

## ABSTRACT

SHAMBLIN, LEIGH. *Caught in the Middle: Understanding Perspectives of Business and Economics Teachers in Kazakhstan in the Face of Cultural Change.* (Under the direction of Dr. Carol Kasworm.)

This qualitative study examines the impact of cultural change on the perspectives of business and economic teachers in Kazakhstan, a country that has experienced tremendous change since gaining its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. During this study, eighteen participants completed semi-structured interviews. Data was analyzed using an approach derived from phenomenography. Six changes in society, as well as specific changes in students, were identified as significantly impacting participant's teaching. Participants stressed that, as a result of the changes taking place, a new world was opening for them and a new model of higher education was emerging in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. While some teachers found a renewed interest in teaching, most found teaching more difficult as a result of cultural change, with some deciding to leave the profession altogether. The study's participants also shared their understandings of effective teaching, identifying two goals and describing six approaches effective teachers use in teaching. Differences emerged between Soviet and post-Soviet teachers with respect to their commitment to the curriculum, their ability to adapt to changing teaching situations, and the effect of increased economic pressure on them. The study concludes that: (a) participants' normative expectations, or their roles, relationships, and responsibilities were most affected by change; (b) participants' pedagogical procedures were largely determined by how they learned to teach; (c) participants desired and were able to change their pedagogical procedures to adapt to changing contexts; (d) Soviet teachers had more difficulty adapting their teaching practices

than their post-Soviet colleagues; (e) the context for teaching constrained teachers in their ability to adapt to cultural changes; and (f) while most beliefs about teaching were rooted in Soviet Kazakhstan, beliefs about teacher's roles and relationships were changing in response to changes in Kazakhstan.

**CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE: UNDERSTANDING PERSPECTIVES OF BUSINESS  
AND ECONOMICS TEACHERS IN KAZAKHSTAN IN THE FACE OF  
CULTURAL CHANGE**

By

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Leigh first fell in love with international development and learning about other cultures in 1993 while serving in Slovakia as a volunteer for the MBA Enterprise Corps. For six years following that assignment, she worked with the MBA Enterprise Corps, helping to place other MBA graduates in similar volunteer assignments in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Thailand, and the countries of Central Asia. In 2000, she moved to Kazakhstan to serve as Country Representative for the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) SME Development Project, a project implemented by the Pragma Corporation. While living in Kazakhstan, she was also a visiting Professor and Dean of the MBA Program at the University of International Business in Almaty under USAID/CARANA's EDNET program, as well as the Chief of Party for the overall EDNET project throughout Central Asia. In 2003, Leigh joined the US Agency for International Development (USAID) as a Foreign Service Officer. In this role she has served as Director of the Education Office for USAID/Macedonia and is currently serving as the Director of the Office for General Development for USAID/Jamaica.

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## CHAPTER ONE

To be a 'good teacher' in one culture of teaching is not the same across all cultures of teaching. Thus, we assume conceptions of teaching are constructed, enacted, and judged within specific cultures of teaching, or communities of practice, often without questioning the norms or values of those communities (Pratt, 1999, p. 271).

And I am not just a teacher. I know the history of my country, not only Kazakhs by the way, but the history of Central Asia and the history of Eurasia. And what makes me proud...it's the history, the ancient history of my country. And I believe we will keep some democratic values, meaning [in] the Central Asia and Kazakhstan in particular. We will move very quickly. And Kazakhstan could be [a] very developed country because [the] people [in] society [are] really talented. It [Kazakhstan] is very sensitive to the new changes. Remember? And that way which [the] European countries passed last two three hundred years, we are passing very quickly. Only ten to fifteen years of independence and look how many changes already are here. And [there are] very talented people, very hard working people, and very patient [people]. Look, there is no interethnic conflict or religious conflict or terrorism or something like that. I like my country, I love my people. It makes me proud (Balzhan [study participant]).

## Introduction

Pratt (1992) defines perspectives as “culturally-embedded reference points through which we make sense of the world around us” (p. 204). Our perspectives shape our interpretation of all our experiences, and govern which ones will be assimilated, and which will be rejected as not fitting within our frames of reference. As we grow up, these perspectives are uncritically and often unconsciously adopted and reflect the ideas and viewpoints of important mentors in our lives, including parents, teachers, and the systems in which we are socialized (Mezirow, 1990; 1997; Pratt, 1992). Writers and researchers have used different terms to help us understand the concept of the underlying perspectives that govern our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Mezirow (1997), for example, called these perspectives “frames of reference” and said these perspectives are primarily the “result of cultural assimilation and idiosyncratic influences of primary caregivers” (p. 6). Pratt (1992) originally used the term *conceptions* to describe perspectives. Regardless of the labels, a consistent theme throughout current research is that our perspectives are inextricably linked to the cultures in which they were shaped.

The cultures in which our perspectives are grounded, however, are not static. The world is experiencing rapid social, political, and economic change. The breakup of the Soviet Union, rapid advances in communications technologies, globalization of industry, the advent of HIV/AIDs, the rise of global terrorism, and the shifting of national boundaries are among the many changes in the world that have occurred in just the last fifteen years (USAID, 2004a). These changes in the larger social and cultural frameworks, or *sociocultural* contexts, affect the structures that contribute to one’s concept of culture, including values, social norms, and history (Trice & Beyer, as cited in Alfred, 2002). Although we understand

that perspectives are culturally influenced, and that change affects culture, little research exists to illuminate just how perspectives are influenced by changes in the cultural contexts that shape them.

Of the many groups affected by cultural change, teachers are important because they are major influencers of what and how the next generation thinks and behaves. As recognized Tanzanian leader and educator Julius Nyerere stated in *The Power of Teachers* in 1966, "Any nation is as great, as good, as its citizens make it... It is teachers more than any other single group of people who determine attitudes, and who shape the ideas and aspirations of the nation" (UNESCO, 2006, p. 1). Research by Pratt (1992, 1998) and Pratt, Kelly, and Wong (1998, 1998), among others, has shown that teachers' understandings of what it means to teach, or their perspectives on teaching, guide their approach to teaching and thus shape classroom practice. Recent research by Trigwell, Prosser, and Waterhouse (1999) demonstrates that teaching perspectives can be directly correlated to student learning outcomes. In our understanding of perspectives on teaching, however, the role of cultural change in influencing these perspectives remains unclear. Given the importance of teachers in shaping society, and the connection between teaching perspectives and student learning outcomes, understanding how teachers' perspectives are affected by cultural change has potentially meaningful consequences to teaching and learning. Understanding the effect of cultural change on teaching perspectives is a focus of this study.

### *Perspectives on Teaching*

Like perspectives on other aspects of life, perspectives of teaching have a cultural foundation. "To 'teach' means different things depending on one's values, beliefs and

intentions” (Pratt, 1992, p. 203). Studies of what it means to teach have been conducted since the mid-1980s, with most researchers concluding their studies by classifying different perspectives on teaching (Kember, 1997). And, with these classifications, the idea has been promoted that certain perspectives on teaching are *better* than others. Kember’s (1997) review of 13 studies of perspectives on teaching suggests that perspectives connected with student-centered learning and facilitative approaches to teaching are somehow better than perspectives that are teacher-centered or focus primarily on the delivery of content. Yet this assertion argues with the reality of teaching in the world today. A widening body of research demonstrates that different beliefs and assumptions about teaching exist and are valid for the context in which they were developed (Pratt & Associates, 1998; Landis, McDermott et al., 2000). For example, Naidoo and Searle (1997) and Cranton (1997) found that the predominant modes of teaching, in South Africa and in higher education in North America, respectively, are through lecture and not through facilitation methodology.

*Pratt and Pratt, Kelly, and Wong*

Pratt’s (1992) study of 253 teachers in five countries is significant in the field because it helped adult educators understand that “good” teaching can represent many underlying perspectives (Kember, 1997). In this study, Pratt investigated the *actions, intentions, and beliefs* of teachers from differing adult education settings. Five primary perspectives on teaching emerged: *transmission, apprenticeship, developmental, nurturer, and social reform*. According to Pratt, each of these perspectives reflects differing levels of individual teacher’s commitment to teachers, learners, content, context, and ideals. Or, put another way, teaching perspectives reflect one’s “orientation to knowledge, learning and the role and responsibility of being a teacher” (Pratt, 2002, p. 9).

Through his research of perspectives, Pratt (1992) argues that we need a more pluralistic view of teaching in adult education. According to Pratt, Kelly, & Wong (1999), teachers in different cultures do not necessarily share the same understanding of what it means to be a good teacher or the teaching practices that one should use in the classroom, nor should they share this understanding. “Across a wide range of disciplines, contexts, and cultures, my colleagues and I found a plurality of good teaching, not all of which rests on constructivist principles of learning” (p. 9). In the West, for example, strategies to increase deep or meaningful student learning include use of experiential learning and involvement of students (Naidoo & Searle, 1997), thus reflecting an appreciation of the individual as exemplified by Western cultures. In China, however, Tai Chi Masters give considerable weight to the role and status of the teacher, rather than to the importance of individual students (Pratt & Associates, 1998). These two examples suggest that viewing teaching as a universal set of expectations, information, and skills to be learned does not make sense. Given differing context and cultures worldwide, it is easy to understand why differing perspectives exist and why a variety of classroom techniques can be considered representative of “good teaching.”

When one acknowledges that perspectives are culturally-influenced (Geertz, 1973; Hofstede, 1997; Mezirow, 1990, 1991; Pratt & Associates, 1998), a logical next step in research on teaching perspectives is to connect individual perspectives to the cultures that shaped them. Pratt, Kelly, and Wong’s (1998; 1999) studies of Chinese conceptions of teaching provided more insight on this issue by demonstrating how specific underlying cultural values shape teachers’ perspectives and influence the process of teaching in Hong Kong. In this study, Pratt, Kelly and Wong were able to link teachers’ actions, intentions, and

beliefs about teaching to five principal relationships dominant in Chinese Hong Kong. They also demonstrated that Western teachers teaching in Hong Kong had difficulty viewing teaching by Chinese Hong Kong teachers as “good” due to differences in the cultural backgrounds of Chinese and Western teachers (Pratt et al., 1998). As Hong Kong is but one of the many places in the world where teaching occurs, further research is needed in this area if we are to more fully understand how cultural values shape teaching perspectives. This study extends research on culture and teaching perspectives to a new context - post-Soviet Kazakhstan.

#### *Context of the Study - Teaching in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan*

One area where immense cultural change has occurred is post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan was a Soviet Republic, or SSR, until December 1991; it is now a post-Soviet Republic and the ninth largest country in the world. Whereas *Soviet* can refer to a native or inhabitant of the former Soviet Union, the term *post-Soviet* refers to the period following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and is used to modify aspects of life coming into being after that dissolution.

The Soviet Union, or Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), existed from 1922 until 1991 and is considered to be the successor to the Russian Empire. Following the Bolshevik (“communist”) revolution in 1917, the Soviet Union was formed in 1922 when the Bolshevik state, or Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RFSR), joined with “those neighboring areas under its military occupation or rules by branches of the communist movement” (Colton, 2006, p. 1). Although its territorial boundaries changed over time as new Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) joined the union, at its zenith, the Soviet Union

consisted of 15 SSRs and was the largest nation in the world. As one of the world's two superpowers, the Soviet Union also wielded tremendous influence in world politics, economics, military, and cultural affairs. By comparison, the Soviet economy was second only to that of the United States. In contrast to a market-based economy, the Soviet command economy was centrally-planned and all productive assets were owned by the State (Colton, 2006).

The goal of the Soviet regime was to “forge the classless, communist society that German political theorist Karl Marx had sketched in the 19<sup>th</sup> century” (Colton, 2006, p. 2). In pursuit of this goal, all Soviet citizens were entitled to jobs, free health care, free education, social security benefits, and housing. Science and the arts were vigorously promoted. Although Russian was the preferred language of government, economics, the military and communication, all citizens of the USSR were also allowed to use their native languages. Territorial boundaries, including the Kazakh SSR, were demarcated within the Soviet Union for the largest ethnic minorities, with members of the respective ethnic minorities serving as titular heads of each territory. The Soviet Union was first to put a man in space, and made significant achievements in citizen literacy and fields such as science, literature, and art (Colton, 2006). Despite the many benefits Soviet citizens enjoyed, and the many achievements the Soviet Union realized, life for citizens within the Soviet Union was not without difficulties. Health care was difficult to come by, goods were scarce, *free* housing might consist of a single room, and personal freedoms, such as the right to religious worship were “drastically curtailed” (Colton, 2006, p. 2).

Keeping the Soviet economy running while simultaneously providing promised benefits to Soviet citizens and fighting the Cold War with the United States proved

unworkable. Following a period of glasnost (opening) and perestroika (restructuring) from 1986 through 1990 under Gorbachev, the Soviet Union fell apart (Colton, 2006). National boundaries were redrawn, new political alliances forged, and economies reoriented toward a capitalistic, or market approach. For many people both inside and outside the Soviet Union, its dissolution came as a surprise. Consider the words of a briefing document on Central and Eastern Europe from the U.S. government in 2000:

To people who grew up during the Cold War, the events that took place in Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia from 1989 to 1991 still seem hard to believe. In less than two years, the once-powerful Soviet bloc collapsed. The satellite countries of Europe, which had lived under Soviet-backed dictatorships for some 45 years, declared independence. They were followed by the collapse of the 70-year-old Soviet Union itself, which gave rise to yet another diverse group of independent nations, some of which had not ruled themselves for hundreds of years (USAID, 2000a, p. 1)

Kazakhstan was one of the new Soviet republics without a long history of self-rule. In the 15 years since the country gained its independence from the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan has focused building a nation, developing political alliances, touting its development of democracy, and reorienting its economy toward a market focus. In the process of transition, Kazakhstan has experienced tremendous shifts in its economic, political, social and cultural frameworks (McLendon, 2004).

Within this framework of Kazakhstan's national change, the role of business and economics education has become immensely important. Both the government of Kazakhstan and the various donor agencies that have offered monetary and technical assistance to Kazakhstan recognize that Kazakhstan must develop a vibrant, market-oriented, private

business sector, complete with managers and staff who can make effective business decisions in dynamic environments (Bilyalov, 1999; DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Heyneman, 1994; Sabloff, 1999; UNESCO, 2000; USAID, 2004b). Furthermore, these organizations recognize that higher education institutions have a critical role to play in educating these future managers. USAID (2004b), for example, has provided approximately \$18 million for two projects specifically designed to improve teaching at business and economics schools throughout Central Asia and to further develop this critical link between higher education and the new market economy. The government of Kazakhstan has also recognized the need for educational reform to address the needs of the changing economy. To this end, the government has created a new law on education to facilitate education development and has promoted new business and economics programs within universities (UNESCO, 2000).

As a result of this increased focus on business and economics education to help support economic development in Kazakhstan, teachers in business and economics education now find themselves with a new job - helping the next generation of workers and business owners learn what a market economy is and how to work successfully within that economy. Yet, most of these teachers have not lived in a market economy, taught in a market economy, or been trained in market-based principles. Donor agencies and organizations have provided assistance by offering training programs to help teachers in business and economics learn new content and new teaching methodologies (USAID, 2000b; 2004b). These organizations have also translated textbooks and made Internet access more available to teachers in business and economics. Through these endeavors, millions of foreign dollars have been invested in business education in Kazakhstan since 1991 (Edwards, 2002).

The efforts of the Kazakh government and donor organizations are consistent with traditional approaches to faculty or instructor development that focus on helping faculty develop new skills and learn new content. However, these efforts at faculty development largely ignore the underlying perspectives that guide individual faculty members in their teaching practice (Kember, 1997; Pratt, 1992; Pratt & Associates, 1998), including the cultural underpinnings of these perspectives (Pratt, Kelly & Wong, 1998). Kember (1997) stresses that methods of improving the quality of teaching that focus only on teaching approaches, including methodology and content, may have little impact if the underlying perspectives guiding teaching are incongruent with the approaches (Kember, 1997; Pratt, 1992; Pratt & Associates, 1998; Pratt & Nesbit, 2000). Thus, this study seeks to understand the perspectives that guide business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan in their practice and their beliefs about the influence of cultural change on those perspectives.

#### *Statement of Purpose*

The purpose of this study is to expand research on the cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives and extend this research to investigate how teachers understand cultural change as influencing their teaching. Early research into cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives was conducted by Pratt (1992) and Pratt, Kelly and Wong (1998, 1999). However, there is need for more research that explores teaching perspectives in different cultures. As Pratt & Associates (1998) point out:

If we know only one perspective of teaching, it will dominate our perceptions and interpretations of all that goes on, yet remain hidden from view. Just as the world above the pond is invisible to a fish, so too are other perspectives invisible to those

who know only one perspective on teaching. Thus, if we are to understand our personal perspectives on teaching, we must consider other ways of thinking and believing about teaching, alternative ways of constructing learning, knowledge or skill, and multiple roles for instructors (p. 34).

The field of business and economics education in Kazakhstan offers an opportunity to study the cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives in greater depth. As Kazakhstan is a country which has experienced considerable economic, political, and social change during its transition from Soviet state to post-Soviet republic, this arena also offers us an opportunity to study how cultural change influences teaching perspectives from the point of view of business and economics teachers themselves.

### *Research Questions*

Considering the purpose and context of this study, specific research questions include:

1. What are the current perspectives on teaching held by business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan?
2. How do these perspectives on teaching manifest in practice?
3. What do teachers perceive as influencing their perspectives on teaching?
4. How do teachers understand the cultural changes taking place in Kazakhstan as related to their teaching?

### *Conceptual Framework*

Pratt and Nesbit (2000) claim that teaching must be understood not as a practice of

activities, but rather conceptualized in the larger social structure in which teaching occurs. This focus on cultural aspects of teaching and learning is consistent with the emerging sociocultural discourse in adult education. Discourses are “systems of thought based on language” or a means by which group members actively shape and order their relationship to the social world” (Pratt & Nesbit, 2000, p. 2). It is through discourse that individuals establish boundaries for communities of practice.

Rather than focus on the individual and psychological aspects of learning, the field of adult education is shifting focus to an understanding of teaching and learning as taking place within the specific contexts (Alfred, 2002; Pratt & Nesbit, 2000). This discourse argues that research should focus on understanding specific contexts more fully and from the point of view of the teachers and learners engaged in these contexts (Caffarella & Merriam, 1999; Pratt & Nesbit, 2000).

Pratt and Nesbit (2000) reviewed the discourses used in the field of adult education and highlighted several shifts in discourses about teaching and learning during the past thirty years. Most of the dominant discourses in adult education, according to Pratt and Nesbit, have been focused on “psychologizing” teaching and learning and using psychological terms to describe knowledge, learners, learning, and the nature of teacher’s work. These terms (Pratt & Nesbit, 2000) include:

1. *behaviorism*, or learning as a change in behavior, focused on developing specific competencies with teacher as an authority figure;
2. *andragogy*, or an understanding of learners as self-directed and teachers as responsible for learner facilitation;
3. *cognitive learning*, or a psychologically-based view of teaching and learning as a

- system of storage and retrieval with teachers as managers of resources; and,
4. *constructivism*, or learning as building upon experiences stored as schemata within in the brain and teachers being responsible for helping construct better schemata (p. 6).

Starting in the 1990s, adult education again shifted its discourse, this time acknowledging the role of social contexts and language in learning. In the socio-cultural discourse, learning is assumed to be inextricably linked to the context in which it occurs. Furthermore, over time learners are assumed to take on the goals and perspectives of members of the social group with whom they interact. Membership in particular groups shapes how learners “think, value, and act in relation to the work and other members of the community or group” (Pratt & Nesbit, 2000, p. 6). Pratt and Nesbit cite three reasons this shift is especially significant for adult education.

1. When one considers that learning occurs in a social and cultural context, one must reconsider his/her views of how teaching occurs. Teaching becomes an activity conducted in a wider socio-cultural context;
2. If teachers and teaching are understood in a wider social context, then what will be taught should also be considered with respect to context. What might work in one setting might not work in another;
3. Acknowledging the socio-cultural aspects of teaching and learning argues that researchers seek to understand those contexts, asking questions such as “researchers seek to understand those contexts, asking questions such as “What does it mean to teach in this context?” and “How does the context and change in context affect the attitudes and approaches of teachers?”

This study examined how teachers in Kazakhstan understand teaching in the face of

immense cultural change taking place within the country. As such, this study was undertaken with two analytic constructs in mind: perspectives on teaching and cultural change. Pratt's (1992) study on teaching perspectives and Pratt, Kelly, & Wong's (1998, 1999) research on the cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives frame the construct of perspectives on teaching in this study. The concept of cultural change is understood within as change in the larger sociocultural context in which teaching occurs or change in the meanings that individuals derive from that context (Geertz, 1973).

#### *A Base from which to Investigate Perspectives on Teaching*

In the 1992 study on teaching perspectives, Pratt investigated *actions*, *intentions*, and *beliefs* as indicators of teachers' commitments to particular perspectives. *Actions* are the most visible aspects of perspective, manifesting in the "routines and techniques" that teachers use on a regular basis (Pratt & Associates, 1998, p. 17). These actions could include routines in starting a class, methods of evaluation, or techniques for gaining group involvement.

*Intentions* are statements made by teachers indicating the purpose of their work and answering the question, "What are you trying to accomplish?" (Pratt & Associates, 1998, p. 18). Intentions suggest a deeper understanding of purpose and sense of direction in teaching. Statements of intention might include, "I want students to love English" or "I want students to learn to think for themselves." Beliefs are the least flexible aspect of commitment and the most difficult to uncover. However, as beliefs represent underlying conceptions of knowledge, knowledge construction, what it means to learn, and what constitutes effective teaching, uncovering beliefs is critical to understanding perspectives. As in Pratt's 1992 study, this study explored participants' actions, intentions, and beliefs surrounding teaching.

In this study, the researcher was an American and the participants were Kazakh

citizens. Pratt (1999) suggests that researchers engaged in cross-cultural research run the risk of interpreting teaching practices in other cultures (national and otherwise) through their own cultural lens. To counteract this tendency across cultures, Pratt suggests that researchers focus on common elements of teaching across cultures: *epistemic beliefs, normative expectations, and pedagogical procedures*. Epistemic beliefs reflect one's understanding of knowledge, how authority over knowledge is granted, and how knowledge should be evaluated. Normative expectations are conceptualizations of the social roles of the teacher and learner. Pedagogical procedures are the actions and approaches to teaching considered to be "right," or socially-acceptable by teachers. This framework for understanding was used by Pratt et al. (1998, 1999) to investigate underlying perspectives of teachers in Hong Kong as described above. In this study, the lens of epistemic beliefs, normative expectations, and pedagogical procedures was used to draw conclusions about findings related to teaching perspectives and cultural change in Kazakhstan.

#### *An Understanding of Cultural Change*

Payne (1996) suggests that culture is difficult to define as it has "virtually limitless applications" (p. 128). Many definitions of culture have been proffered including culture as "webs of significance" (Geertz, 1973, p.5), culture as "software of the mind" (Hofstede, 1997, p. 4), culture as "both a way of life for a people and a framework within which they may make meaning" (Nekwevha, 1999, p. 5), cultures as "repeated classroom patterns" (Nesbit, 2000, p. 298), and even culture as a structure consisting of ideological, technological, and sociological subsystems (Leslie White, 2006). Through these definitions, culture is construed as being both a context and a meaning that individuals derive from interacting with and in that context.

Several theories also exist to explain or predict cultural and social change. Even since World War II, “an impressive number of theories of change have been produced” (Boudon, 1983, p. 143). Regardless of when they were developed, Preston (2000) suggests that theories of change “were, and still are today, products of their times and are characterized to a greater or lesser extent by the prevailing views and ideologies of their eras” (p. 3). Some examples of theories on cultural and social change are *Darwinism*, or change as evolution; *structural functionalism*, or change as increasing complexity and interdependency in society; and *conflict theory*, based on Marxism, which suggests that the potential for change is built into a society’s structures and that radical change is inevitable (Preston, 2000). Other theories of change include *sociocultural evolutionism* and *self-organization*. Sociocultural evolutionism suggests that progress in society is fueled by changes in the technological substructure of cultures (Leslie White, 2006). The theory of self-organization proposes that societies develop novel adaptations to change with little external intervention (Hudson, 2000). These theories explain *how* or *why* change occurs, predict *what* will change in sociocultural contexts, or describes the *results* of change. Inherent in many of theories of social and cultural change is the concept of progress, i.e. that societies develop from a lesser to a more developed state, or from a simple to a more complex state (Geertz, 1973; Preston, 2000).

The treatment of cultural change in this study does not attempt to utilize theories of cultural change or sociocultural change, to explain why changes in the social and cultural contexts occurred or to predict how and when social and cultural changes might occur. Nor does the concept of cultural change utilized in this study relate to why theories of social change fail (Boudon, 1983). Rather, the use of the term *cultural change* in this study reflects

an understanding that change *has* occurred in the social and cultural contexts in which individuals live and work. Specifically, this study investigates what *has* changed in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and what these changes mean for participants' perspectives on teaching.

As early as 1994, public opinion polls in post-Soviet Russia indicated three fundamental directions of sociocultural change in post-Soviet Russia: *destatization*, *openness*, and *privatization* (Levada & Vale, 1994). In discussing Soviet culture, Levada and Vale (1994) suggest, the Soviet state “served not only as the principal sponsor and censor of the cinema, but also –and this is much more essential – as the monopolistic source, interpreter, and guardian of the entire sphere of society’s norms and values” (p. 10). Destatization refers to the process of the devolving control of sectors of society and the shaping of society’s norms and values from the State to the individual and other decentralized social structures. Openness refers to the removal of “geopolitical and sociocultural space” barriers (p. 11), a new ability to communicate with those outside those barriers, and a new influx of information. The concept of privatization suggests the individualization of both assets and the determination of “the normative regulators of social life.” As Levada and Vale (1994) write “social institutions, the state, and politics should serve the individual and not vice versa is making headway in social consciousness” (p. 12).

It should be remembered that Kazakhstan is not Russia and destatization, openness, and privatization are not the only social and cultural changes taking place in former Soviet republics. Levada and Vale’s (1994) research suggests, however, that major shifts within post-Soviet societies have, and are, occurring. Although this study explores specific elements of teaching perspectives (actions, intentions, and beliefs), the study does not seek to explore

cultural changes through a prescribed framework by investigating specific elements of change. Rather, this study seeks to illuminate teachers' own understandings of what has changed in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and what those changes mean for participants perspectives on teaching.

### *Significance*

This study is important for future research and practice. In the area of research, this study will expand the body of research on the cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives (Pratt, Kelly and Wong, 1998, 1999). Specifically, this study will help researchers understand the cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives as discussed by business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan. It will also add to understanding in an area that has not been widely explored – the influence of cultural change on teaching perspectives. This is consistent with an emerging focus in adult education on examining sociocultural factors that influence teaching and learning (Alfred, 2002; Caffarella & Merriam, 1999) and is thus, in step, with other current research in this field. Findings from this study may also suggest specific gaps in the research on teaching perspectives which, if filled, could help teachers navigate cultural change more effectively.

In the area of practice, this study will help those interested in supporting business and economic teachers in Kazakhstan to better understand the perspectives of the individuals with whom they will work. The group of interested stakeholders potentially includes donor organizations, the Kazakh government, and the universities where faculty members teach. If they understand how teachers have been affected by change, then these stakeholders can more effectively target their faculty development efforts at teachers' needs.

Business and economics teachers who participate in this study may actually come to better understand the assumptions that guide their teaching. This process of reflective learning is in itself a strong development tool for teachers (Brookfield, 1995; Cranton, 1994, 1996; Pratt & Associates, 1998). For teachers, such examination of perspectives can “broaden understanding of who they are, what they do, and their power to influence what happens” (Pratt & Nesbit, 2000). If teachers gain a better understanding of themselves through this study, then teachers and students alike benefit.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

Current research and theory suggests that our perspectives are shaped by the cultures in which we are socialized (Hofstede, 1997; Mezirow, 1990, 1991; Pratt, 1992). Research in the area of perspectives on teaching also acknowledges that personal and sociocultural contextual factors are important in perspective formation (Berg, Grisham, Jacobs & Mathison, 2002; Hativa; 2000; Pratt, 1992, 1999; Pratt & Associates, 1998; Pratt et al., 1998, 1999; Taylor, Dirkx, & Pratt, 2001). However, there has been little research on understanding how specific cultures shape teaching perspectives and what cultural change means for individual teacher's understandings of teaching. This study seeks to begin to fill a gap in the research by exploring teaching perspectives of business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan, and by investigating how teachers understand teaching in Kazakhstan in light of the immense changes taking place in the culture in which their teaching practice occurs. Thus, this study expands the literature which helps us understand how culture shapes individual teaching perspectives and how individual teachers perceive cultural change as influencing their teaching.

The purposes of this literature review are to provide an understanding of culture and culture change within which to approach the study, to lay the theoretical groundwork for what we know about perspectives of teaching and the cultural foundations of these perspectives, and to help us better understand the context of post-Soviet Kazakhstan in which this study will investigate the influence of cultural change on perspectives on teaching.

*Culture and Cultural Change*

According to Payne (1996), culture is one of the most difficult words to define because it has “virtually limitless applications” (p. 128). This point is illustrated by Bodley (1994) who suggests the following potential frames for understanding culture:

1. Topical: Culture consists of everything on a list of topics, or categories, such as social organization, religion, or economy
2. Historical: Culture is social heritage, or tradition, that is passed on to future generations
3. Behavioral: Culture is shared, learned human behavior, a way of life
4. Normative: Culture is ideals, values, or rules for living
5. Functional: Culture is the way humans solve problems of adapting to the environment or living together
6. Mental: Culture is a complex of ideas, or learned habits, that inhibit impulses and distinguish people from animals
7. Structural: Culture consists of patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols, or behaviors
8. Symbolic: Culture is based on arbitrarily assigned meanings that are shared by a society (p. 1.)

Within this variety of frames, numerous descriptions of culture have been suggested. For example, Geertz (1973) describes culture as being semiotic “webs of significance” spun by humans themselves. This definition acknowledges culture as a social construction and distinguishes it from those things constructed by nature. Hofstede (1997) called this “the software of the mind” or the “collecting programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (p. 5). Noted anthropologist

Leslie White suggested that culture could be viewed as a three-part structure composed of subsystems. White termed these subsystems, *ideological*, *technological*, and *sociological*. Cultural evolution, White postulated in *The Evolution of Culture* (1959), occurs in response to changes in the technological aspect of the subsystem. In White's definition, culture actually exists outside the individual (Leslie White, 2006).

In discussing the effects of post-colonial education systems in Namibia and South Africa, Nekwevha (1999) describes culture as “both a way of life for a people and a framework within which they make meaning, confront difference, and initiate change...culture is a set of beliefs and practices which provide opportunities for human beings to be the agents of their own destinies (p. 492).” The definition offered by Nekwevha (1999) suggests that individuals can utilize their concepts of culture to effect individual and social action. A caution exists, however, in this frame. Concepts of culture can become tools of power when one group defined by certain ethnic, racial, professional, national or other “boundaries” uses definitions of culture to exclude another group defined by like boundaries, or to label it or its members as coming from a “less-developed” culture. As Payne (1996) writes:

Just as Nazi definitions of the human required efforts to exclude Jews and just as southern American definitions of humanity once excluded blacks, so now in South Asia, Africa, and elsewhere in the world cultural definitions are instruments of the political power of identity exclusion. To define ‘culture’ is to define the human; to be excluded from that definition can have an ultimate cost (p. 128).

Research in adult education has also illuminated the extensive use of cultural labels to exclude a group or groups, or define a group or individuals as being “less” (Kember, 1997;

Pratt & Associates, 1998;). One example is the promotion of Western adult learning theories, including andragogy as espoused by Knowles (1980), as a means to judge the teaching of others (Pratt & Associates, 1998; Pratt & Nesbit, 2000) or to shape educational policy and activity in transition economies (Sabloff, 1999). Andragogy is described as being learner-centered (Knowles, 1980) and promotes the teacher as a facilitator of adults, responsible for creating a democratic classroom, and working for education that empowers and emancipates (Pratt & Associates, 1998). Pratt et al. (1999) found that Western faculty members in Hong Kong who viewed themselves as facilitators simultaneously viewed local teachers in Hong Kong who relied on expert power more than facilitation skills as “less developed.” In the same study, Western faculty member also viewed local students from Hong Kong who did not actively participate in facilitative classrooms as “lazy.”

Sabloff (1999) highlights similar cultural hegemony in the efforts of international donors to provide faculty development assistance in the former Soviet Union:

Only when the researcher speaks their language (literally and figuratively), understands how they relate to one another, and understands their goals can the researcher offer assistance in their transformation. Unfortunately, this disciplinary dictum (anthropology), which has proved successful in other development projects, is not being heeded by the faculty and other experts from the Americas and Western Europe - all supported by private, government, and international organizational funding - working in transition nations today. These experts - and their funding sources - are rushing in to help convert the higher education systems (among other systems) from the Soviet model to the Western (USA?) model of organizing, teaching, evaluating, and researching. They usually have little knowledge of these

nation's culture(s) or of the linkage between government and university goals. Furthermore, they often expect Western problems along with successes. In short, they are asking the public universities to *adopt* the Western model of higher education when they should be helping these countries *adapt* the Western model to their goals, needs and national culture. The result is often confusion and frustration (p. xii).

The inclusion of these examples is not to judge the value of andragogy, other learning theories, or international development efforts. It is rather to demonstrate how one's concept of *culture* can be used as a tool to separate individuals and groups from each other with negative implications for adult education. Similarly, the purpose of this study is not to judge to what extent teachers' views are "developed" or even applicable for the conditions under which teachers are now teaching or to separate teachers into categories of development. Rather, this study seeks to understand how business and economic teachers in Kazakhstan understand teaching, how culture shapes these perspectives, and how teachers understand cultural change as influencing these perspectives. Therefore, a view of culture that is more inclusive and grounded in the experience of those living in the culture itself is needed to support the intent of this study, and to frame its execution.

Geertz (1973), arguing for an idea of culture as semiotic, or as manifesting in construable signs, writes "culture is not a power, something to which social events can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly—that is thickly —described" (p. 14). Or, alternatively, culture is "fabrics of meaning with which human beings interpret their experiences and guide their actions" (p. 42). Within this fabric are beliefs, actions, values, interpretations, and rituals that guide their actions and affect

meaning making. This definition of culture is similar to Pratt and Nesbit's (2000) who suggest that

culture is both (1) a complex web of interpretations and meanings that people use to make sense of their experiences, and (2) the range of social relationships and practices people find membership in, as they struggle over the material conditions, and the form and content, of everyday life (p. 125).

This treatment of culture as both *context* and the *meaning* that individuals derive from and within that context forms the conceptual framework for understanding culture in this study. As Pratt and Nesbit (2000) indicate, the benefits of utilizing this type of definition of culture are that it (a) incorporates a notion of discourse through social relationships; (b) addresses individuals experiences and the social influences that shape these experiences, and furthermore acknowledges the importance of these social influences; and, (c) recognizes that individuals' experiences and relationships are mediated by "the asymmetrical distribution of power within society" and thus accounts for a "myriad of sub-cultures localized by structures, material practices, lived relations, place, context, subject content, and language" (p. 126).

Pratt and Nesbit (2000) further suggest that socio-cultural contexts are not static: "We create them [social structures] as they create us" (p. 9). Using a definition of culture as both the context and the meaning that individuals derive from and within that context suggests that cultural change encompasses a) changes in the cultural contexts in which individuals work and live, including changes in the social relations and practices in which they find membership or b) changes in the interpretations people use to make sense of their experiences (Geertz, 1973). These changes can include, but are not limited to, changes in

beliefs, actions, values, interpretations, and rituals that guide their actions and affect meaning making (Geertz, 1973).

Geertz (1973) cautions, however, that culture cannot be understood from the point of view of someone outside the culture. While rituals may be observed, and understandings communicated through discourse, observation and interpretation, researchers are “outsiders” to the process of experiencing the culture observed. Only “insiders” or “natives” can live their own culture. This understanding argues for investigating culture, and cultural changes, from the point of view of those experiencing it, and thus further supports a study of teaching perspectives based on the understandings of the teachers themselves.

### *Perspectives on Teaching*

“A perspective on teaching is an inter-related set of beliefs and intentions that gives direction and justification to our actions. It is a lens through which we view teaching and learning” (Pratt, 2002). Other words used to describe perspectives are “orientations, conceptions, beliefs, approaches and intentions” (Kember, 1997, p. 256). In his 1997 review of 13 studies on conceptions of teaching completed between 1989 and 1995, Kember notes that Pratt’s (1992) definition of conceptions is consistent with definitions utilized or expressly written in the work of other authors cited. According to Pratt (1992):

Conceptions are specific meanings attached to phenomena which then mediate our response to situations involving those phenomena. We form conceptions of virtually every aspect of our perceived world and in so doing, use those abstract representations to delimit something from, and relate it to, other aspects of our world. In effect, we view the world through the lenses of our conceptions, interpreting and

acting in accordance with our understanding of the world (p. 204).

In the theoretical and empirical literature on perspectives on teaching, two major directions have emerged: (a) categorizing individual teaching perspectives into organizing frameworks (Kember, 1997) and (b) understanding how teaching perspectives are shaped, including their cultural genesis, and how they in turn shape practice (Berg et al., 2002; Hativa, 2000; Pratt, 1992, 1999; Pratt & Associates, 1998; Pratt et al., 1998, 1999; Taylor et al., 2001). Fewer research studies exist on understanding the cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives (Pratt, 1992; Pratt & Associates, 1998; Pratt et al., 1998, 1999) or connecting teaching perspectives to specific learning outcomes (Kember, 1997). Studies on the cultural underpinnings of teaching perspectives are included in a discussion in this review. Because this study deals with understanding perspectives of teaching and their cultural underpinnings, but does not connect these perspectives to student learning outcomes, key findings and theoretical discussions of the connection between teaching perspectives and learning outcomes is not included in this literature review.

### *Investigating and Categorizing Perspective*

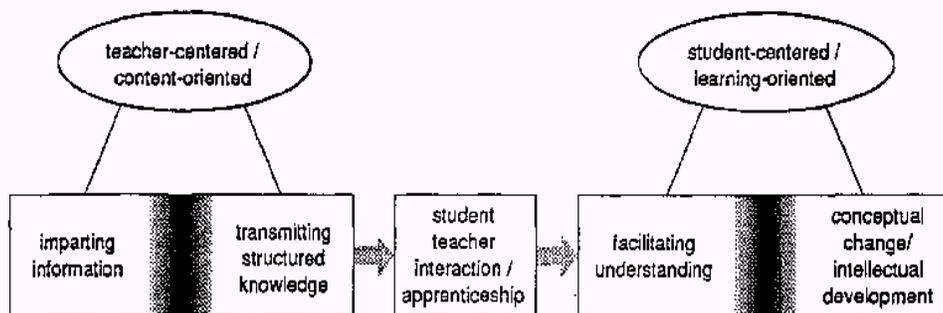
Since the mid-1980s, several researchers have explored perspectives on teaching. Most of these researchers have conducted qualitative studies and have included classifications of perspectives as key study findings (Kember, 1997). In 1997, Kember reviewed 13 studies of conceptions of teaching completed through 1995 and found many commonalities among them. All studies reviewed by Kember (1997) were qualitative in nature. These studies reviewed include Dall'Alba (1991), Dunkin (1990, 1991), Dunkin and Precains (1992), Fox (1993), Gow and Kember (1990, 1994), Martin and Balla (1991), Martin and Ramsden (1992), Pratt (1992), Prosser et al. (1994), Samuelowicz and Bain

(1992), and Trigwell et al. (1994).

Kember (1997) noted that all the researchers he reviewed delineated categories of conceptions of teaching, with most outlining four or five categories of perspectives. Kember also noted that the majority of these categories were presented as discrete entities organized in a linear or hierarchical sequence. Kember challenged the idea that conceptions of teaching could really exist in neat classifications. Rather, he cited research by Martin and Ramsden (1992), Samuelowicz and Bain (1992), and Prosser et al. (1994) as suggesting that teachers' conceptions of teaching could be viewed along a continuum, with teachers moving between categories.

Based on his own research (Gow & Kember, 1993; Kember & Gow, 1994), as well as the re-conceptualization of the other eleven studies in the review, Kember (1997) suggested the following five categories of teaching perspectives are aligned along the same continuum: *imparting information, transmitting structured knowledge, student- teacher interaction or apprenticeship, facilitating understanding, and conceptual change/intellectual development*. Kember (1997) further suggested that these five categories are subsets of two larger categories of conceptions, *teacher-centered/content-oriented* and *student-centered/learning-oriented*. These categories of conceptions are presented in Figure 1 (p. 264).

Teacher-centered conceptions focus on transmitting content to students, while student-centered conceptions focus on facilitating understanding and developing intellect. Kember notes that the boundaries between conceptions in his model are not clear. This blurring of boundaries indicates that movement between conceptions is possible. Kember's



*Figure 1.* Kember's Multiple-level Categorization Model of Conceptions of Teaching

model also suggests that “development” occurs when teachers move from teacher-centered to student-centered perspectives. Citing research by Gow and Kember (1993) that examined teaching conceptions and student learning outcomes, Kember (1997) asserts that teaching perspectives oriented to learning facilitation led to deeper learning than those associated with transmission of content and were thus “better” for students. This view is consistent with andragogy (Knowles, 1980), the dominant view in Western adult education today. Andragogy stresses that adults are self-directed and that the role of the teacher is to be a facilitator. In andragogy, the needs of the students, not the content of a program, are central to learning.

This assertion, however, ignores the reality of teaching in the world today where lecture is still the most prominent mode of content delivery (Naidoo & Searle, 1997). Reflecting on their work with teachers in South Africa, Naidoo and Searle (1997) found that the predominant mode of teaching was lecture supported by seminars, tutorials, or discussion programs. Pratt and Nesbit (2000) cite Nesbit’s 1998 study of math teaching, noting that “Nesbit found that teachers were governed by the textbooks, more than by any sense of what

the learners might already know, or need to know, beyond the formal examinations (p. 125).” In both of the cited studies, learner facilitation was not the primary role of the teacher. Similarly, in Kazakh universities teachers were seen as experts, respected for their knowledge and their age, and lecture was still the prevalent mode of information transmission (Destler, 2000; DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997).

### *Pratt’s Study on Teaching Perspectives*

Of the studies reviewed in Kember (1997), the 1992 study by Pratt is notable because it suggests that a variety of teaching perspectives represent good teaching and thus helps reframe the discussion on teaching perspectives in an more inclusive direction. Pratt (1992) interviewed 253 adult educators in a variety of settings in Canada, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the United States and asked them questions such as “what does it mean to teach,” “why are you a teacher,” and “what do you hope to accomplish with your teaching?” Some of the teachers were also observed teaching in the classroom. This research was expanded upon in *Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult and Higher Education* (Pratt & Associates, 1998). Results of these studies will be discussed throughout this review. Data from Pratt’s research was analyzed based on five dimensions, or components, of teaching: learners, content, context, teachers, and ideals. Figure 2 below depicts Pratt’s (1998, p. 4) general model of teaching.

*Actions, intentions, and beliefs as indicators of commitment.* Perspectives on teaching were determined by analyzing the degree to which teachers expressed their commitments to the individual dimensions of the general model through their actions, their expressions of intentions, and the underlying beliefs. Pratt (1998) defined commitment as a “sense of loyalty, duty, responsibility, or obligation associated with one or more elements

within the General Model of Teaching” (p. 7).

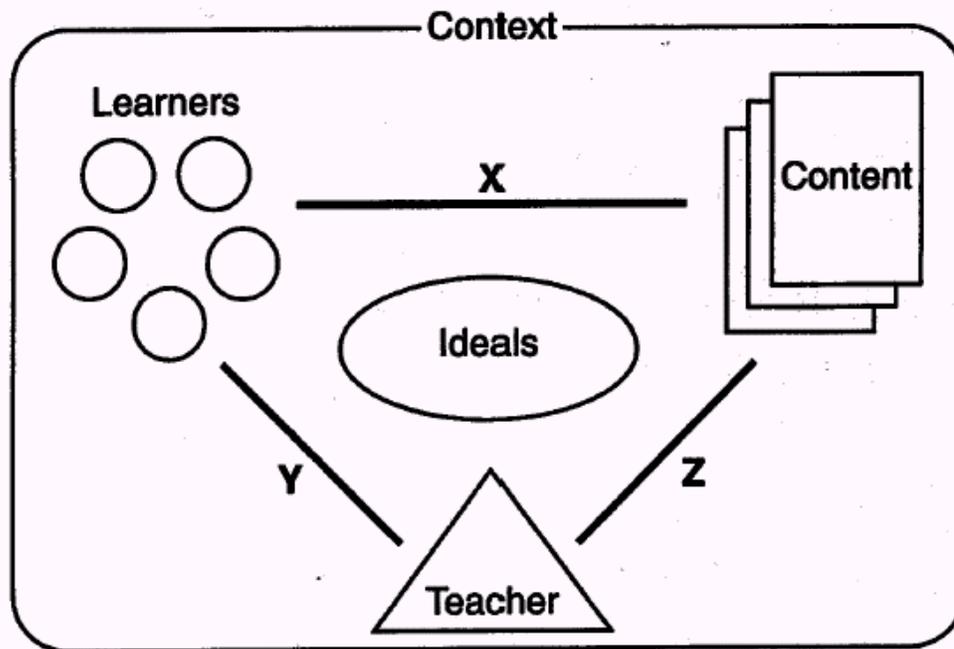


Figure 2. Pratt's General Model of Teaching

Relationships between elements also provided clues to perspectives. As Pratt (1998) states, “In the research it was clear that people used different means to engage learners in the content (line X), preferred different kinds of relationships with learners (line Y), and held contrasting beliefs about an instructor’s content credibility (line Z)” (p. 7).

*Actions* are the most visible aspects of perspective, manifesting in the “routines and techniques” that teachers use on a regular basis. These actions answer the question, “What do you do in the classroom as a teacher?” (Pratt & Associates, 1998, p. 17). These actions could include routines in starting a class, methods of evaluation, or techniques for gaining group involvement. Pratt cautions that actions, however, are not always indicative of underlying perspectives. As Pratt points out, “regardless of their perspective on teaching, teachers use a

variety of techniques, or methods, to help people learn. The choice of techniques usually depends on what they want to accomplish, and how familiar, or comfortable, they are with the technique.” Therefore behavior observed in the classroom may be misleading if one seeks to judge perspective solely from performance. Furthermore, observable actions may not always be indicative of underlying perspectives as individual teachers are sometimes constrained in their action by institutional or social forces (Kember, 1997; Pratt, 1992).

*Intentions* are statements made by teachers indicating the purpose of their work and answering the question, “What are you trying to accomplish?” (Pratt & Associates, 1998, p. 18). Intentions differ from instructional objectives in that objectives are usually described as specific behaviors, while intentions connote a deeper understanding of purpose and sense of direction in teaching. Statements of intention might include, “I want students to be able to think for themselves, so that they can be effective in the workforce” and, “I want students to develop a love of accounting, like I did.” Pratt (1992, 1998) stressed that teachers hold their intentions with conviction and are usually able to articulate them clearly.

*Beliefs* are the least flexible aspect of commitment and the most difficult to uncover. However, they are critical to understanding teachers’ perspectives as they represent underlying conceptions of knowledge, knowledge construction, what it means to learn, and what constitutes effective teaching. Pratt and Associates (1998) point out that individual beliefs are held in varying degrees with some being so dominant the teacher could not even conceive of questioning them. “The centrality of a belief is not necessarily a matter of logic or rationality but, more often, the extent to which the belief itself is not in question. When a belief is held without question, it acts as arbiter in determining whether intentions, actions, and even other beliefs, are reasonable and acceptable” (p. 21).

Types of beliefs manifested in Pratt's (1992, 1998) study by teachers include *epistemological beliefs*, or beliefs about knowledge, learning and its evaluation, *normative beliefs*, or those concerned with roles and responsibilities, and *procedural beliefs*, or those that help us understand how to use tactics and strategies. Together, these help shape our practice in teaching and influence everything from our choice of using a particular teaching method in a particular class to how we greet students in the hallway. Most important to teaching are beliefs about knowledge and learning. One's belief in knowledge as objective or subjective, and one's definition of what learning is – a change in content or a change in thinking or something else entirely - helps define one's underlying perspective on teaching.

Pratt's conceptualization of beliefs is consistent with other researchers, including Brookfield (1987). Brookfield referred to beliefs as *assumptions* and categorized them as: *causal*, *prescriptive* and *paradigmatic*. Like *epistemological beliefs*, *paradigmatic assumptions* are those most deeply held. They form the underlying structure for how we make meaning in the world, and will likely not be recognized as assumptions, but rather viewed as *reality* or "the facts we know to be true" (Brookfield, 1987, p. 2). *Prescriptive assumptions* are based on our *paradigmatic assumptions*, and tell us how things ought to be in a given situation. For example, if one believes that the teacher is always the expert and the learner a novice, then having students listen to a teacher lecture without questioning his/her ideas seems appropriate. These are similar to *normative beliefs* in that they help us define our roles and responsibilities as teachers. *Causal assumptions* are those teachers use to predict what will happen if they take a certain action, or behave in a certain way. Like *procedural beliefs*, they help teachers determine which methods to use in the classroom to achieve desired goals.

*The five perspectives.* Through his work, Pratt (1992) identified five distinct perspectives on teaching in adult and higher education. The five perspectives that emerged from Pratt's (1992) data are: *transmission*, *apprenticeship*, *developmental*, *nurturing*, and *social reform*. As Kember's (1997) framework reconceptualization includes Pratt's study, some of the labels suggested by Pratt (1992, 1998) are similar to those suggested by Kember (1997). Pratt and Associates (1998) have delineated the classification of these perspectives slightly differently than Kember (1997). Pratt also offers an additional perspective, the *social reform* perspective, not included in Kember's (1997) framework. It is important to restate Pratt's contention here that all perspectives are valid for the context in which they are created. Therefore, Pratt does not present perspectives in a hierarchical or other organizationally delineated form. Rather he delineates and describes perspectives according to the degree of attention teachers give to each of the components of his general teaching model. A summary of perspectives as proposed by Pratt and Associates (1998) and compiled by the researcher is presented in Table 1 below. This table represents the categorization of data from teachers from five countries and describes how they "see" teaching as suggested by Pratt (1992). This table outlines key beliefs of each perspective, the perspective's focus within the General Model of Teaching (see Figure 2), teacher roles and responsibilities, one's commitment in this perspective, where power resides according to the perspective, and common difficulties faced by the teachers holding this perspective.

In this study, Pratt (1998) found that divisions were evident in teachers' understandings of (a) the nature of knowledge as existing objectively or being constructed subjectively, (b) the role of rationality and cognition vs. relationship and affectation in learning, and (c) individual vs. society as the unit of focus in education. Pratt acknowledged

that teachers can hold more than one perspective on teaching. He also suggested that the dominant perspective may shift due to changes in educational context, changes in learners, or revised educational goals. Furthermore, he recognized that a teacher's use of individual teaching methodologies is not definitive evidence of his/her perspective as methodologies overlap perspective boundaries (Pratt & Associates, 1998).

After analyzing the data for his study on teaching perspectives, Pratt (1998) put forth five propositions for adult education:

1. There is no single, universal, best perspective on teaching adults.
2. Teaching is guided by one's perspective on teaching which is defined by actions, intentions, and beliefs regarding: (a) knowledge and learning, (b) the purposes of adult education or training, (c) appropriate roles, responsibilities, and relationships for instructors of adults.
3. Some of these beliefs are more central to one's being than others and, therefore, are less open to change.
4. Improvements in instruction can focus on actions (e.g., improving lectures), intentions (e.g. clarifying exactly what one wants to accomplish), or beliefs, (e.g., articulating what is taken for granted about learning).
5. Development as an instructor can mean improving current ways of teaching or it can mean challenging fundamental beliefs about instruction and/or learning (pp. 11-12).

Pratt does not claim that this is the only possible categorization for perspectives in teaching, or that this categorization is the only legitimate categorization. Certainly Kember (1997), with a reconceptualization of 13 studies, has contributed other framings to research in

Table 1

*Pratt's Perspectives* [as excerpted by the researcher]**TRANSMISSION PERSPECTIVE**

<b>Key Beliefs/ Focus within Model</b>	<b>Roles/ Responsibilities</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Power</b>	<b>Common Difficulties</b>
Stable body of knowledge exists, procedures must be reproduced by learners, instructional processes shaped and guided by the content, teacher's job to accurately represent that content and productively manage learning/teacher's content credibility is dominant	Content expert and skilled presenter/set standards, specify course objectives, provide well-organized lectures, correct errors	Deep respect for content: accurate, enthusiasm, encouragement to continue	"Under the table," power is located in knowledge/expertise of teacher, expressed as authority over decisions related to content and assessment of learning	Adjusting to individual differences, empathizing with people who cannot understand content, using content as security/protection against "difficult" learners, anticipating where (in content) and why learners will have difficulty, shifting roles

Table 1 (cont'd)

<b>APPRENTICE PERSPECTIVE</b>				
<b>Key Beliefs/ Focus within Model</b>	<b>Roles/ Responsibilities</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Power</b>	<b>Common Difficulties</b>
Expert knowledge is best learned in contexts of application and practice. Taking knowledge and wisdom from practice is to drain it from its most essential qualities/ dominant elements are context, content, and teacher	Role model and coach/ teach for transfer of learning, require learners to use knowledge, provide coaching	Role and identity as practitioner, standards of the community	“Craft” knowledge is power, role in community determines authority, teachers are gatekeepers to practice	Articulating craft knowledge, finding relevant and authentic tasks for classroom settings, teaching those who want quick access to practice

Table 1 (cont'd)

<b>DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE</b>				
<b>Key Beliefs/ Focus within Model</b>	<b>Roles/ Responsibilities</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Power</b>	<b>Common Difficulties</b>
Key to learning lies in finding effective “bridges” between present and desired ways of thinking and learner’s prior knowledge, use of content to develop thinking (line X)	Guide and co-inquirer/ assess or diagnose learner’s prior knowledge, adapt content to learners	Learner’s prior knowledge as starting point, desired ways of thinking as end point	Allowing teaching process to be influenced by learner’s prior knowledge, allowing assessment to have regard for learners’ ways of knowing	Letting go of being the expert, asking good questions, refraining from giving answers, developing assignments and tests that are consistent with this view of learning

Table 1 (cont'd)

<b>NURTURING PERSPECTIVE</b>				
<b>Key Beliefs/ Focus within Model</b>	<b>Roles/ Responsibilities</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Power</b>	<b>Common Difficulties</b>
A learner's self- concept is critical to learning/regard for learners' self- concept, concern for fidelity of relationship	Facilitator and friend, foster climate of trust/ respect, engage empathetically with individual needs, focus on learner's self- esteem, concentrate on feelings, focus evaluation on growth or process	Respect and nurture dignity and self- esteem of learner, pursue self-efficacy as the goal; achievement as the means	Use of learner's language, elimination of institutional or social title roles, avoidance of dependency, assessment of congruence between competence and performance	Assessing learning according to institutional expectations, setting boundaries between teaching and counseling, avoiding burnout, finding balance between challenging and caring, wanting (too much) to be liked

Table 1 (cont'd)

<b>SOCIAL REFORM PERSPECTIVE</b>				
<b>Key Beliefs/ Focus within Model</b>	<b>Roles/ Responsibilities</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Power</b>	<b>Common Difficulties</b>
Ideals and ideology have emerged to a position of dominance and centrality/ focus on moral, social or political imperative, ideal deemed appropriate for all and necessary for better society	Advocate for ideal/ authentically represent the ideal in words and actions, connect ideal with discussions, classroom, discipline	Ideal or ideology, collective social change rather than individual learning	Pressure to conform to ideal or ideology, positional authority and expertise vs. democratic facilitation	Including those who enrolled for content, responding to those who object to ideal, patience with learners who assume content to be value neutral

(excerpted by the researcher from Pratt, 1998).

this area. Pratt's categorization does, however, help us understand the wide range of possible understandings of what it means to be a *good* teacher from the viewpoint of the teachers (Pratt, 1992, 1998). What it does not do, and none of the studies included in Kember's review above do, is provide us with an understanding of how perspectives on teaching are shaped by the specific cultures in which they developed. This is an area for further research and a subject of this study.

### *Cultural Influencers of Perspectives on Teaching*

Adult education theory recognizes that our perspectives are derived from our social and cultural experiences (Pratt, 1992; Pratt & Nesbit, 2000). Our perspectives reflect our values, our experiences, our understandings of the world, and our reflections on that understanding and are grounded in the home, school and larger societal culture in which we are raised (Mezirow, 1990, 1991; Pratt, 1992). In fact, the role of culture is so integral to perspective formation that, as humans, we are not conscious of the extent to which these beliefs are shaped by the societies in which we grow up, by our role models, and by the power structures that exist in our countries of origin, in our schools, and in our homes. Rather, our beliefs, attitudes, values, and assumptions are often unconsciously and uncritically adopted as we grow and develop (Cranton, 1994; 1996; Mezirow, 1990).

### *Perspective Formation for Teachers*

For teachers, major influences on perspective formation are their experiences as learners (Taylor et al., 2001) and formal training as teachers (Berg et al., 2002). The on-the-job training teachers receive working with learners also influences their perspectives (Hativa, 2000). Taylor et al. (2001) utilized videos and field notes to trigger memory in six adult

education teachers and found that teachers react to their past experiences as learners. If the experience was positive, teachers will tend to recreate a similar classroom environment. If negative, teachers may actually “rebel” and try to consciously create environments the “opposite” of what they experienced. Berg et al. (2002) researched the effect of values learned during teacher training at the Model Education School at San Diego State University on teachers’ subsequent practice. Results indicated that even 15 years after graduating, teachers still espoused values promoted by the school such as a commitment to learning, academic rigor, and safety. Hativa (2000) recognized that although most teachers have strong subject content backgrounds, many lack formal training in teaching pedagogy. She demonstrated that teachers gained pedagogical knowledge through the “trial and error” of actual teaching practice (Hativa, 2000). “Trial and error” was based on reflection but was aided by student feedback and evaluations. These studies demonstrate that culturally-construed life experiences, including education, have a significant effect on perspective formation.

Research by Pratt conducted in 1992 cited in Pratt & Associates (1998) and Pratt et al. (1998, 1999) further illuminates the role of culture in the formation of teaching perspectives. As related to cultural aspects of perspectives, these studies demonstrate that (a) a variety of perspectives of teaching exist in the world, (b) these perspectives are valid for the cultural context in which they were developed and (c) it is possible to link specific cultural values to perspectives on teaching. Furthermore, these studies reveal that (d) because teaching perspectives are culturally-embedded, teachers who are observing and/or evaluating teaching in a culture different from their own may have difficulty understanding what is actually taking place in the teaching environment.

*Pratt, Kelly, and Wong*

*Cultural values of Chinese teachers in Hong Kong.* Pratt, Kelly, and Wong (1998) furthered understandings of the relationship between teaching perspectives and culture by studying how particular cultural values held by Chinese teachers of adults in Hong Kong shaped these individual's perspectives on teaching. Pratt et al. revealed that five principal relationships exist within Chinese society that shape an individual's viewpoint on teaching. Pratt et al. suggested that

1. the individual's role and identity are defined by one or more principal relationships;
2. social behavior is quite different, depending upon whether or not it occurs "within" or "outside" the bounds of one of the principal relationships;
3. these relationships are hierarchical, both within and between relationships;
4. social order and individual responsibility is defined and ensured through everyone honoring their part in the role relationships;
5. authority flows one way and is not contingent upon the benevolence of those with more power;
6. "heart" or a sense of caring and morality is, in part, enacted through fulfillment of one's responsibility and authority; and,
7. there is a high degree of consistency between socialization that takes place at home and the socialization processes of schooling. (Pratt et al., 1998, p. 6).

The specific principal relationships influencing Chinese teachers' perspectives are ruler and subject (government and citizen), father and son, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother, and the relationship between friends. Pratt et al. (1998) suggested that Chinese teachers identified themselves as behaving within these five relationships, primarily

in the father role. Furthermore, Pratt et al. found that the manifestations of Chinese teacher's values in the classroom were very different than manifestation of cultural values expressed in a Western classroom.

*Evaluation of teaching in Hong Kong.* In another study on evaluation of teaching in Hong Kong, Pratt, Kelly, and Wong (1999) reported striking differences in perceptions of teaching and learning between native faculty and students in Hong Kong and Western faculty teaching there. In this study, students and teachers were asked about (a) the goals for undergraduate teaching and learning; (b) qualities of effective teachers; and (c) factors that contribute to effective teaching/learning. Research was conducted through open-ended surveys and focus groups.

Responses from native faculty and students deepened Pratt et al.'s (1999) understandings of Hong Kong Chinese conceptions of teaching in higher education and are consistent with dominant cultural values of Hong Kong Chinese. However, Pratt et al. (1999) caution that these are not the only values expressed in teaching in Chinese Hong Kong, and that their research only provides a beginning to understanding Hong Kong Chinese conceptions of teaching (Pratt et al., 1999). Basic concepts expressed include:

- Effective teachers are experts in their discipline;
- It is very important to understand all of the basics in the discipline;
- One can only be an expert when he/she becomes one with the knowledge;
- Evaluation of learning consists of evaluating how well one knows these basics;
- Ultimately, privilege in society is granted through achievement. Achievement is recognized when one can demonstrate on a test that he/she has gained knowledge deemed to be essential in a particular field;

- Teachers have responsibility to take students “systematically” through a subject to insure that students gain knowledge;
- In helping students memorize information, teachers are expected to be critical and to point out weaknesses or errors. Thus students expect very little positive feedback from teachers;
- Memorization is not considered an end in itself; rather, it is the first stage of learning that eventually leads to understanding;
- Teachers must also demonstrate “heart,” or the ability to care about individuals inside and outside the classroom.

A comparison of responses from native and non-native (Western) faculty illuminated striking differences between perceptions of Hong Kong Chinese and Western faculty on all aspects of teaching and learning covered in the survey. Table 2 below summarizes these responses (Pratt et al., 1999, pp. 245-249). Differences in understandings of teaching as expressed by Western faculty and Hong Kong Chinese and reported in Table 2 suggest that Westerners might misunderstand what is actually taking place in a Chinese classroom. As Pratt et al. (1999) write:

For example, when westerners observe Chinese classrooms they see a teacher that is highly authoritarian, formal and even strict in manner, and an instructional process that is largely didactic. Chinese teachers appear to be the center of activity, concerned most of all about how well prepared they are and how well they can represent the text or subject matter. From this vantage point, Chinese students appear to be relatively passive, but on-task, as they attempt to record the teacher’s words and focus on their primary responsibility – preparation for examinations. It is our contention that we

would have different interpretations of this scenario, depending upon whether one was an insider (Chinese) or outsider (non-Chinese) to the situation (p. 17).

Findings and conclusions in by Pratt et al. (1999) further suggest that there is potential for misunderstanding in any situation in which individuals or groups holding one perspective attempt to understand or evaluate teaching conducted by teachers holding a differing perspective. Pratt cautions that an understanding anchored in multiple perspectives is critical for evaluation. “Each perspective on teaching is a complex web of actions, intentions, and beliefs; each, in turn, creates its own criteria for judging or evaluating right and wrong, true and false, effective and ineffective.” (Pratt et al., 1999, p. 35). Those individuals involved in formal evaluations of teaching should be mindful of the variety and validity of teaching perspectives so as to not judge teaching that might seem “different” as wrong.

Extended into teaching practice, studies by Pratt (1992) and Pratt et al. (1998, 1999) above also suggest that cultural aspects of perspectives may constrain a teacher’s ability to carry out roles that may or may not be consistent with the underlying perspectives that govern their teaching practice. For example, “for other adult educators, the role of facilitator might be at odds with their cultural traditions for a teacher, as, for example, in the case of a Chinese master teaching Tai Chi to Westerners” (Pratt & Associates, 1998, p. 3). Another example might be a Western teacher’s inability to see himself as an expert in charge of delivering content if s/he has come to believe that his/her role as a teacher is to facilitate.

The above findings of the studies by Pratt (1992) and Pratt et al. (1998, 1999) deepen our understanding of how cultures shape perspectives on teaching. If there is a

Table 2

*Differences in Perceptions About Teaching* [as excerpted by the researcher]

Subject	Hong Kong Chinese	Western Faculty
Role and value of foundational knowledge in undergraduate education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="553 390 992 506">▪ Foundational knowledge extremely important</li> <li data-bbox="553 537 992 726">▪ Teacher and text are most authoritative sources of knowledge.</li> <li data-bbox="553 758 992 936">▪ Students expected to reproduce knowledge as given by teachers or text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1024 390 1390 726">▪ Foundational knowledge in each discipline can change – therefore students need to learn to learn.</li> <li data-bbox="1024 758 1390 1230">▪ Students have primary responsibility for finding foundational knowledge – the teacher has a more important role in helping students understand how to apply knowledge.</li> <li data-bbox="1024 1262 1390 1524">▪ Rote memorization is not needed – in fact is “antithetical” to understanding.</li> </ul>

Table 2 (cont'd)

Subject	Hong Kong Chinese	Western Faculty
Appropriate roles and responsibilities of teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roles are consistent with Chinese society and are therefore hierarchical.</li> <li>▪ Effective teachers care about students as individuals, understand their difficulties, and guide them.</li> <li>▪ Students are responsible for giving teachers respect.</li> <li>▪ Balance between authority and “heart.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roles are defined by the institution. Teacher’s responsibility is to be consistent.</li> <li>▪ Relationships with students should be more egalitarian.</li> </ul>
Process of teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A teacher’s primary responsibility is to transmit information, in a structured manner, with a goal of helping students complete an examination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A teacher’s primary responsibility is to be a facilitator of learning.</li> <li>▪ Teachers encourage independent learning by providing general direction.</li> <li>▪ Teachers question and challenge students.</li> </ul>

Table 2 (cont'd)

Subject	Hong Kong Chinese	Western Faculty
Process of teaching  (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="558 401 992 653">▪ Teachers are expected to provide specific, critical feedback as students memorize information.</li> <li data-bbox="558 688 992 1020">▪ Students are only allowed to question information after they have memorized it, then understood it, then tried to apply it.</li> <li data-bbox="558 1056 992 1234">▪ Effective teachers adjust the pace of learning to student's needs.</li> <li data-bbox="558 1270 992 1449">▪ Teachers in class can be formal, outside of class more informal.</li> <li data-bbox="558 1484 992 1663">▪ Teachers should be concerned about student's entire lives, not just academic success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1062 401 1396 873">▪ Students should take an active role in learning by challenging the teacher, each other, and the text. Students should not be passive.</li> <li data-bbox="1062 909 1396 1161">▪ Learning environment is “psychologically safe” so that students can explore ideas.</li> </ul>

Table 2 (cont'd)

Subject	Hong Kong Chinese	Western Faculty
Characterization of Chinese learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pragmatic, sensible</li> <li>▪ Students understand they need to meet high expectations of teachers and parents.</li> <li>▪ Students are a product of Chinese society, and upbringing by parents. Teachers also have some parenting responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lazy, unwilling to work, don't know how to think, does not take responsibility for learning</li> </ul>
Responsibility for effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learners are responsible for their own learning, and for the teacher's effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers are mostly responsible for student learning with students sometimes sharing that responsibility.</li> </ul>

(excerpted by the researcher from Pratt, Kelly, & Wong, 1999, pp. 245-249).

primary, continuing, message from Pratt and his associates in publishing this research, it is that there is no “single, universal perspective on teaching adults” (1998, p. 3). We limit ourselves and the potential of our field when we believe and behave otherwise. These studies, however, considered participants from only five of the world’s many countries. Given this, considerable opportunities for research on the role of culture, specific cultural values, and cultural change in shaping teaching perspectives exist. The arena of teaching business and economics in post-Soviet Kazakhstan offers a new cultural context in which to extend our understandings of culture in relation to perspectives of teaching.

*A Changing Cultural Context - Soviet to Post-Soviet Kazakhstan*

The context of this study is business and economics education in Kazakhstan. To understand the current context for teaching in Kazakhstan more fully, it is important to understand how the cultural context in Kazakhstan has changed during the country’s transition from Soviet state to independent post-Soviet Republic. As Hossler, Liferov, and Kostikov (1994) suggest in describing changes in post-Soviet Russia:

It is impossible to discuss higher education change in Russia at the microlevel without an understanding of the broader political and economic reforms...The form and substance of change at the institutional level is influenced by the history, geographic location, mission, and strengths and weaknesses of each individual university, academy, or institute. The impetus for change, however, is impelled by these broader societal forces at work within Russia (pp. 60-61).

This section describes some of the social and cultural changes that have occurred in Kazakhstan since it became independent from the Soviet Union. It also describes the

environment for teaching in higher education in Kazakhstan prior to Kazakhstan's independence as well as the current context in which business and economics education occurs.

*An Overview of Change in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan*

Much has been written about the changes that have occurred following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. A Google search on the terms "Soviet," "post-Soviet," and "change" yielded over 900,000 results (11/01/06). National boundaries have changed, new governments have been formed, new political alliances forged, and people who once considered themselves Soviets are now trying to redefine their identities based on new national identities.

With the fall of the Soviet Union came great expectations that the post-Soviet republics would move quickly to adopt democracy and develop market economies (Akiner, 2003; Luong, 2002; Olcott, 2002a). As Akiner (2003) suggests:

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, there were many who cherished the same hopes for the Central Asian republics that had previously been held for the newly decolonized world of the 1950s, namely, that it would be possible to launch these states on a smooth process of cultural change, economic growth, and stable democracy.

As Akiner (2003) and others recognize, the transition to democracy for the republics of Central Asia has proved to be "far more complex" (p. 431). In contrast to some of the other republics in the former Soviet Union, including those in the Baltics and the CIS, the republics of Central Asia had not ruled themselves in hundreds of years (USAID, 2000a). And unlike

other Soviet Republics, including the Baltic States, Central Asian Republics had no history of democratic rule at the time the Soviet Union dissolved (Heyneman, 2004; Olcott, 2002a; USAID, 2000a).

Before being colonized by Russia, the area of Kazakhstan was inhabited by nomadic tribes of Turkic-mongol Kazakhs loosely organized in the 15<sup>th</sup> century into three *zhuzes*, or hordes, ruled by *khans*. In the mid-1700s, *khans* of the Small and Middle hordes swore allegiance to the Russian Tsar in exchange for protection against invading Mongols. In the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia forcibly conquered Kazakh lands, further blurring the distinctions between Russia and the Kazakhs (Olcott, 2002a, p.12). When Russia was transformed into the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan was swept along in the movement. In essence, the history of Kazakhstan in most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was entwined with the history of the Soviet Union.

Since 1991, Kazakhstan has been involved in the building a new nation. This process, as McLendon (2004) writes, “has witnessed enormous economic, political, and social change” (p. 276). Prior to 1991, almost all industries in Kazakhstan were state-owned and were operated to support the planned economy of the Soviet Union. Major industries in Kazakhstan included mining, heavy equipment, aerospace, agriculture, energy, and the development and testing of nuclear weapons. After independence, Kazakhstan focused on reorienting its economy to deal with the transition from a planned to a market economy. Toward this end, the country introduced a privatization program to promote social and economic reforms. By mid-1994, ownership of over 9006 enterprises had been changed, resulting in the privatization of almost 2000 enterprises and joint ownership programs for

another 2200 (Safavi, 1997).

Although the country initially suffered economically after independence, with inflation rising to 30% by 1994 (Safavi, 1997), Kazakhstan's economic indicators have now partially rebounded. With the energy sector driving economic development, Kazakhstan registered an impressive 9.3% increase in gross domestic product (GDP) in 2004, following a 9.1% in 2003 (Teshebayeva, 2005). Inflation also declined to 6.9% in 2004 (CIA, 2005).

Kazakhstan was the first Soviet republic to repay its debt to the IMF (US Dept. of State, 2005). As of June 2006, Kazakhstan was also selling 1.3 million barrels of oil a day and its banks were the largest private financial institutions in the former Soviet Union (Greenberg, 2006). Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has become a member of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Asian Development Bank (Safavi, 1997). The country also received \$1.2 billion in US government assistance from 1992-2005. Furthermore, Kazakhstan has inspired confidence in American companies, resulting in more than \$6 billion of investment since 1993 (US Dept. of State, 2005).

Unemployment has also declined from an official 2001 rate of 14% (CIA, 2002), with unofficial reports as high as 30% (Edwards, 2002) to a 2004 estimated official rate of 8% (CIA, 2005). Additionally, the official percentage of the population living below the poverty line has decreased from 26% (CIA, 2002) to 19% (CIA, 2005). Kazakhstan's economic achievements caused US Secretary of Energy, Spencer Abraham (2002), to remark at a conference about trade and investment in Kazakhstan:

The impressive progress Kazakhstan has made in developing new laws and new

governmental institutions to implement those laws has produced economic growth rates –an astounding 13.8% in 2001 – to be envied by any nation in the world. Energy has been the engine for this growth. This was true for the United States in the early twentieth century and it is true for Kazakhstan in the early twenty-first century. The next step is to build a diversified economy benefiting all sectors.

Since gaining independence from the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan has joined a number of new political alliances to increase stability and protect its sovereignty. These include the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Partnership for Peace, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Eurasian Economic Community (US Dept. of State, 2006). The government of Kazakhstan also renounced the world's 4th largest nuclear arsenal and closed the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site where about 500 nuclear explosions took place in Soviet times (Abraham, 2002).

Although Kazakhstan has been promoting itself as moving toward democracy, a number of critics suggest that the transition to a more pluralistic society is not proceeding as expected. Rather, critics contend that Nursultan Nazarbayev. The country's president and former communist party leader, maintains close control of the country's resources (Akiner, 2003; Olcott, 2002a). Akiner (2003) cites the 1999 Human Rights Report as follows "In Kazakhstan, members of the president's family control almost all media outlets, print and electronic; consequently, there is little opportunity to air independent views, particularly if they are critical of the incumbent regime (pp. 437-438). Under Nazarbayev's control, democratic freedoms have been curtailed and the process of decentralization of power

significantly derailed. As Olcott (2002b), noted authority on Kazakhstan, stated in remarks about Kazakhstan's "unfulfilled promise" at a Carnegie Endowment open forum:

Nazarbayev originally flirted with the idea of decentralizing power, of at least empowering local governments with a unitary system – empowering local governments through permitting their direct or indirect election of governors. And then we when he saw he didn't have to do this to maintain external credibility, and he didn't have to do this to maintain his internal power base, he really backed away from the position.

Or, as the 2006 Freedom House report summarizes:

The re-election of President Nursultan Nazarbayev in 2005, ensures that control over national and local governance as well as the judiciary will remain among the financial, business, political and even civil interest groups close to and/or loyal to the president, and will greatly limit the possibility for democratic development (p. 2).

In addition to slow progress on democratic reforms, Kazakhstan is challenged to deal with shifts in its social fabric and to continue to provide jobs and social benefits for its citizens. The Kazakh language is gaining use in education and government as the new official state language, yet many Kazakh citizens have not been formally trained in Kazakh. Russian is still utilized in business and has a special status as a language of "interethnic communication" (Ayupova & DeYoung, 1998, p. 1). Increased use of Kazakh is just one measure of an increase in Kazakh nationalism. Another is the emigration of large numbers of non-ethnic Kazakhs. Census data from 1991 suggests that the population was 40% Russian and 39% Kazakh. As DeYoung and Santos (2004) point out, Kazakhstan was "the only

former Soviet republic where the titular nation was a minority” (p. 73). Since independence, however, a radical demographic shift has occurred; almost 1 million people have emigrated from Kazakhstan with Russians, Germans, and Ukrainians accounting for most of the population loss (US Dept. of State, 2005). The Kazakhs are also rewriting their history to “legitimize the independent state” These new histories, based on the revival of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Khanates, suggest that treaties with Russia in 1731 and 1740 were, in fact, temporary alliances (DeYoung & Santos, 2004, p. 74).

There is also an increasing gap between rich and poor in Kazakhstan. As Olcott (2002a) notes, “Growing poverty is a national problem and severely depressed economic regions are found in every part of the country” (p. 197). UNDP reported in 2000 that “65% of the population lives below the poverty line of \$4 a day” and more than one-third of respondents to a 1999 study reported being unable to feed their families satisfactorily (Olcott, 2002a, p. 201). Rigi (2003) suggests that increasing poverty and a lack of employment opportunities has also led youth in the country to become disposed and increasingly turn to deviant behavior to cope with stress and frustration.

Other issues of increasing concern include deteriorating health care, environmental despoliation, a lack of funds to provide basic social services such as education and pensions, and corruption in the public sector (McLendon, 2004; Olcott, 2002a). Within this framework of national change, the field of education is also changing rapidly. Changes in Kazakhstan’s education system are discussed below.

*Teaching in Kazakhstan - University Education in the Soviet Period*

Before 1991, university curricula were organized by industry leaders and later by a variety of Ministries around communicating the information and developing the skills needed in mining, agriculture, engineering, and other primarily production-oriented specialties.

According to Heyneman (2004), under the Soviet Union “twenty-one different federal ministries – health, agriculture, industry, transport, etc. owned higher [education] institutions” (p. 4). Specialties taught at these universities were designed to meet the needs of the centrally-planned economy and keep the Soviet Union running efficiently (Heyneman, 2004). Teaching and learning programs within universities, colleges, and other post-secondary institutes were designed to create effective workers for particular industries. The number and types of specialists needed, even the number of teachers needed for each subject area, were decided at the State level rather than by any functioning market mechanism (Bilyalov, 1999).

Under this system, higher education teachers had relatively few curriculum and practice decisions to make in the classroom. Content was standardized within subject areas and was based on knowledge believed to exist independent of the learners. Effective teaching meant relaying information, primarily through lecture and according to an *uchebny*, or standardized curriculum, plan. Students had to then demonstrate that they had “received” that information by reciting what they had been told or by performing well on standardized tests (DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Landis, McDermott et al., 2000). “Equality” in education meant that one textbook per subject was allowed, pedagogy was uniform, and teachers were supposed to carry out the ideology of the State (Heyneman, 1997; Laporte & Schweitzer, 1994). An excerpt from the *Moscow News* (1973) under the section “Fundamentals of

Legislation of the USSR and Union Republics on Public Education” reads:

The purpose of public education in the USSR is to train highly-educated, comprehensively developed and active builders of communist society, reared on the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, in the spirit of respect for Soviet laws and socialist law and order, communist attitude to work, physically healthy and capable of successfully working in different areas of economic, social and cultural construction, actively participating in social and state activities, ready to selflessly defend their socialist Homeland, to preserve and augment her material and cultural wealth, protect and preserve nature. Public education in the USSR is called upon to ensure the development and the satisfaction of the cultural and intellectual requirements of the Soviet man (translated and reprinted in Zverez, 1983, p. 23).

All things *Western*, including western literature, were considered to be bourgeois and elitist. This literature was discouraged because it promoted relative comparisons not productive work (DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Landis, McDermott et al., 2000). Government officials, senior researchers, and others in charge of defining content and methods of practice in education were seen as experts not to be challenged, and independent thought and action on the part of individual teachers or students was discouraged. As stated by Shalva Amonashvili, a noted Russian educator, in 1998, “For 60 years all we did was fulfill and execute directives. Our teachers are brilliant executors, the likes of whom we won’t find anywhere else in the world. For in their heads sits an inspector who, although he may never come to the teacher’s classes, they always bear in mind” (Long & Long, 1999, p. 83).

Given its purpose, this system of education served Kazakhstan and the Soviet Union well. Literacy rates reached nearly 100% by 1991 and notable advances in literature and astrophysics were achieved (Bilyalov, 1999; DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Heyneman, 1994). Other benefits of the system included near universal basic education provided to grade eight, secondary education provided to fourteen to eighteen year olds, centralization of textbook creation and distribution, standardization of teacher training, and high standards for some subjects considered important for the economy such as mathematics and science (Laporte & Schweitzer, 1994). As Johnson (2004) states, “The Soviet period has left a powerful educational legacy in Central Asia.”

Critics of the Soviet system of education cite several weaknesses with implications for Kazakhstan’s nascent market economy (DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Heyneman, 1994; Laporte & Schweitzer, 1994). First, the Soviet education system forced students to choose a vocation during high school rather than allowing them to choose a vocation after taking college courses. Because they had to make a choice of vocation early in their lives, students were not able to more fully develop their interests before choosing what would seemingly be a lifelong career. Second, the system prepared participants for only one career and thus ignored career development. A corollary to this is that adult and continuing education programs that provided for the retraining of workers were virtually non-existent. These conditions restricted the ability of workers in outdated industries to find new jobs, and businesses in emerging industries to find trained workers. Third, exercise of political influence and power through the hiring of teachers for their political beliefs instead of their academic qualifications, promotion of access for children of party leaders over more

academically deserving students, and the selling of admissions, grades and diplomas, resulted in inequity to access in teaching and learning (DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Heyneman, 1994; Laporte & Schweitzer, 1994). According to its critics, the Soviet system of education left students unprepared to be effective workers in a competitive market economy because it did not provide students with important knowledge and skills they needed to be effective in 21<sup>st</sup> century businesses (Bilyalov, 1999; DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Heyneman, 1994; Laporte & Schweitzer, 1994; UNESCO, 1998). Topics such as business and management were not widely offered, and skills including the ability to think critically and make autonomous decisions were not widely encouraged (Smyth, 1998; UNESCO, 2000).

#### *The Current Environment for Business and Economics Education*

*Government support.* With the emergence of the nation as an independent state, the government of Kazakhstan has made attempts to change the educational system and has indeed made progress. Despite this progress, major government policy makers recognize that the education system still needs to be adjusted to a market economy:

Transition to a market economy and involvement in the economic world will require that our own economy is staffed with specialists properly trained in economic, financial, legal and other fields. These new specialists should be knowledgeable about the theory of economics, social economics and management, statistics, and municipal administration, marketing and commerce, finances and loans, accounting and auditing, labor economics and sociology, economical use of natural resources, inventory management and quality control of consumer goods, information management, and management information systems, cybernetics, and tourism

(UNESCO, 2000, p. 63).

To this end, Kazakhstan adopted a new Higher Education law in 1993 and a more comprehensive education law in 1999. These laws recognized the need to teach students more about Kazakh history, culture and language, and to develop education to an international standard as well as give more authority over curricula to individual schools and school districts. New programs in business and economic education were developed at state universities such as the Kazakh Academy of Management where almost 10,000 students were enrolled in 1994. Private universities, including the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP), the University of International Business (UIB), and the International Academy of Management (IAB) in Almaty developed undergraduate business and graduate MBA programs and were able to charge competitive rates for each MBA course.

Despite these developments, many of the weaknesses of the Soviet education system outlined above still persist. Students are still primarily prepared for one career and are asked to choose their specialty upon entering college. The practice of making admission decisions and inflating grades on the basis of political favors, ethnic preferences, and bribes are still common, particularly within state universities (Heyneman, 2002). Teacher salaries in Kazakhstan, as throughout Central Asia, are extremely low at about \$100 a month for full-time teachers at a private university and are often insufficient to provide support for a family (Destler, 2000; DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997). Consequently teachers often have a full-time and at least one part-time job. Lack of money within university budgets for copying, purchasing new materials, and providing resources often hinders teachers who would

otherwise adopt new methods. As an example, one faculty member at the UIB reported to the researcher in 2002 that she could not provide each student with a personal copy of the mid-term exam so that students could write answers on the tests and have the material to take home after grading for further study. Copying thirty exams (150 sheets of paper) was simply not allowed by her department.

*Donor support.* Because business education is a relatively new field in Kazakhstan, however, many teachers in this field lack understanding of internationally-recognized business subjects such as marketing, organizational behavior, finance, and even accounting under international practices (Bilyalov, 1999; Bollag, 1999; Heyneman, 1997; USAID, 2000a, 2004b). Many donor organizations have provided support to assist teachers in gaining the knowledge and skills they need to teach these new subjects, donor agencies including the United States International Development Agency (USAID), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the European Union, and their contractors, grantees, and partners such as ACDI/VOCA, the CARANA Corporation, the Eurasia Foundation, the Pragma Corporation, and Winrock International established train-the-trainer programs and train-the-professor programs to provide teachers with new content and teach them how to use new teaching methodologies (case studies, group discussions and role plays).

Starting in September 2000, the Pragma Corporation, the contractor managing USAID's SME Development Project in Kazakhstan, worked with local training institutions, including consultants and universities, and conducted train-the-trainer programs in accounting and general management topics for individual trainers (Pragma, 2001). In early

2001, the CARANA Corporation, a USAID contractor, started a *Resource Network for Economics and Business Education*, (later called “EDNET”) project in all five Central Asian Republics to help higher education teachers gain new knowledge and skills. CARANA offered workshops on developing case studies for teachers, conducted train-the-professor programs, and donated Visiting International Professors from the US and other CIS countries to select universities throughout Central Asia. A second project to continue support to business and economics universities was funded by USAID and implemented by CARANA starting in 2004. Other organizations, such as the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Project, have also invested considerable time in helping teachers gain needed skills such as critical thinking (Temple, 2000).

The government of Kazakhstan and the donor community have spent considerable time and money developing programs to increase content knowledge and improve methodologies with a goal of improving business and economics education in Kazakhstan (Edwards, 2002; UNESCO, 2000; USAID, 2000b). The approach of the Kazakh government and donor agencies is consistent with traditional faculty development strategies in use today. Or put another way:

The assumption is that if teachers have sufficient content knowledge, all they need to learn is a predetermined set of skills to be on the road to effective teaching. Teaching is thus conceived of as a politically neutral, skilled performance – setting objectives, leading discussions, giving lectures, asking questions, providing feedback, and so forth. Any values, beliefs, and commitments embossed in those actions go unexamined (Pratt & Associates, 1998, p. 16).

Yet, little has been done to understand the underlying perspectives that guide teaching in business and economics in Kazakhstan. Methods of improving the quality of teaching that focus only on teaching approaches, including methodology and content, may have little impact if the underlying perspectives guiding teaching are incongruent with the approaches (Kember, 1997; Pratt, 1992; Pratt & Associates, 1998; Pratt & Nesbit, 2000). Research by Pratt (1992) and Pratt et al., (1998, 1999) points out that teaching is never value neutral. Rather, it is shaped by intentions and beliefs that in turn shape teaching actions. And these intentions and beliefs are shaped by the societies in which they were developed. Pratt and Nesbit (2000) argue for an approach that allows teaching to be “theoretically grounded in social, cultural, economic and political conditions” that define teaching cultures, rather than focused solely on content and techniques. This study is being undertaken with that goal in mind – of bringing to light the larger context of teaching for business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan by examining the perspectives on teaching held by the teachers themselves, seeking to understand specific cultural underpinnings of this teaching, and by investigating how business and economics teachers understand the influence of cultural change on their teaching. It is against this backdrop of economic, political, and social change in Kazakhstan that this study was undertaken.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methods

Researchers in adult education, including Caffarella and Merriam (1999) and Pratt and Nesbit (2000) stress the need for adult education research which attends to the individual, but also considers the wider society in impacting the individual's understanding of phenomena. Caffarella and Merriam (1999) characterize this as *integrative* research. An integrative approach to research means conceptualizing learning in adulthood using a combination of two major lenses or frames, to include: (a) an awareness of individual learners and how they learn; and (b) an understanding of how the context shapes learners, instructors, and the learning transaction itself. It is this approach to research that they believe will be the most beneficial in advancing adult education. As Caffarella and Merriam (1999) stress:

While we are well aware of the challenges of studying adult education from this integrative perspective, we believe that accounting for both the individual learner and context of the learning offers the greatest potential for advancing our understanding of the complex phenomena of adult learning (p. 66).

Pratt (1992, 1998) and Pratt et al. (1998, 1999) have embarked on integrating individual and contextual lenses through their research on teaching perspectives. Pratt (1992, 1998) studied the perspectives of 253 teachers across five countries. Pratt et al. investigated Chinese conceptions of teaching (1998) and conducted an evaluation of teaching in Chinese Hong Kong (1999). This study extends this integrative research on teaching perspectives into a new context and new country by examining how business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan understand teaching in a country that has undergone tremendous social and

cultural change since it gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. This study also attends to a new contextual element not addressed by Pratt (1992, 1998) or Pratt et al. (1998, 1999) – the role of cultural change in influencing teaching perspectives.

As described in chapter two, the concept of cultural change that guides this study defines cultural change as (a) change in the cultural contexts in which individuals work and live, including changes in the social relations and practices in which they find membership (Geertz, 1973), or (b) change in the interpretations people use to make sense of their experiences. These changes can include shifts in beliefs, actions, values, interpretations, and rituals that guide teachers' actions and affect meaning making. In pursuit of this integrative research agenda, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What are the current perspectives on teaching held by business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan?
- What do these teachers perceive as influencing their perspectives on teaching?
- How do these perspectives on teaching manifest in practice?
- How do teachers understand the cultural changes taking place in Kazakhstan as related to their teaching?

This chapter describes the research design used to frame this study and the methodology used to conduct it, including participant selection, data collection and analysis, and the methods of increasing trustworthiness of design and results.

### *Research Design - Phenomenography*

Through this study, participants were encouraged to examine their perspectives on teaching, how these perspectives were shaped, and how these perspectives guided their

teaching practice. They were also asked to discuss teaching in light of cultural changes occurring in Kazakhstan. As this study sought to understand the phenomena of teaching and cultural change from the teachers' perspectives, it was situated in the frame of *phenomenography* (Kvale, 1983; Marton, 1994; Pratt, 1992) and, in a broader sense, in the qualitative genre of research.

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research does not seek to predict or explain phenomena in discrete terms. Rather than accept that there are certain positivistic truths, qualitative research deals with “multiple socially constructed ‘realities’ or qualities that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables” (Glesne, 1999, p. 5). Through qualitative research, adult educators seek to understand how individuals make meaning in their lives, and thus understand their perspectives. The lens of qualitative research is naturalistic, interpretive, and subjective, with the researcher acting as a primary instrument.

Phenomenography is “the empirical study of the limited number of qualitatively different ways in which various phenomena in, and aspects of, the world around us are experienced, conceptualized, understood, perceived, and apprehended” (Marton, 1994, p. 4425). As a type of qualitative research, phenomenography involves an attempt to reach “the lived world” (Kvale, 1993, p. 184). Or, Ashworth & Lucas (1998) suggest, phenomenography must be “sensitive to the individuality of conceptions of the world – it must be grounded in the lived experience of its research participants” (p. 417). What matters, therefore, in phenomenography, is that phenomena are described as thoroughly as possible, from the viewpoint of those doing the describing. According to Pratt who conducted his 1992 study on teaching perspectives using a phenomenographical approach:

Phenomenography is a method for describing qualitatively different ways in which people understand or conceptualize an aspect of their world. It moves beyond individual, idiosyncratic understanding of a phenomenon (teaching) to provide a general map of the qualitatively different ways in which the phenomenon is understood” (p. 205).

Phenomenography emerged from studies of university students in Sweden in the early 1970s. In these studies, researchers sought to understand how students perceived the concept of learning (Ashworth & Lucas, 1998). According to Marton and Pong (2005), each concept has two aspects: a *referential* aspect “i.e. a particular meaning of an individual object (anything delimited and attended to by subjects)” and a *structural* aspect. “i.e. – the combination of features discerned and focused upon the subject” (p. 336). In traditional phenomenography, data analysis is conducted in two stages with the goal of capturing both the referential and structural aspects of the phenomena in an *outcome space* or hierarchical depiction of the possible conceptions (Marton, 1994).

Not all phenomenographical research concludes with an ordered hierarchy of conceptions, however. Indeed Pratt’s (1992, 1998) conclusions that all perspectives can be considered “good” teaching suggests that such a hierarchy is not appropriate to describe all conceptions of teaching. This idea is supported by Bradbeer, Healey, and Kneal (2004) who found that conceptions of geography did not fit in an ordered hierarchy. “In many phenomenographic studies, the conceptions that emerge form a hierarchy, with later and more sophisticated conceptions subsuming the earlier and less sophisticated ones...this is not strictly the case with the conceptions of geography” (p. 22). Ashworth and Lucas (1998) also

question the extent to which the goal of creating distinct, hierarchical categories allows for accurate representations of individuals' conceptions of teaching and learning. The goal of this study was to investigate teachers' perspectives on teaching and cultural change. Like Pratt (1992), I did not assume that one perspective on teaching would be of a higher order, or that participants' understandings of teaching or cultural change as related to teaching would be logically related to each other with an "ideal authorized conception at the apex" (Ashworth & Lucas, 1998, p. 428).

This study could be further characterized as exploratory in nature. Exploratory research is used to investigate little understood phenomena, to identify or discover important categories of meaning, and to generate hypotheses for future research (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 33). In exploratory research, the researcher's outlook is essentially *interpretivist* – "interpretivists... regard their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them" (Glesne, 1999, p. 5).

In-depth interviews were used in this study as the primary source of information, with questions structured to help the researcher learn more about teachers' understandings of what it means to teach. Interviews are a common technique in qualitative research and particularly useful in phenomenography (Kvale, 1983; Marton, 1994). Through in-depth interviews, the subjects themselves can describe how they understand the world.

### *Study Phases*

This study was conducted in two phases. The first phase, a pilot study, "Breathing out: Perspectives of Management Faculty in Kazakhstan" was conducted from June 2002 until September 2002 in order to help refine the research proposal for this study. Pilot studies

are useful for testing aspects of the proposed research and to inform the researcher about the topic (Glesne, 1999). Permission to conduct pilot research was obtained from the NC State IRB in June 2002 following submission of an IRB application. Approval to conduct the main study, or second phase, was obtained in October 2002. Data for the second phase of the study was gathered between June 2003 and July 2004. Similar procedures for participant sampling, data collection and analysis, and controlling for validity were used in both phases of the study. An overview of each phase is described below. Any methodological differences between phases are also noted below.

*Pilot Study.* The pilot study investigated actions, intentions, and beliefs (Pratt, 1992) of teachers in Kazakhstan. The pilot study did not address specific issues of culture and cultural change as related to teaching perspectives. During the pilot phase of the study, fifteen teachers in Kazakhstan participated in semi-structured interviews guided by questions suggested by Pratt's 1992 study on teachers and Pratt et al's (1998) follow up work, *The Five Perspectives* (see Table 1).

Each participant in the pilot study received a copy of the informed consent form in the Russian language (Appendix A) prior to interviews. To protect participant anonymity, participants were asked to give their verbal consent after reading the consent form rather than signing the informed consent form. These teachers completed Interview #1 (see Appendix C) during the pilot phase. Data in the pilot study was initially analyzed using the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Glesne, 1999). The themes emerging from the data in the pilot study suggested the roles that teachers in post-Soviet Kazakhstan saw themselves in, the actions they utilized in the classroom, and some beliefs participants' held

about teaching and learning. Data from the pilot study also suggested that teachers in Kazakhstan faced complex challenges. Although participants in pilot study did mention some of the changes taking place in Kazakhstan in their interviews, data on cultural change was not sufficient to allow themes or categorizations to be generated. Participant responses, however, suggested the impact of cultural change on teaching as a topic in the study.

*Second Phase.* The second phase of the study, the main study, began in October 2002 when the research proposal was accepted. Phase two of the study explored teachers' perspectives as well as their understandings of changes taking place in Kazakhstan and the influence of these changes on teaching. An updated IRB form was submitted to NC State in January 2003. The Informed Consent Form (Appendix A) was updated to reflect the new issues of culture and cultural change to be examined in the study. In-depth interviews for phase two were conducted between June 2003 and July 2004. Four of the original pilot study participants dropped out or could not be reached to participated in phase two. Three new participants were recruited in phase two using snowball, or referral sampling. All participants received updated Informed Consent Forms in the Russian language (Appendix A) and were asked to give their verbal consent prior to being interviewed in phase two. Participants continuing from the pilot study completed Interview #2 in phase two. New participants recruited in phase two completed both Interview #1 and Interview #2 in phase two. Sixteen of the seventeen interviews conducted in phase two were completed between June and July of 2003; one was conducted in July 2004 when I was able to reconnect with a pilot study participant who could not schedule Interview #2 before I left Kazakhstan in July 2003.

### *Participant Selection*

Participation in this study was voluntary; no teachers wishing to participate were excluded. Of primary importance was a willingness of teachers to participate in interviews. This is discussed further under *data collection* below. Participants in the pilot phase were chosen through a purposeful sampling method (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Patton, 1990) so as to select cases that had potential for rich data. These participants were chosen because:

1. They were teachers of subjects in the business and economic disciplines in a higher education or other adult education setting in Kazakhstan; and,
2. They indicated a willingness to participate in the study.

*Pilot study.* Participants in the pilot study were primarily recruited from faculty who were teaching in 2002 in the business and economics programs at the University of International Business (UIB). Marshall and Rossman (1995) suggest that qualitative researchers should choose sites and populations where

- (1) entry is possible; (2) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest are present; (3) the researcher is likely to be able to build trusting relationships with the participants in the study; and (4) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured (p. 51).

I recruited teachers from UIB because I felt that by working with this group I could meet each of the conditions above.

Of import, I had entry into the population of business and economic teachers at UIB. I had served as a teacher in UIB's Masters of Business Administration (MBA) program from

September 2001 until June 2002 and as Dean of the MBA program at UIB from October 2001 through mid-September 2002. In these capacities, I worked closely with five of the teachers who joined the study. The Rector of the university was also aware that I was conducting the study. She gave me her verbal approval to solicit teachers' participation and her assurance that the administration would not try to find out who was participating or what they said during the interviews. Second, working with participants from UIB offered me the opportunity to gather rich data from teachers with varied experiences and skills. I was interested in understanding how business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan understand teaching in the face of cultural change. In 2002, UIB was one of the country's leading business and economics schools; over forty teachers were then teaching in nine specialties. Because UIB was a leading school, its administrators chose teachers they believed were well qualified and would deliver a high-quality education. Most of the teachers at the school had Master's degrees; a few held doctorates. Many of them worked outside the university before becoming a teacher and several had traveled to the US for training or a formal degree program. These teachers had much to share from their work and overall life experiences. Thirdly, it is my belief that, through my work at UIB, teachers there developed enough trust in me to be able to discuss their teaching openly without fear of reprisal. Finally, because UIB was a leading business and economics school, its teachers were among those most likely to understand, and thus be able to discuss, what it means to be a business and economics teacher in Kazakhstan.

To find initial participants for the pilot study, I distributed a flyer about the study to approximately forty full and part-time teachers in the undergraduate business and economics

program at UIB. I then followed up by asking, independently and through a translator, if these teachers were interested and willing to participate in the study. As Dean, I was responsible for supervising teachers who taught in the graduate-level MBA program. During the pilot phase, to avoid a conflict of interest between my job as Dean and my role as the researcher for this study, I focused on recruiting undergraduate-level teachers at UIB. Nine undergraduate teachers at UIB agreed to be participants and gave verbal consent for their participation. Those who declined to participate in the study and bothered to give a reason cited lack of time, and not lack of trust, as the reason for not participating. One contract teacher who was teaching marketing to a group of teachers at UIB; one economics teacher doing research at UIB; and the former Dean of the undergraduate program, a teacher herself, also agreed to participate in the study after receiving an information flyer.

Three other pilot phase participants were chosen through snowball or referral sampling. In snowball sampling, the researcher “obtains knowledge of potential cases from people who know people who meet research interests” (Glesne, 1999, p. 29). Staff members at UIB, student interns, and teachers who participated in the survey were asked to recommend teachers in business and economics programs in Kazakhstan whom they thought might be interested in participating in a study on teaching perspectives. Three teachers from the Kazakhstan Institute of Management under the President (KIMEP), another leading private business and economics school in Almaty, were suggested as potential participants. Like UIB’s teachers, KIMEP’s teachers had varied life experiences to bring to the study. All had advanced degrees, had studied in the United States, and were chosen to teach in a well-respected business and economics program. Although I had not been working directly with

the KIMEP and the proposed teachers suggested as participants, and therefore had not established a trusting relationship with them, I felt confident in approaching them based on the recommendations. Through a translator, I described the study to these teachers via email and by phone and offered to send more information. After receiving the flyer, all three teachers agreed to participate in the pilot phase of the study. In-depth interviews for the pilot study were conducted between June and September 2002.

*Second Phase.* The research proposal for this study was accepted in October 2002. Between May and July 2003, I made attempts to engage all 15 teachers who participated in the pilot study in the second phase of the study. One pilot participant declined to participate, citing scheduling overload. Despite repeated attempts, I could not reach three other pilot participants by phone or email during the second phase. These participants had either left the universities where they were teaching in 2002, or were not in Almaty when I conducted interviews during the summer 2003 interview period. In total, two original participants from UIB and two from KIMEP dropped out of the study. Eleven of the original pilot study participants continued into phase two of the study.

During summer 2003, I recruited three additional teachers for the study using snowball sampling (Glesne, 1999), with referrals coming from those who participated in the pilot phase of the study. After receiving a flyer, two additional teachers from UIB and one additional teacher from KIMEP agreed to participate. By the time I conducted research interviews in 2003, I was no longer Dean of the MBA program at UIB; I left UIB in fall 2002 to become the Chief of Party [Project Director] of USAID's EdNet project. EdNet assisted business and economics teachers in Central Asia in improving their teaching skills and

content knowledge. Through one of its programs, EdNet offered graduate-level training to business and economics teachers at EdNet Academies in four countries. In the Academy, teachers were expected to perform academically and were given grades toward certificates. Because I had real and perceived power over the EdNet Academy selection processes and over problem resolution in the Academy, I excluded any teachers who were then studying in the Academy from participation to avoid a conflict of interest.

### *Description of the Participants*

Eighteen university-level teachers of subjects related to business and economics completed at least one interview in contribution to a pilot and second phase of the study. Demographic information about each participant is provided in Table 3 to enhance the reader's understanding of the individuals that made up the group. All data represented in the table are self-reported by participants on the Demographic Survey sheet (Appendix B). When they joined the study, participants were assigned a random four-digit number. Interviews were recorded and data was coded using each participant's assigned number. Personal information, including name and contact information for each participant was kept separate from participant numbers so as to avoid data correlation and protect participant confidentiality. Participants are identified by their pseudonyms in Table 3.

As depicted in Table 3 above, the average number of years of full-time teaching experience per participant in the group, as of the time each participant completed Interview #1, was 8 years. However, teaching experience varied considerably between the six participants who started teaching before Kazakhstan gained its independence and the 12 who started teaching after 1991. The group that started teaching before 1991 averaged 17.6 years

Table 3

*Summary of Selected Participant Demographic Data*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Year started teaching</b>	<b># of years of full-time teaching experience at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Degrees held at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Courses taught</b>	<b>Countries outside Kazakhstan where teacher participated in training related to teaching</b>
Botagoz	F	1974	29	B	Money and Banking, Credit	USA
Vera	F	1975	27	Candidate	Sociology	USA
Alfiya	F	1977	8	B	English and Kazakh	
Olga	F	1982	20	B	Production, economics, organizational behavior	

Table 3 (cont'd)

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Year started teaching</b>	<b># of years of full-time teaching experience at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Degrees held at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Courses taught</b>	<b>Countries outside Kazakhstan where teacher participated in training related to teaching</b>
Galya	F	1983	14	B, Candidate	Banking	Russia
Balzhan	F	1989	8	B, Ph.D.	Philosophy, History of Culture	Hungary, Russia, USA
Alexey	M	1995	7	B, Candidate	Marketing, Management	Russia
Lyzzat	F	1998	4	B	Financial Analysis	
Gulmira	F	1998	4	B	Business English	
Vladimir	M	1998	4	B (2)	Marketing, Operations	Italy, Russia

Table 3 (cont'd)

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Year started teaching</b>	<b># of years of full-time teaching experience at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Degrees held at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Courses taught</b>	<b>Countries outside Kazakhstan where teacher participated in training related to teaching</b>
Karlygash	F	1998	4.5	B, post graduate work	Corporate Finance	
Aigul	F	1999	3	B	Finance, Taxation	
Boris	M	2000	1.5	B (2)	Business Ethics, Diplomacy	Russia
Asel	F	2000	2	B, M (2)	Economics, Public Finance	Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, USA
Mariya	F	2000	3	B, MBA, Ph.D. Study	Economics (various)	Russia, USA

Table 3 (cont'd)

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Year started teaching</b>	<b># of years of full-time teaching experience at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Degrees held at time of 1<sup>st</sup> interview</b>	<b>Courses taught</b>	<b>Countries outside Kazakhstan where teacher participated in training related to teaching</b>
Aliya	F	2000	3	B (2)	Philosophy, History of Culture	
Marat	M	2001	2.5	B, MBS	Corporate Finance, Financial Accounting	USA
Asem	F	2002	1	B, MBA	Accounting	

Key to section on degrees: B=Bachelor's Degree, M=Master's Degree, MBA= Masters in Business Administration, MBS=Masters in Business Science, Number of degrees held in the category is indicated in (s).

of teaching experience compared with an average of 3.2 years of teaching experience for those who started teaching after independence.

Approximately one-half of the participants had earned bachelors degrees at the time they completed Interview #1. Four had earned one, or more, master's degrees. Six had participated in post-graduate study although only three of these had obtained a candidate, or doctoral, degree. Ten of the participants reported traveling outside of Kazakhstan to participate in formal training to improve their teaching or to pursue a degree. The remaining eight participated in training related to their teaching inside Kazakhstan.

### *Profiles of Individual Participants*

Individual participant profiles are included here to help the reader gain contextual knowledge of the teachers who have graciously shared their understandings and experiences for this study. To maintain anonymity, each participant's name has been changed to a pseudonym. The pseudonyms have no special meaning in themselves. In addition to a pseudonym, I have assigned a descriptive name or phrase to each participant to help the reader gain more insight into the individuals in the study. This description is based on my interactions with, and impressions of, each participant during our interactions. Four teachers completed the first interview only. These include:

*Mariya – inspiring others (1st interview only).* Mariya completed some of her PhD study in the U.S. before returning to teach in Kazakhstan. Her mother is a scientist and her father was a teacher and musician; she felt both influenced her life. When we met she had been teaching full-time for three years. During the interview, she reported that she had been a student in many different places and “so many schools in different countries: Kazakhstan,

Russia, United States,” and that these experiences had shaped her teaching. She repeatedly talked about wanting to inspire and help others.

*Asel – the resource (1<sup>st</sup> interview only).* This young female teacher completed one Master’s degree in finance in the U.S and a second one in Kazakhstan. When we met, Asel had been teaching for two years at the university where she had completed a second master’s degree in economics and was completing a PhD. At the time of the interview, she was working with graduate students. During the first interview, she repeatedly talked about being a resource for her students, as a favorite professor had been for her and other students while she was studying in the U.S.

*Gulmira – helping others speak (1<sup>st</sup> interview only).* Gulmira had seven years of teaching experience when we met, split between grade school and the university. When she completed the first interview, she was teaching English language to business students and helping them learn specific words and phrases used in business. To prepare for teaching, she majored in English as an undergraduate; she also took courses in pedagogy and participated in an internship program during her undergraduate program. Her non-teaching work experience in English language was limited to some short-term work as a translator. She had never studied or worked in an English-speaking country. This teacher participated in the first interview in 2003, but then left the university, and I was unable to reach her for a second interview.

*Alfiya – the ambassador (1<sup>st</sup> interview only).* Alfiya also taught language; she had eight years of experience teaching English and Kazakh when I first interviewed her. She held a bachelor’s degree from a Kazakh university. Her father was a teacher and she reported that

he influenced her life greatly. After seeing a film about a female Ambassador from Russia who had met Hitler, she wanted to be a consul or ambassador. Her father told her that only people who studied in Moscow or Almaty could become Ambassadors but forbade her to go to Almaty to study. In defiance, she ran away from home to go to school. Her father found her through the KNB (the Kazakh equivalent of the KGB) one month later and brought her home. She pursued a teaching career instead of becoming an ambassador. Still, she reported counseling her students to be good ambassadors saying, “You may not respect me, but you should respect yourself because you will represent this country. You should be a patriot of this country.”

Fourteen teachers completed both Interview #1 and Interview #2. These were:

*Alexey – the reluctant teacher.* Alexey, a middle-aged male teacher stated very clearly, “I never wanted to be a teacher.” Many of his family members had been contract military servants for the Soviet Army; being a soldier was this participant’s early profession as well. While he was serving in Germany, he realized that if he did not leave the army, he would be sent to fight in Afghanistan. He quit the Army against his family’s wishes and was given a teaching job by an acquaintance that worked at a university near his home. By the time we met, he had been teaching marketing and tourism for about 5 years, had completed work on his candidate’s degree, and was hoping to finish his dissertation. He had also participated in courses in accounting and economics on a continuing education basis. When interviews were conducted, he reported having a “Moscow mentality.”

*Marat – the idealist.* Marat obtained his MBA in the U.S. and returned to Kazakhstan to find a job. When we met he had two and one-half years of experience teaching corporate

finance and accounting. During our interview, he relayed a story about failing 60 students in a class for not studying. He taught this particular class at a State university where he said it was common for students not to study. Although the administration tried to convince him to change the grades so that they would not lose revenue from failing students, he refused to sign false documentation. During the interviews, he told me that he liked teaching. However, he left university teaching shortly after the second interview to take a job as an instructional designer for an oil company in Kazakhstan so that he could build a consulting career.

*Karlygash – the facilitator.* I first noticed Karlygash in one of my faculty development seminars where she attended as a participant. She had completed graduate work in Kazakhstan and had been teaching for four and one-half years when she first interviewed. The Rector of the University later asked her to help coordinate faculty development as part of a larger strategic planning exercise for the University. Although her background is in banking, she originally started teaching because she was studying corporate finance while working and wanted to finish her dissertation. She thought studying while teaching would make her life easier. Her teacher encouraged her to become a lecturer's assistant, or junior teacher. In discussing her style, she distinguished herself from other teachers by saying, "I'm not a person who gives knowledge; I'm a facilitator who can help students to open their new talents maybe and to be more creative." When we completed a second interview in 2003, she had left the university and was working as a trainer for a private training firm.

*Aigul – vicarious dreamer.* Aigul, a young female teacher, had been teaching finance and taxation for three years by the time we first met. She was unmarried, had completed a bachelor's degree, and was trying to finish a dissertation. While she expressed a desire to

share knowledge as a reason to teach, I was struck by a phrase she used early in our first interview, “I like it that I have the opportunity to share my knowledge and ideas with the students. Probably they will realize some of my dreams.” Throughout the interview I realized that she wanted students to realize their dreams, because she had not yet realized hers.

*Balzhan – the visionary.* Balzhan holds a doctorate of philosophy from a Kazakh University and a candidate of science designation in ethnography from a university in Russia. She had been teaching since 1989, primarily in the subjects of philosophy and history of culture. Her full-time teaching experience then totaled eight years. We met when I was Dean of the MBA program. Shortly after my arrival, she was recruited to serve as Dean of the Undergraduate program at a local university. She said that because her doctorate was in philosophy and not business, many of the professors in the undergraduate program initially refused to acknowledge her authority as dean. However, she persisted and was successful in implementing new programs at the university to increase the use of student-centered learning methods. She resigned her administrative position at the university between the first and second interview but continued teaching and promoting education in Kazakhstan. As she stated, “I want to teach all my life.”

*Vladimir – the trainer.* Vladimir differed from other participants in that he primarily teaches as an independent contractor through his own marketing training business. He holds two bachelor degrees and has also participated in training in sales and services marketing courses outside Kazakhstan. I interviewed Vladimir when he was teaching marketing to teachers of undergraduates at the university where I worked. He thinks of himself as a trainer, more than a teacher, because, as he put it, “I didn’t take special courses on how to

teach and I don't have enough experience as a teacher." He also stated, "I think I have enough practical experience and...I have the knowledge students need to get." He saw himself as a change agent.

*Aliya – the philosopher.* Aliya, a young female teacher, had three years of full-time teaching experience during the study, she taught culture and philosophy to undergraduate business students. As of the time she interviewed, She held two bachelor's degrees at the times of the interviews and had also participated in two in-service teacher-training programs, both held in Kazakhstan. I met her when she participated in a faculty development seminar. I had the opportunity to observe Aliya in class one day and was impressed that she was trying to reduce conflict between Russian Orthodox and Kazakh Muslim students in her class by teaching her students about comparative religion, focusing on the elements common to many of the world's religions.

*Galya – regular gal.* When we first started talking, Galya had 14 years of full-time teaching experience to her credit. She has a bachelor's degree in economics that she earned in Russia at the only pedagogical school of its type in Russia. The university where she studied trained economists to teach in colleges. During her undergraduate study, her coursework included pedagogy and methods of teaching. After getting her undergraduate degree, she continued study and obtained a candidate degree (*aspirantura*) after defending her dissertation in Moscow. During this study she also took teaching courses including psychology and methodology of teaching. While teaching, she has participated in additional training in banking and finance in Kazakhstan. I first met her through my work at the university. I assigned the phrase "Regular Gal" to Galya because it seemed to me that she

typified many teachers I met in Kazakhstan who earned their degrees under the Soviet system and consider themselves to have a Soviet mentality.

*Botagoz – the shopkeeper.* Botagoz, an older female, had 28 years of full-time teaching experience when we met. She earned a degree in economics in Kazakhstan, and also participated in continuing education in banking in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and the U.S. Her area of focus was money, credit, and banking. After obtaining her bachelor's degree, she worked in banking. She especially enjoyed working with interns and explaining how the credit system worked. As she put it, "This is where my desire to teach came from." She started teaching at the college level while completing her candidate qualifications and stayed to work at the university after completing her dissertation. Although she had not lived in a capitalistic society, she taught *Money and Credit in the U.S.S.R.* and *Money and Credit During Capitalism*. I first met her when I was teaching faculty development courses at the university and she was a participant. When we met, she was one of the more experienced teachers at the university. She also ran her own retail business, a small convenience store that she opened in 1992.

*Vera – the actress.* As of the first interview, Vera teacher had 27 years of teaching experience, primarily in political science, religion, and sociology. She held a candidate of science degree from a Kazakh university. She initially wanted to be an actress, but changed her career to teaching after she did not pass the entrance exam to the Institute of Cinematography in Russia. During her career as a teacher, she realized that being a teacher is like being an actor, "A teacher is in front of people, everyone listens to him. That's why I liked it at the beginning." However, she also realized that being a teacher was different,

“After some time I realized that I can somehow influence my students. This is how I became a professional and good teacher.” At 34 years of age, she was finally admitted to the Institute of Cinematography, but she did not stay long. In her words, “After studying there for three months, I left this institute. I understood that I’m a true teacher.” I met her when we were both teaching at the same university.

*Olga – the patriot.* When I met her, Olga had approximately 20 years of teaching experience. She studied during the Soviet period and was identified as a good student when she completed her undergraduate degree. As such, she was asked to stay at the university and become a teacher. Both of her parents were teachers and their styles of teaching influenced hers. She told me that during the transition from the Soviet period she had an opportunity to quit teaching and go into business. She decided to keep teaching because the Dean of her department reminded her that teaching was for the benefit of society and being patriotic is very important to her.

*Asem – the experienced novice.* When we met, Asem had only completed one year of full-time teaching experience. However, she had eight years of practical experience in accounting and work in the financial sector to bring to the position. She also had completed a master’s degree in Kazakhstan. Her goal in teaching was to help prepare students to be effective in the sectors aligned with her own practical experience. She had participated in courses to update her accounting knowledge, but had never taken courses in teaching methods. While she clearly recognized the value of her content knowledge, she also said she was struggling to find the best teaching methods to apply in her courses in order to keep the course interesting for students.

*Boris – nation builder.* Boris, an older male teacher was, in his words, “sent” to teach in a professional school after completing his bachelor’s degree from the University. However, he only stayed one semester because he was asked to teach subjects outside his specialty and didn’t like the experience. He became a career diplomat who worked in several countries outside Kazakhstan. In this role, he completed a second bachelor’s degree. When Kazakhstan first became independent, he returned to the country to help establish the first Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the new government. He retired from his diplomatic career and started teaching to continue working. He had been teaching part-time for three years when we met. Although he has no formal training as a teacher, he taught diplomacy, negotiations, and ethics based on his extensive work experience. He believed strongly in the value of promoting his country.

*Lyzzat – the protégé.* Lyzzat, a young female teacher, had been teaching full-time for three years and part-time for two years when she participated in the study. When we met, she was primarily teaching financial analysis. As a junior teacher, she was only able to help students with practical sessions, or seminar; only senior teachers with more than five-six years of teaching experience or a candidate degree were able to deliver lectures to students. Prior to being a student at university she had no previous teaching experience. She was chosen to teach based on her knowledge of the subject gained through her bachelor’s study.

### *Data Collection*

During this study, the primary method of data collection was through two semi-structured in-depth interviews (see Appendices C and D). Participation in the setting, participant observation, and the researcher’s field notes were also used as data sources and

will be discussed below.

### *Interviews*

Interviews are used in qualitative research to gather information on the participant's life from his/her perspective. As outlined by Kvale (1983), qualitative interviews can be understood from the following characteristics:

(1) centered on the interviewee's life world; (2) seeks to understand the meaning of phenomena in his life-world; (3) qualitative; (4) descriptive; (5) specific; (6) pre-suppositionless; (7) focused on certain themes; (8) open for ambiguities; (9) changes; (10) depends upon the sensitivity of the interviewer; (11) takes place in interpersonal interaction; and, (12) may be a positive experience (p. 174).

Through qualitative interviews, it is possible to gather "rich data, filled with words that reveal respondents' perspectives" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 95). In phenomenography, interviews are the preferred method of collecting data (Marton, 1994).

While interviews are centered on an individual's life, they are focused on certain themes, such as perspectives on teaching. The interviewer must be skilled in helping draw out rich description of phenomena and experiences. The interviewer must also be flexible with questions and in allowing the participant to guide the interview, to change opinions and answers during the interview, and to stop the interview if the participant feels uncomfortable. In short, the interviewer must be sensitive to the needs of the participant. Allowing the participant to guide the interview is particularly important in phenomenography in order to reach the "lived experience" of the research participant (Ashworth & Lucas, 1998, p. 417). Being face-to-face with the subject allows the interviewer to not only hear what is being said

by the participant but also monitor body language and tone as a means of enriching data gathering and monitoring participant comfort levels (Merriam & Simpson, 1995).

In total, 18 teachers participated in 32 in-depth semi-structured interviews (see Appendixes C and D) during this study, with interviews lasting between 30-60 minutes each. All eighteen participants completed Interview #1 (Appendix C) between June 2002 and July 2004. Questions asked in Interview #1 centered on understanding teachers' actions, intentions, and beliefs. These were drawn from Pratts et al.'s (1998) suggested approaches to teaching evaluation (pp. 266-269) and were adapted by the researcher for this study. Fourteen of the participants also completed Interview #2 (Appendix D) between June 2003 and July 2004. I conducted member checks with all of these fourteen participants between Interviews #1 and #2 to make sure that I understood what they were trying to convey.

Questions asked in Interview #2, while continuing to investigate participants' actions, intentions, and beliefs, explored teachers' understandings of culture and cultural change. As a researcher, I was open to the comments that participants wanted to make, and the direction they wanted to take the interview based on their own experiences. Consequently, the interview protocols were used only as guides, not as prescriptive tools. The timeline for interviews and the number of participants who completed each interview during the individual period is outlined in Table 4.

As noted above in the table, 15 teachers completed Interview #1 during the pilot phase of the study between June and September 2002. Four of these participants dropped out of the study or could not be reached to join in phase two. Ten of the pilot participants, plus

Table 4

*Interview Schedules and Participant Numbers*

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Pilot Phase</b>	<b>Second Phase</b>	<b>Total</b>
Period	June 2002-September 2002	June 2003 – July 2004	
Interviews Conducted			
No. of Int. #1 Conducted	15	3	18
No. of Int. #2 Conducted		14	14
Total	15	17	32

three new participants, completed the second interview during summer 2003. The remaining pilot participant had left the university where she was teaching during the pilot interview in 2002 and was thus unable to complete a second interview before I left Kazakhstan in July 2003. However, I was able to reconnect with this participant in the summer of 2004 and conduct a second interview.

Before participating in interviews, all subjects completed a short demographic survey which gathered data about their education, teaching experience, and training (see Appendix B). This data is presented in Table 3. A random four-digit number, assigned in the order that participants joined the study, identified participants on survey forms. All participants were given a copy of the number used to identify them and were told that I would use that same number when contacting them for follow up. Any written and electronic personal information for each participant, including name and contact information, was kept separate from participant numbers and data gathered through interviews to protect participant confidentiality. Both the researcher and the translator committed participant names and numbers to memory, however, so that participants could be contacted for future interviews,

member checks, or data clarification as needed during the study.

*In their own voices.* Interviews were conducted in two primary languages, English and Russian. Participants were encouraged to speak in the language with which they felt most comfortable. A few of the participants who primarily spoke in Russian during their interviews also occasionally responded to questions or shared their ideas using the Kazakh language. I lived in Central Asia for three years and had a functional knowledge of spoken Russian when I conducted interviews. Thus, I understood much of what was said in Russian during the interviews. However, I was not fluent in Russian and did not know any Kazakh. To insure that participants were able to understand my questions and comments as clearly as possible, and that they were able to share their ideas as fully as possible, I hired a translator who spoke English, Russian and Kazakh to assist with each interview.

As the researcher, I asked all questions in English, my native language. These questions were usually translated into Russian, the then current language of business in Kazakhstan. However, participants were told that they had the option of asking for and receiving translation of my questions into Kazakh. Participants were encouraged to listen to questions and respond in the language of their choice so that they might express themselves as clearly as possible. All answers were then translated back to me in English. A few participants knew English well enough to understand my questions and respond in English. In these situations, the translator listened to my questions and to the participants' responses to make sure that their answers reflected a real understanding of my question. If a participant seemed to have trouble formulating responses, the translator translated my question into Russian or Kazakh for him/her.

*Recording, transcription, and translation.* All interviews were taped in the original languages of data; subjects were identified on the tape by the randomly-generated number corresponding to the number on the subject's demographic survey form. I transcribed two of the interviews from the pilot study which were conducted in English into a Microsoft Word file. The remaining interviews were transcribed from the tape in the original language into a Microsoft Word file by one of the translators.

During the study I worked with two translators. The first translator was a student at a prestigious business school who had lived in the United States with a host family during a study abroad program. She worked with me for almost eighteen months. During this time, she was present at the first 31 interviews and helped transcribe and translate the first 24 interviews. She also was present for all fourteen member checks conducted between Interviews #1 and #2. This translator took another job in November 2003 and therefore could not continue working with me. Unfortunately, that translator left without completing transcription of five interviews conducted in the summer 2003. Because I could not do the transcription and translation myself, data from these interviews could not be compared and integrated until I found another translator. In April 2004 I hired a second translator who was then living in Washington, DC. This translator was a former teacher and translator in Kazakhstan who had moved to the US. She randomly checked previous translations to promote validity of data and also transcribed and translated the five interviews “in limbo” from the previous summer’s interviews. She also helped me conduct the final interview by phone in July 2004, which she transcribed and translated.

Once interviews were transcribed, each translator then translated any Russian or

Kazakh contained in the interview into English and saved the translated file as a new word processing file. The second translator did a review of a random sample of the first translator's translations to insure that both translators had a common understanding of meanings in both languages (Pratt & Associates, 1998). The second translator did not suggest any material changes in the first translations.

I reviewed all transcriptions and translations as they were completed. As an additional check of translation quality, I compared transcriptions in Russian and their translation into English to insure that I could follow the line of translation when categorizing key themes. For all transcripts and translation, I corrected punctuation in the transcript when it was obvious that the translator made a mistake. For example, I corrected punctuation if the translator mistyped a comma when it should have been a period or when what was said in one sentence in Russian or Kazakh should have been translated into two sentences in English instead of two phrases separated by a comma. I also removed "aahh" and "hmmm" from all transcriptions and translation. Quotes made in English are included in this study in their original form; I did not make changes or correct grammar in these interviews.

*Participant Observation and Participation in the Setting.*

I lived in Almaty, Kazakhstan from September 2000 through July 2003. Living in Kazakhstan and working with some of the study participants over a three-year period allowed for my *prolonged engagement* with and *persistent observation* of study participants. Through prolonged engagement and participant observation, researchers are able to “develop trust, learn the culture, and check out hunches” (Glesne, 1999, p. 32). While living in Almaty, I interacted with eleven of the study participants on a regular basis, albeit from varying

vantage points in varying roles. My work in Kazakhstan allowed me both to observe participants over an extended period of time, in and out of their natural teaching setting, and to participate in the educational process with them. Interacting with and observing the study participants gave me important insights into teaching in Kazakhstan. As Marshall and Rossman (1995) point out, participation is:

an essential element of all qualitative studies...Participant observation demands first-hand involvement in the social world chosen for the study. Immersion in the setting allows the researcher to hear, see, and begin to experience reality as the participants do. (pp. 78-79).

From September 2000 through August 2001, I served as Country Representative of USAID/Pragma's SME Development project in Almaty. The goal of that project was to increase the business knowledge and skills of managers and staff members in small and medium enterprises in Kazakhstan. My office was on the top floor of UIB and was part of the project office space we rented from the University. From that vantage point, I saw UIB's teachers and students on a daily basis and began to understand the "pulse" of the university. I also interviewed some UIB teachers as potential trainers for business training programs the SME project was conducting. None of the teachers who interviewed for that training participated in this study. However, by watching them teach, I began to see patterns of interaction between teachers and students in Kazakhstan emerging. Because the SME Development Project also conducted train-the-trainer programs for business teachers, I was able to talk to teachers and trainers from throughout the region and hear their views on teaching and methodologies used in teaching. Finally, I also spent time with some of the UIB

staff, including the Rector whom I came to know as a talented, committed individual and who I came to admire for her vision of how education could be. I was, from a research point of view, living in the setting of the country, and observing the teaching setting. These interactions with teachers and staff helped me understand that I wanted to learn more about how teachers in Kazakhstan understood teaching and what guided their teaching practice.

In September 2001, I left the position with Pragma to join USAID's EdNet project as a Visiting International Professor (VIP), assigned to UIB. With this move, I became an actual participant in the business and economics education setting. My two main functions at UIB were: (a) serving as Dean of the MBA program (which included teaching two courses in the MBA program), and (b) serving as a faculty development advisor to the Rector, responsible for helping the university to create and implement a faculty development program for teachers. In these roles, teachers at UIB were my colleagues and I got to know them better as such. Some stopped by my office to ask about teaching in America. Some invited me for coffee and together we discussed university life. Some even took the Organizational Behavior or Marketing courses I taught in the MBA program as part of their own development.

While at UIB, I taught several seminars designed to open a dialogue with faculty members about improving teaching practices within the University. The first faculty seminars were entitled "Encouraging Student Participation and Getting Feedback." In these seminars teachers were encouraged to reflect on why they taught and what methods they used in class to get students more involved in courses. Twelve of the teachers who participated in this study attended the seminars I held at UIB. During these seminars, teachers expressed a range

of ideas and emotions. In one faculty development session, I asked teachers to write down ten ways they knew they were successful as teachers and a “good” and “bad” experience they had had teaching. During this time, I was trying to better understand teaching in Kazakhstan. Because of this, I kept electronic and paper field notes to help me reflect on what I was seeing. Together these field notes formed a field log or research journal. As Glesne (1999) described, my field log became “filled with descriptions of people, places, events, activities and conversations”; it became “a place for “ideas, reflections, hunches, and notes about patterns that seem to be emerging” (p. 49). My field log ultimately helped me understand some of the problems and issues that teachers in Kazakhstan were facing in a changing context and thus contributed to my desire to study teaching and cultural change.

In November 2002, I became Chief of Party of USAID’s EdNet project. While working with EdNet through July 2003, I continued to interact with teachers from UIB, KIMEP, and other business and economics schools throughout Central Asia. Although I was again in the role of observer, with respect to specific teachers in the study, I was fortunate enough to be exposed to and engaged with hundreds of business and economics teachers across the region during this period. Through conversations, observations, and participation in conferences and events with them, I began to see patterns in teachers’ views on teaching. Through this prolonged engagement in the setting, I learned a great deal about their views of teaching during this period that helped me understand what teachers were saying in study interviews more effectively.

### *Data Analysis*

Data was analyzed in this study using two research methods, the constant

comparative analysis and a modified phenomenographical approach. The process of analyzing participant data for this study officially began in summer 2002, when I conducted the first fifteen interviews with the teacher participants. As of the end of that summer, I had worked for two years in the same building where many of the participants in this study taught; I had opportunity to observe them interact with students and with each other. I also worked with some of them between November 2002 and July 2003 in my role as Chief of Party of EdNet. Since I first started conducting this study, I have carried this data to four countries; mulled it over and over in my head; sometimes put it away for months to take care of other life priorities; categorized it using computers, index cards, and little pieces of paper on the floor; written and destroyed outlines and models; and even waited for the answers to magically appear to me. Throughout this long, recursive, and sometimes painful, process of data analysis, I was mindful of the need to step back from the setting I spent three years immersed in, from the me that was Country Director, Dean, and Chief of Party in Kazakhstan, and from the western literature that stereotypes Kazakh and Soviet teachers so that I represent the real voices of these teachers and help others understand what it means to be a *good* teacher in Kazakhstan and how changes taking place in the country have influenced the teachers participating in this study. Though the process of data analysis for this study was long, it was not without order. The methodology of data analysis is described in the next pages.

*Pilot study.* Data from the pilot study was initially analyzed using the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Glesne, 1999), to search for broader understandings of what it means to teach in Kazakhstan within the framework of actions,

intentions, and beliefs suggested by Pratt (1999). The constant comparative method allows researchers to begin to analyze data while they are still collecting it. By organizing data as one reads it, one is able to see emerging themes. Although final analysis is not completed until all data has been gathered, this process keeps researchers engaged in an active self-dialogue about the study. As a foreigner living in Kazakhstan, I found that utilizing the constant comparative method during the pilot study helped me to quickly identify gaps in my understandings. By identifying these gaps, I was able to ask follow-up questions and gather additional information that helped me better make sense of the data.

Initially, I coded data from the pilot study in two broad ways. First, I separated data and coded by the question asked, i.e. “Why are you a teacher?”, or “How did you learn to teach?” I then went back through the data and coded it into the broad categories suggested by Pratt (1992) of actions, intentions, and beliefs. Clear themes emerged under each of these coding systems. When I compared the initial results, it became clear to me that teachers in Kazakhstan were faced with many challenges and that things were “not always as they seemed.” For example, teachers’ actions in the classrooms did not always seem to match their reasons for teaching. A teacher who wanted to develop students and seemed to be more nurturing might also engage in one-way communication with students through lecturing in the classroom. After seeing this in the data, I wanted to find out more about how teachers were influenced in their behavior by the environment in which they taught.

*Second phase.* Between phases, and during the process of completing interviews in 2003 and 2004, I continued using the constant comparative method to tease out emerging patterns. At this point I had more practice with the method and could “uncover patterns,

themes, and categories” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 155) more easily than I had in the pilot study. Because of this, I was able to follow up with emerging themes early in the process of phase two interviews and gather data more effectively.

I initially coded data in the second phase based on the questions that were asked in the interviews and then against the framings of actions, intentions, beliefs, and culture and cultural change. Coding data in this way is similar to the stage one analysis of transitional phenomenography. As Bradbeer et al. (2004) suggest, “the usual method of phenomenography is to work with transcripts of interviews or other written materials to establish what categories of description of experience are present...transcripts are read and reread many times so that the categories emerge from the whole body rather than from individual responses” (p. 19). Traditional phenomenography utilizes a two-stage data analysis process in order to capture both the referential aspect and the structural aspect of each conception. In stage one of the analysis, as in this study, data is analyzed according to the subject under study and the questions addressed. A unit is formed whenever there is “sufficient evidence that a particular overall meaning had been expressed.” (Marton & Pong, 2005, p. 337).

Pratt (1992) conducted his phenomenographical research on conceptions using an analytical framework of actions, intentions, and beliefs as related to a general model of teaching that he had developed to guide his questions and frame his data analysis. Because data was analyzed using an “a priori” framework, Pratt characterized his study as a “departure from traditional phenomenography” (p. 209). Others have departed or “derived” from phenomenography in a similar manner (Bradbeer et al., 2004). My study could also be

considered as being a modified phenomenography because my data analysis started within the framework of actions, intentions, beliefs, and change.

After all data was collected, I continued data analysis based on the entire data set. First, I added pilot data to the data collected in phase two to generate a full set of data from Interviews #1 and #2. Then I merged all of the transcripts into one data file and read the data set in its entirety several times. As Marton (1994) suggests, “At this point the analysis boils down to identifying and grouping expressed ways of experiencing the phenomena (literally or metaphorically making excerpts from the interviews and putting them into piles)” (p. 4428).

Consistent with the approach suggested by Marton (1994) above, I literally cut out expressions, put them in piles, and then organized and reorganized over a period of months until I felt comfortable that I was accurately understanding the data identified. From the full data set, I identified expressions of actions, intentions, beliefs, values, and change. I also identified a separate category of *other* for further analysis. Within the expressions of change, several broad categories describing participants’ understandings of what had changed emerged. These included changes in society, changes in students, changes in the university system, among others. The original *other* category was then analyzed to generate subcategories. These ultimately included such categories as Soviet, post-Soviet, and insufficient resources, among others.

In stage two of phenomenographical data analysis, categories or conceptions are ordered into logical structures. “By drawing on logical relationships found between the different ways of understanding the text, a hierarchy was established between categories of

description” (Marton, 1994, p. 4424). Working within the conceptual framework of change, and perspectives on teaching, I searched the data recursively to determine to what extent the data conveyed relationships between categories and how categories might be logically ordered.

Understandings of teaching that emerged from participant’s expressions of *actions*, *intentions*, *beliefs*, and *values* are identical to the themes which emerged using the constant comparative method to analyze data in the pilot study. These are depicted in Figure 5 in this study. Although these conceptions are depicted in Figure 5 in a listed manner that could be construed to be hierarchical, I found no data to support a hierarchical relationship between them.

Understandings of changes that emerged primarily from categories related to *change* and the *other* subcategories are depicted in Figure 3. As depicted in the model, the data supports relationships between different elements of change and the impact of change. These relationships were either direct or indirect. Direct relationships are those described by the participants. Indirect relationships are those that participants alluded to through their descriptions. The model is not assumed to be hierarchical with changes identified by participants at the apex.

Data analysis revealed two categorizations of teachers: Soviet and post-Soviet. Table 5 was developed by relating these conceptions to other conceptions which emerged from the study. Groupings of teachers into Soviet and post-Soviet was supported by correlating participants’ conceptions with the year that participants started teaching and years of teaching experience as collected on the demographic survey.

*Trustworthiness of Research Design*

Trustworthiness in qualitative studies refers to the believability or credibility of the study and answers the question “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). The trustworthiness of the study must be considered from several perspectives. Credibility addresses the extent to which the researcher, the primary instrument for data collection, has accurately interpreted the data. Researchers who rely only on their own interpretations of data are likely to misinterpret meanings intended by participants or to miss important nuances in transcription of data. For this study, the potential pitfalls surrounding credibility were compounded by the fact that this study was conducted in two, and sometimes three languages, in a setting outside my home culture. It is therefore arguably more important to focus on credibility than if this study was being conducted utilizing “backyard research” (Glesne, 1999) in the native tongue and culture of the researcher.

Common methods of addressing credibility include (1) using multiple methods of data collection and checking for consistency among the messages, (2) conducting member checks or asking participants’ to verify researcher interpretations of their data, (3) peer review – asking colleagues to review the findings and comment on believability, (4) establishing researcher assumptions and biases up front, and (5) prolonged engagement – collecting data over time so as to develop a better understanding of participants and the research setting (Glesne, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Simpson, 1995).

Given the importance of addressing credibility in this study, all five techniques listed above were employed. Use of multiple methods for data collection is discussed above.

Member checks and peer reviews are discussed in this section below. Information on researcher beliefs and biases is included below. A full researcher statement of bias is included as Appendix E.

Transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) refers to the reliability of data. In quantitative studies, this is often referred to as generalizability, or the ability to replicate a study's findings in another population (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Qualitative studies are not prescriptive and do not seek to develop formulas. Recognizing the commonalities shared in research settings, it is the job of readers, or consumers of qualitative research therefore to decide for themselves how to apply the research to different settings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). One way to help readers see themselves in the setting and therefore make more informed decisions about application is through the use of "thick description" of data (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). Thick description attends to the depth and richness of data and helps readers understand "direct lived experience instead of abstract generalities" (Glesne, 1999, p. 22). The use of thick description is a primary method used in this study to address transferability.

### *Member Checks*

The fourteen participants in this study who completed both Interview #1 and Interview #2 participated in *member checks* of data analysis. Member checks provided opportunities for participants to review the researcher's interpretation of their data. These reviews helped the researcher further ensure trustworthiness. Glesne (1999) suggests that by reviewing the interpretation of the data, the respondent can (1) verify that the researcher has reflected the respondent's perspective; (2) inform the researcher if parts of the research could

be problematic if published, (3) help the researcher develop new ideas and interpretations (p. 152).

As indicated, this study was conducted in English, Russian, and sometimes Kazakh. In order for participants to review the researcher's preliminary findings, data from Interview #1 was translated from the original Russian or Kazakh into English and preliminarily analyzed by the researcher. Member checks were then conducted in two phases. As interviews were conducted in the pilot study nine to twelve months prior to interviews in the second phase, I believed that pilot participants would likely have difficulty remembering what they said in the pilot study. To help them remember, I gave each participant a copy of the transcription of Interview #1 in the original language so that s/he could review the questions asked during the interview and his/her answers and comments. A few days to a week later, I met with the participant to review my initial analysis of Interview #1 and summarize my understanding of the data. I then asked the participant to comment and correct my understanding where necessary. This meeting was held immediately before these participants completed Interview #2. During these member checks, pilot participants did not suggest any changes to my interpretations.

The time that elapsed between Interview #1 and Interview #2 was considerably shorter for the new participants who joined the study in phase two. For these participants, interviews occurred within a few weeks of each other. Member checks with these new participants were conducted in one meeting. Immediately prior to conducting interview #2, I gave each of the new participants a copy of the transcription of Interview #1 in the original language so that s/he could review what had been said. I then shared my analysis of the

interview data with each participant and asked for feedback. These member checks also confirmed my analysis; no changes were suggested by participants.

Member checks lasted from 5-20 minutes each. Like the interview, each member check was conducted as a conversation. To facilitate this process and increase trustworthiness, the translator participating in the Interview #1 was also present at thirteen of the fourteen member checks. I conducted the remaining member check with the participant named Balzhan in English before leaving Kazakhstan in 2003; Balzhan completed Interview #2 in the summer of 2004. Formal face-to-face member checks were not conducted on interview #2 as most of the data analysis on interview #2 was done after I left Kazakhstan in 2003. The results of member checks on interview #1 suggested that my interpretation of the data was consistent with participant understandings of teaching in Kazakhstan. To further check the trustworthiness of data for interview #2, I relied on informal conversations with study participants and peer reviews of data coding and findings.

### *Peer Reviews*

Through peer reviews the researcher can “check” the plausibility of emerging findings against what is already known by colleagues who are familiar with the situation (Merriam & Simpson, 1995, p. 102). Thus the purpose of peer reviews is to further insure that what emerges from the data is not inconsistent with local understandings. I spent three years living in Kazakhstan. During this time, I observed participants and interacted with them in many settings. Through these experiences, I felt I understood much about teaching in Kazakhstan, and the constraints faced by teachers. Nevertheless, as a researcher conducting a study in a foreign country, I could not then, nor likely ever, be aware of all of the cultural

nuances of the setting or the practice of teaching in Kazakhstan. The fact that interviews were conducted in a foreign language and someone unfamiliar with this area of research translated transcripts further supports the need for peer reviews.

Peer reviews for this study were conducted by (a) a Kazakh who has worked on USAID business support projects for the past eight years, (b) two American professors who worked long-term in education in Kazakhstan, and (c) a Kyrgyz teacher whom I met while living in Namibia. These individuals gave me feedback on ideas during the study, reviewed different sections of the findings, made recommendations based on their individual expertise. The Kazakh colleague served as a resource during data analysis. During this stage, she remained in Kazakhstan. Through phone calls, emails, and instant messages, she reacted to my coding schemes and gave me feedback concerning the credibility of my findings at numerous points in the data analysis stage. The American professors with whom I had worked in Kazakhstan served as a cross-cultural reality check for me. One of these professors moved to Macedonia in 2004 while I was still doing data analysis. He assisted me by reviewing coding categories, listening patiently while I explained what I was seeing, and then giving me feedback on my analysis. Although he was an American, I felt that he had significant understanding of the field because he had worked in education in Kazakhstan for several years and was also married to a Kazakh.

The other American professor assisted me by reviewing chapter four in draft and giving me feedback through emails and phone conversations on my interpretation of the findings. The Kyrgyz teacher also reviewed my findings in draft for me and gave feedback to me regarding the credibility of my interpretation. I was especially pleased that she felt the

findings reflected her own experiences and understandings of teaching.

Another colleague who possesses a graduate degree in business administration, has significant international experience in a variety of settings, and is also conducting research on cross-cultural issues, served as a resource and partner in the later stages of the study. She provided additional objective feedback by checking my coding structures and reading and suggesting revisions to several drafts of the entire study. Despite the fact that she is not an expert on Kazakhstan, or on teaching, her understandings of cross-cultural research and its challenges proved invaluable.

#### *Researcher Belief and Biases*

As the researcher, I am keenly aware that I am the “instrument” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999) through which the data gathered in this study is filtered and shaped into this presentation of participants’ perspectives on teaching and cultural change in Kazakhstan. I have tried to present the participants’ ideas, their voices, and their perspectives as transparently as if they were talking to the reader directly. However, I recognize that my interpretations are naturally made through my own experiences and biases about what good teaching means. In fact, after reading considerable literature on perspectives and perspective transformation, I further understand that my beliefs, values and attitudes about what is “right” in the world were shaped by the dominant power structures in the US where I grew up. I realized early in the study that I needed to remain engaged in examining my own assumptions, learning how they affect my practice, and challenging them from time to time when they no longer work in order to be an effective researcher. I have done that through keeping a research journal during the past three and one-half years, through writing my ideas

down on large pieces of paper in the room and just living with them to see “if they fit,” through asking other teachers how I come across and what beliefs I might be sharing, and through using available tools to understand myself better. My statement about my biases and beliefs is included in Appendix E.

## CHAPTER FOUR

This study explored how business and economics university faculty in Kazakhstan understand the practice of teaching and the impact of cultural change on that practice. Through this study, eighteen participants shared their perspectives on teaching, how these perspectives were shaped, and how these perspectives guided them in carrying out the process of teaching. Participants were also asked to discuss their understandings of the nature of teaching in light of social and cultural changes occurring in Kazakhstan. Pratt's (1992, 1998) seminal research on teaching perspectives and Pratt, Kelly, and Wong's (1998, 1999) work on teaching perspectives in different cultures were used as a basis for developing an interview framework for this study. This study extended research on teaching perspectives to a new context (Kazakhstan) and explored a new area related to teaching perspectives – the perceived impact of cultural change on teachers' understandings of teaching. The specific research questions that guided this study were:

1. What are the current perspectives on teaching held by business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan?
2. How do these perspectives on teaching manifest in practice?
3. What do teachers perceive as influencing their perspectives on teaching?
4. How do teachers understand the cultural changes taking place in Kazakhstan as related to their teaching?

Because this study explored teachers' own understandings of the phenomena of teaching and cultural change, it was rooted in the qualitative research genre of phenomenography.

Phenomenography seeks to reach the "lived world" (Kvale, 1983) to "provide a general map

of the qualitatively different ways in which the phenomenon is understood” (Pratt, 1992, p. 205). Consistent with the philosophies of phenomenography and of qualitative research, participants were encouraged to go beyond the interview questions, expound on their own ideas, and share their own understandings of teaching.

Three main categories of findings emerged from the data that correspond to the constructs of perspectives on teaching, cultural change, and change in Kazakhstan during the Soviet to post-Soviet transition outlined in the conceptual framework of the study. Key findings regarding cultural changes in Kazakhstan and the perceived impact of these changes on teaching are presented in section one. Section two presents teachers’ perspectives on teaching, or understandings of effective teaching at the time of the study, including what teachers hoped to achieve through teaching, how they went about reaching these goals, and the cultural and operational challenges they faced in doing so. Section three describes differences between those teachers identified as Soviet and those identified as post-Soviet. Supporting information and references are added where necessary throughout this chapter to help the reader better understand these findings. During this study, participants also shared information that they wanted people outside of Kazakhstan to know about teaching in their country, as well as their ideas about how teaching could be improved. A compilation of these ideas, in the participants’ voices, is included as Appendix F.

#### Changes in Kazakhstan Identified as Important and the Perceived Impact of These Changes on Teaching

In this study, participants described immense changes in the economical, political, business, and sociocultural fabrics of Kazakhstan. They also described the impact of these

changes on their teaching practice and on their individual lives, as well as changes in relations between ethnic groups and between nations. Two primary categories of change emerged as being particularly influential for teaching – changes in society and changes in students. Changes in society were distinguished from changes in students in that changes in society occurred in the larger social framework – outside the classroom environment inhabited by teachers and students. Changes in students reflected changes in who students were becoming as people and how they related to the teachers in the study. Participants typically used Kazakhstan's independence, or a period of approximately ten to twelve years prior to interviews, as a reference to frame the changes in Kazakhstan that they highlighted in their discussions. Younger teachers who were new to teaching placed more emphasis on changes taking place since they graduated from the university and started their teaching practice.

In discussing how changes in society and changes in students influenced them, participants described positive and negative impacts in their lives and in their teaching. On the positive side, teachers found a new world opening up to them as a result of the changes taking place in Kazakhstan. This new world included new opportunities for growth and increased access to resources including people, training, and tools. Participants also believed that, as a result of changes in society and in students, a new model of higher education had emerged in Kazakhstan. This model was based on the concept of the university as a business. In the new higher education model, students were clients and teachers functioned as service providers. Both areas of change – changes in society and changes in students – are discussed below.

### *Changes in Society*

Through participants' descriptions, six changes in society emerged as particularly impacting participants' teaching. These influential changes included the opening of Kazakhstan's borders, the introduction of new technologies, the rise of private universities, increased economic pressures, an increased focus of businesses on hiring students more competitively rather than based on relationships, and the development of chaos in the education system following Kazakhstan's independence. These changes in society did not each occur in a vacuum. Rather, participants recognized that these changes were interconnected. For example, the opening of borders brought in new resources, which allowed for the introduction of new technologies. Increased economic pressures in the overall society and chaos in the education system resulted in the rise of private universities. With increased economic pressures, businesses increasingly focused on hiring students on a competitive basis rather than on the basis of personal relationships. Although participants described these changes as being interconnected, they are described as distinct in the following sections because (a) each was identified separately by participants as having an impact on teaching and (b) it is important to have an understanding of each identified change as it relates to participants' perspectives on teaching.

#### *The Opening of Kazakhstan's Borders*

Prior to independence, most of the teachers in the study had not traveled outside the Soviet Union or engaged with colleagues from the West. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, physical and informational borders in Kazakhstan that had previously been closed were opened, allowing teachers and students to go more freely out of Kazakhstan and an

increasing number of foreigners to come into the country. Balzhan, a senior teacher at one of the private universities represented in the study, shared how the opening of the borders had generally affected teachers:

Before, it was up to the policy of Soviet government, because nobody had really possibility to move and to study abroad or to get some training or retraining courses. Remember, the borders have been closed. And one of the very good things during the last 10-15 years [of] independence was [the] opening of the borders. Openness not only in physical meaning, but in meaning of changes, exchanges, visiting, tours... And not only [are the] local faculty...moving, but a lot of visiting professors are coming and working with local faculties.

The opening of borders provided many of the teachers in this study with their very first opportunity to meet, interact, and work with people from outside the Soviet Union. Botagoz, another senior teacher, shared her experience, “In the Soviet Union we were isolated from foreigners. They did not invite us and we did not see them. It was only in 1996 when I for the first time listened to an English teacher.” Botagoz expressed a common reality in the group; many of the teachers lacked experience with Western cultures and ideas prior to the opening of borders. Through their interactions with foreigners in and outside of Kazakhstan, participants were exposed to new information and new ways of looking at teaching. They were also able to share their experiences and help foreigners learn more about Kazakhstan. Lyzzat summarized the effect of the open borders on this aspect of her life by saying, “In teaching now we have more opportunities to make contact with teachers from other countries and to share our experiences.”

After the borders were opened, donor aid also flowed into the country to support teaching. First, foreign consultants and professors came into Kazakhstan to provide in-service training to teachers. Most of the foreign professors were supported through donor organizations such as USAID, UNDP, or the World Bank. Participants were able to meet and interact with these professors during training, at conferences, or even at their universities where foreign professors were also teaching courses.

Second, through donor-supported scholarships and programs, teachers and students were able to attend training in other countries. As a result, many of the teachers in the study participated in training in countries previously closed to them, including the US. Several participants in the study even earned degrees outside of Kazakhstan as a result of donor support. Some of the participants' family members also studied abroad as students. Vera, a senior teacher, shared what this meant for her family:

Speaking about changes in our life, I can see them in my family. I have two sons. Could I ever dream that they would study abroad? Now they have American diploma certificates. I could not even dream about that! If I could have had such an opportunity in my time, I would have had such [a] certificate too. They graduated from the university. They had an opportunity to see the world. They traveled a lot. They have friends in the United States, Europe, and Germany. They try to find a job there. We have an open society now. This is the result of the democratic changes. I can see them in my own family.

### *The Introduction of New Technologies*

The introduction of new technologies also had a major impact on teaching. By using

new technologies, teachers had new access to information and new means of sharing that information with students. Technologies mentioned ranged from new computers and Internet, to relatively older technologies such as televisions, Xerox machines, and overhead projectors. Galya, a senior teacher, cited the introduction of new technologies as a major change affecting her teaching:

First of all [among major changes are] the implementation of a more contemporary technical means of education -- computers, overhead projectors. We used overhead projectors before. But now you can show the material on the screen from the disk. Here I really understand that life goes on. In any case, books are the same. With [new] technical means, new business games can be elaborated on the computer [and] tests can be conducted on the computer. That is why I say that life requires us to use everything.

Teachers were able to use new technologies in teaching to prepare their lessons and show information to students. Balzhan described how some of the new technologies were being used in teaching:

Now we are also using new technologies of teaching: computers, CD projectors, some places...and some technologies like TV set and others, CD and other technical things that are very helpful. And probably they are helpful in demonstrating some tables... material...Most of teachers now are giving handouts. Before it was not like this. They were just been saying, "Please read Chapter 7 or 2 in such [and such] Monograph." Now they are trying to give small dictionaries. We are training them to get this syllabus if you remember. And TV set is very useful. Before we haven't it in such a

way like now we are using it. They are showing some films. For example I am showing films on ethnic groups of Kazakhstan to my students.

Galya shared similar information:

We had fewer opportunities; we didn't have Xerox machines, computers and not a lot of students were interested... Now we can printout the handouts, make copies, and distribute [them] among students...to help students learn how to use the technology itself in a future career.

In addition to using new technologies to prepare materials, or show information, teachers also used these technologies in order to help prepare students for their careers. For example, several teachers mentioned holding classes in computer labs and assigning students homework that required them to use the Internet as a means of giving students hands-on experience with this technology.

The Internet was identified as the new technology that had the most impact on participants' teaching. Participants said the Internet gave them access to literally a world of information they could bring back to students. Marat, a younger teacher, described how he utilized the Internet in his courses by saying, "If you observed my courses...then first of all you would notice that I started using Internet a lot. I have a web site -- the course web site -- and I try to upload all the material there, just to...make it slightly easier. [Be] cause sometimes students need information, and you can just check it on the Internet."

Although many new technologies were available in the larger society, most participants had only limited access to them at the workplace. Universities provided some computer and Internet access for teachers and students and some equipment such as overhead

or LCD projectors for teachers to use on a limited basis. However, participants said they were not able to use the computer lab as much as they wanted; many other teachers and students were competing for access to a relatively small number of computers. Internet access at the university was also often limited because of its expense. As a result of these constraints, most teachers in the study who wanted to use computers or have access to the Internet did so at their own expense at home or in Internet cafés.

### *Rise in Private Universities*

The establishment and increase of private universities in Kazakhstan also had a major influence on participants' teaching. The creation of private universities was first allowed in the 1990s under the Laws On Education and Laws On Higher Education (McLendon, 2004). Like State universities, private universities were under the purview of the Ministry of Education. Unlike State universities, however, private universities were organized as joint stock companies and had to operate as businesses, charging tuition in exchange for providing education. As a result of the need to raise income, private universities typically charged higher tuition rates than State universities. Participants believed that private universities also needed to deliver a higher quality education than State universities to match the higher tuition rates private universities charged, at least in the fields of economics and business.

The private universities represented in the study were but two of many private universities that had been registered by the government as of 2002. Galya hinted at the far-reaching impact of private universities by saying, "Ten years we've been living in independency. Of course, major changes occurred. We've never had private education; there are more than 60 private universities in Almaty now, more private institutions. This, of

course, requires a new approach to the system itself.” McLendon (2004) reported that 103 private universities were registered in Kazakhstan at the time interviews were conducted.

Private universities in Kazakhstan were set up as joint stock companies, usually owned by one or two investors. As private businesses, private universities had to raise their own money to meet expenses; these universities did not receive regular funding from the Kazakh government as did State universities. To cover expenses, private universities had to charge tuition; attract students on government, or other, scholarships; take loans from banks; or raise outside funds (McLendon, 2004). Because they were legally private for-profit businesses, they were also subject to the same tax structure as other businesses in Kazakhstan.

At the time of the study, private universities in Kazakhstan generally charged higher tuition than State universities. For example, at the time of the study, entering freshmen had to pay approximately \$860 USD per year for tuition at one of the universities where participants worked (Botagoz). Tuition at State universities was considerably lower, and, in some cases, free of charge. However, tuition at State universities was also rising at the time of the study due to rising pressure on the national education budget and the need for the government to supplement its budget with tuition income (McLendon, 2004).

Participants believed the private universities should offer a higher quality education commiserate with the higher tuition rates they charged. Marat shared this idea by saying, “...schools are seeing themselves as businesses trying to earn money. Here, I know often people say that students are paying for it, therefore we must give it.” Botagoz elaborated on this by saying, “For ten years great changes have happened. Ten years. Before the 90s people

did not have to pay for education. Now we have commercial education. The students require good quality of teaching from us because they pay for it.”

Although they were private businesses, private universities were still regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science in much the same manner that State universities were. The Ministry regulated licensing and accreditation. The Ministry also determined which specializations could be offered by each university, set the curriculum, and provided compliance oversight (McLendon, 2004).

### *Increased Economic Pressures*

A fourth change in society that impacted teachers was an increase in the economic pressures they experienced. During the transition years, inflation and rising prices in Kazakhstan against the comparatively stable salaries of teachers resulted in a relative decline of the purchasing power of teachers' salaries. As Heyneman (2004) pointed out, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, “teachers salaries [in Central Asia] were reduced to a fraction of their former value” (p. 4). Aliya, one fairly new to teaching, expressed the group's common sentiment, “the teachers in Kazakhstan are very poor.”

Younger and older teachers alike emphasized how difficult it was to live on a teacher's salary. Participants stressed that teachers were hit particularly hard by increased economic pressures, because teacher's salaries were lower than some of the other professions in the economy. Karlygash elaborated, “In general, teachers and medical personnel always had very low salaries. They were the part of the population which were not protected against changes in economic policy.” Those who had been teaching for a long time were more cognizant of how the financial situation had changed. As Galya, an older teacher, recounted:

Not only in the system of education. You can see changes everywhere. Well, it became difficult financially. Medical services also require payment [and] a lot of private schools. Everything was free of charge before. In our days you have to work; if you work, you earn money and live...before, there was equality. Everyone was equal; no matter how long and how hard you worked; everyone would get equal salary.

All of the participants in the study worked at private universities where salaries were relatively higher than those paid at State universities. Salaries for teachers at State universities were set by the Kazakh government, while salaries at private universities were usually set by the rector or finance director (McLendon, 2004). Vera, a senior teacher, shared that her salary at a State institution was 12700 Tenge [Kazakh currency]. As she put it, “It was less than 100 [US] dollars. It was 80 or even 70 dollars. That was why I left, though I had been working there for so many years.” At the private universities represented in the study, an Associate Professor could expect to earn 24000 Tenge, almost twice the amount paid at a State university (Botagoz). Despite earning a comparatively higher salary than at a State university, participants felt considerable financial pressure living on a teacher’s salary. The situation for many of the participants worsened during the study, because of leadership changes at one of the two private universities. According to participants, at one of the private universities, the new president cut teachers’ salaries by as much as half and cut out overtime payments to save money and pay the University’s debts.

Participants also recognized that the relative decline in teachers’ salaries had caused current teachers to examine their earning options. The two options mentioned most often

were taking new jobs and leaving teaching entirely. Alexey was one of the many teachers looking for ways to ease the pressure. As he said, “I like teaching, but I don’t like the salary. It is very low. If I find another job with [a] higher salary, I will immediately leave [the university]...For me, money is the most important thing. I’m tired of being poor.”

Several teachers also recognized that the financial pressures teachers faced were affecting entry of potential teachers into the profession. Lyzzat expressed this reality clearly:

Much was changed. For example, before our profession was one of the most prestigious – one of the most prospective. Now professions connected to oil and gas that bring more money are more desirable. And respectfully, the young people do not treat teaching in a positive way. If you ask students whether they would like to teach they will answer, ‘No’ because they would like to get more money.

### *Businesses Hiring More Competitively*

Another change described as influential was the change in hiring practices at businesses in Kazakhstan. Under the Soviet Union, relationships and centralized planning mechanisms were the bases on which students were hired and placed into jobs. Although centralized planning was abandoned when the Soviet Union broke apart, personal relationships continued to influence hiring decisions. Participants stressed, however, that businesses in Kazakhstan had changed their hiring practices and were now hiring students on a more competitive basis. According to participants, *what* students knew, not *who* they knew, was becoming more important when businesses decided who to hire. As businesses realized they needed to compete against each other in a rapidly changing environment, they increasingly wanted students who were better prepared and well qualified. Botagoz explained

how the hiring situation had changed:

We did not deal with business in the past. Only in the 90s [did] that movement start. ... We had [a] planned economy. It was planned which students should be sent to the regions where they were in demand. Now, if you study well, the enterprise owners will be interested in you. They are interested in good students and they offer them [a] job. These [include] bank people and others. Our sponsors, for example, they invite our students to in-work training and after [this training] they offer them some positions in their bank. Before it was all planned. Everything. Each student was sent to his position within Kazakhstan according to a single plan. Now there is nothing of it. Now only the best from the best are selected.

Correspondingly, providing students with high-quality knowledge and skills became more important for universities wanting to help students be more competitive in the new hiring market.

Another participant suggested, “If you made something wrong, you can be fired and the company will find a better student. Nobody cares about your diploma; but [they care] about your knowledge.” Galya added “And now students know that in the conditions of competition they have to work really hard, to practice their knowledge, to improve and to grow. Before [a] student thought that he will work for that his father will find him something. Nowadays people are invited to a position for [their] knowledge and professional qualities.”

### *Chaos in the Education System*

Changes in the education system also significantly impacted participants’ teaching. Prior to 1991, all higher education in the Soviet Union was centrally controlled. When

Kazakhstan became independent, the Ministry of Education in Almaty was on its own; ties with central planning in Moscow were broken. In fact, responsibility for education was given to a variety of Ministries before the Ministry of Education finally took it over in 1996 (McLendon, 2004). Several participants described how a vacuum in government leadership, including leadership in education, developed during the '90s after Kazakhstan became independent. As a result of the ensuing chaos in the system, positive aspects of the Soviet education system were lost, teachers in new disciplines such as business were hired without any methodology training or teaching experience, and the educational system was slow to change the curriculum to meet market needs. Boris reflected broadly on the transition:

It so happened that after disintegration of the Soviet Union all the countries became independent. There was a depression in economy, industry, construction, and transport facilities. Everything was frozen. It seems to me that even now we have not achieved yet the level in economy that we had during the Soviet time, though now we say that we are independent. In this situation, [the] superstructure was affected most of all -- culture, medical care, and science. Education lost its value. There was no progress in science; the Academy of Science stopped its functioning. It was amalgamated to the Department of Education and it was renamed to Department of Science. So academic science was completely ruined. We had had good achievements in nuclear physics, [and] in medical science. Now we lost these positions. Teaching, surely, had the same destiny....Only now they begin to understand that in order to develop business structures you should first provide for a good basic education. Participants expressed regret that some of the most positive aspects of the Soviet

education system were lost during the transition. The Soviet Education system was described by academics as “universal, secular, state-financed, and dedicated to equal opportunity for men and women” (Ayupova & DeYoung, 1998, p. 4). Galya was one of the many participants that expressed pride in the Soviet system. “Actually, I think that [a] Soviet education is one of the best in the world.” Participants mentioned that during the transition, facilities and support systems were lost. However, what they particularly lamented was the loss of a student’s right to a high-quality education free of charge. With the transition in the education system, the burden of education financing shifted from the State to the individual. Students, or more often their parents, became responsible for paying some or all of their higher education costs. Vladimir pointed out how this shift had affected individuals and families, “The University system has changed greatly. My friends of my age have children who are university students. So they find the University education extremely expensive. It is very, very expensive for them....When I studied in my first University, it was free [at] that time. It was a Soviet system then.”

During the chaotic transition, much of the support for training of future and current teachers was also lost. Prior to 1991, the education system was responsible for teacher training and faculty development. After independence, the Kazakh education system did not initially provide much development support for its university teachers. New business and economics teachers received little to no training in teaching methods prior to being hired as teachers. In fact, most of the teachers in this study were hired primarily based on their subject knowledge; most did not have any teaching experience when they started teaching. A participant’s comment expressed this common reality:

I only I learned when I saw my teachers because I was studying and that is it. I have never had any training on teaching and now I want [to], two semesters I taught and now I realize that – your knowledge is one thing but how you can present it, to teach it is different subject. Actually people who teach, they should be trained to teach...maybe [we] should be trained to make presentations, to be teachers.

Incumbent teachers did not fare much better during the transition; faculty development courses previously provided by the Ministry of Education were largely absent during the 1990s.

Several participants also stressed that the education system was slow to respond to the changing needs of the market during the transition. According to these participants, this lack of responsiveness occurred because the education system remaining centrally controlled during the transition yet was also very disconnected from rapidly changing disciplines such as business. This slowness of response was particularly evident to participants in the areas of curriculum reform. Karlygash highlighted the centralized nature of the problem by saying, “Because really the policy of the whole system of education was done by one headquarters. And because of that influence, it took the universities a long time to adapt to change.” Vladimir, a marketing teacher, noted: “The study programs have to be approved by the Ministry of Education, and usually they’re outdated.”

In their descriptions, participants acknowledged that the education system in Kazakhstan was improving during the time of the study. While they did not feel what was being done was sufficient, participants did admit that steps were being taken to improve the education system and reduce the chaos. Improvements noted included the State allowing the

privatization of universities, an increase in the number and types of subjects available to teach in business programs, and the potential for increase in curriculum flexibility.

### *Changes in Students*

Almost every participant in this study stressed how dramatically students had changed and how much the changes in students affected the overall practice of teaching. From the data, three categories regarding changes in students emerged: changes in student attitudes, changes in student preparedness, and changes in the roles students wanted to take in the learning process. Vera was one of many who stressed the importance of this change, “So, as I, being a teacher, belong to education, first of all I see the changes in education. And in this field the main change is that the students have...changed.” Balzhan used the term “new generation of students” to compare her students with those studying under the Soviet system:

You know the new generation of students is totally different. Because we now already have the students, [a] new generation who was growing up during the transition time. And...they understand these market values really better than I do in my age and my generation. Yeah. Believe me. They know that they have to work in a very competitive area in the future. They are very motivated.

Participants attributed much of the change in students to the fact that students’ understandings of what they needed to be successful in business were changing. According to participants, students knew businesses required more from them that had perhaps been required of students in the past. Students also knew that, in modern Kazakhstan, they had to be well prepared in order to get a good job.

One of the most often-mentioned changes was in student attitudes; students seemed

more motivated and goal-oriented to participants than past students. Participants said that students now knew what they wanted and what it would take to get it. Marat shared his impressions of the changes in student attitudes:

Now I see young people, I've been young; I mean I've been of that age...let's say seven or eight years ago. And I'm kind of comparing myself to my students. Lots of changes. That time we were kind of lost because there was a transition, and we really did not know what is going to happen and what we were to do. Now I see that these people...they know their path, they know where they are going, and they know what they want. That's, of course, I like that. It is one change in culture, I guess.

One indication that students were more goal-oriented was that students participated more fully in choosing a university and in selecting a particular field of study for themselves.

Alfiya, a senior teacher, explained, "I appreciate the generation of post-Soviet period. They are goal-oriented, they knew [why] they choose the university." Botagoz elaborated on this idea:

In the past, for example, some parents made their children enter colleges. Now our students are more mature. They study where they want to study. It is also very good. It is easier to deal with them. They are not a burden on you. Let us suppose that he likes medicine, for example. But his parents make him study economy. He is going to suffer in [an] economy college, isn't he? We have less such students now. They go where their soul chooses to go.

Participants also expressed pleasure that students were more motivated to study and to prepare for classes. This increased motivation and preparation was related to the second

change in students noticed by teachers – these teachers felt that participants were better prepared for their overall education and for individual classes than students had been in the past. Galya shared her thoughts about student preparedness during the time of the Soviet Union, “No, I would say that before, students could enter the university with the ‘help’ of their parents...Also there were quotas for students who came from suburbs, [and] who worked. I worked in the entrance committee and saw such cases. The level of preparedness was very low and it would affect the whole university.” Botagoz elaborated on how student preparedness had changed, “Every year our students become more and more...advanced...So, you see, they are already prepared. They come to their first and second years of study being already well prepared for it. These are already big changes.” A few participants even noted with surprise that students were sometimes better prepared than their teachers.

Many participants understood that students also expected to have a new role in the classroom. Specifically, participants perceived that students expected to share their ideas more in the classroom, help shape topics of discussion more, and provide more feedback to teachers. Participants believed that students expected more because they knew better what they wanted out of a university education *and* because they, or their parents, had to pay more for that education. Boris explained how the students’ desire for increased involvement had affected his classroom, “During the Soviet times there was a certain doctrine – everyone had to follow one idea. Now, we allow our students to express their own point of view on certain issues like [the] Caspian Sea, even though it may contradict to teacher’s view.” Most of the participants welcomed the new student involvement; they liked to share ideas with students

and hear new points of view. Botagoz, however, was one of the teachers who hinted at how this new student involvement also had potential negative implications for teachers. “They are well educated when they come. And they, you know, would not keep silent. They would tell you. Especially when the teachers’ activity is assessed, they would write that they don’t like the teacher, that he is monotonous at his classes, he doesn’t give them any handouts or slides. That it is boring at his lectures. They [students] can [tell]. They are not afraid. Two or three teachers were fired because of that.” These participants clearly believed that students liked the new role of active classroom participant and were not willing to simply be passive listeners in teacher-controlled classrooms.

#### *Summary of Changes in Society and Students*

Participants experienced sweeping changes in Kazakhstan’s society and in its students. Six changes in the larger society, and transformations in student attitudes and preparedness, and in the roles students wanted to play in the teaching process emerged as being important to participants and to the practice of teaching. The opening of Kazakhstan’s borders provided teachers with opportunities to travel more freely and to make new contacts. Teachers gained new access to information and new means of sharing that information with students with the introduction of new technologies. With the rise in private universities, a market function in education emerged in Kazakhstan. Participants held expectations that these new private universities would offer a higher quality education than their State counterparts based on the belief that because private universities charged higher tuition rates, they must provide higher quality.

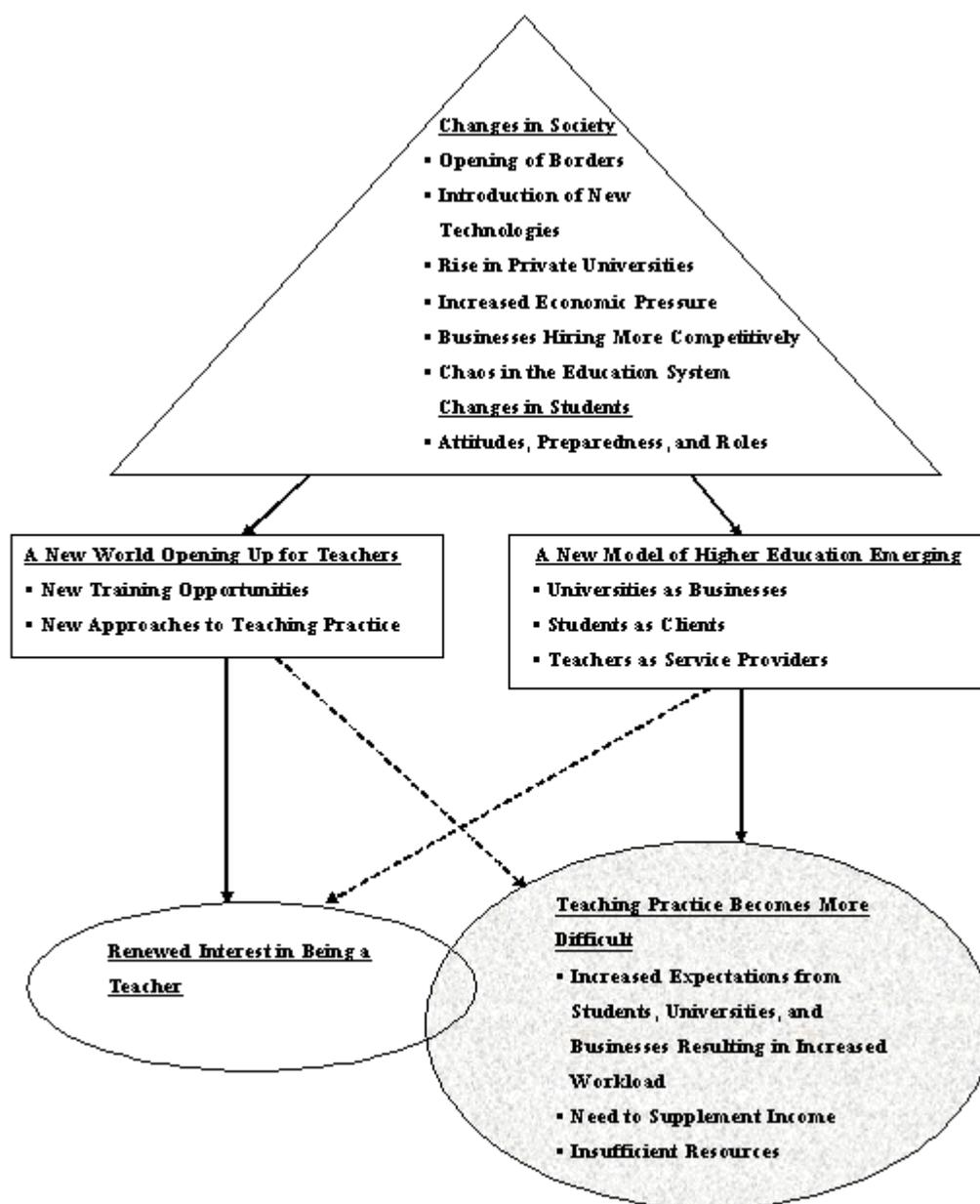
Other changes were also important. As a result of increased economic pressures,

teachers felt they were resource “poor” and therefore were evaluating their career options. New competitive hiring practices in business meant that students increasingly had to rely on knowledge and skills rather than relationships to be hired. As chaos in the education system developed, many of the positive aspects of Soviet education system were lost, teachers were hired without methodology training, and the higher education system grew unresponsive to the market.

In addition to changes in society, participants identified significant changes in students that they believed impacted their teaching practice. Specifically, participants believe that students were more motivated and goal oriented than in the past, put more effort toward preparing for the university and for individual classes, and wanted to a more active role in the learning process. Participants believed that these changes in students resulted from (a) students knowing better what they needed out of education and being more determined to get it and (b) students or their parents having to pay more for education and thus expecting more from teachers and universities.

#### The Perceived Impact of Changes in Society and Students on the Profession and Practice of Teaching

The effects of these six changes in society and the changes in students impacting these faculty participants and their teaching roles and practices were complex and multi-layered. In fact, most of the teachers in the study were still trying to make sense of all of the changes in their lives during the study. Figure 3 summarizes participants’ perceptions about the impact of changes in society and changes in students in Kazakhstan on the profession and practice of teaching. Note, solid lines indicate the direct relationships participants described between



*Figure 3.* Participants' Perceptions of the Impact of Changes in Society and Students in Kazakhstan on the Profession and Practice of Teaching

changes taking place and the ensuing impact of those changes on participants' teaching practice. For example, some participants found a renewed interest in being a teacher as a result of participating in new training opportunities and learning new ways to work with students. Dotted lines indicate indirect relationships that participants alluded to through their descriptions of changes and their impacts. For example, teachers suggested that the practice of teaching became more difficult because teachers felt that they were expected to find time to take advantage of new training opportunities and to implement new approaches to teaching they learned through participating in these new training opportunities. Participants described the impact of change in both positive and negative terms. Those impacts that participants considered to be negative are shaded in the model while impacts participants considered positive are not. The circle representing Teaching Practice Becomes More Difficult is larger than the circle representing Renewed Interest in Being a Teacher to indicate that most of the participants found teaching more difficult as a result of the changes taking place in Kazakhstan. The two circles overlap, however to indicate that these impacts were not mutually exclusive of each other; some participants found a renewed interest in being a teacher while simultaneously finding teaching practice more difficult.

#### *A New World Opening for Teachers*

With the opening of borders, introduction of new technologies, and changes in students' attitudes, their preparedness, and the roles students wanted to play in the classroom, a new world of possibilities had opened up to these teachers. New training opportunities were made available to teachers with the aid of donor funding. While participants learned new content during these new trainings, most participants highly-valued learning new teaching

methodologies and new ways of working with students. During training, and in their daily lives at the university, participants also often interacted with foreigners or others who shared different perspectives on teaching. These interactions caused many participants in the study to reflect on their own teaching practice and to begin to view teaching differently.

*New training opportunities.* Under the Soviet Union, Ministries of Education had provided training for teachers on a variety of subjects to keep teachers current. However, following Kazakhstan's independence, government planned and funded training programs largely disappeared due to chaos in the education system and reduced resources for training. With the opening of borders and influx of donor aid, training opportunities for teachers increased significantly. Training offered through donor support and by individual universities included courses to upgrade subject knowledge, methods courses, seminars, conferences, and even excursions to other countries to participate in training related to teaching. For example, as of the time of interviews, all of the teachers in the study had participated in new training opportunities for faculty, and eight of the eighteen had traveled outside of Kazakhstan for training.

By participating in training, teachers did acquire new subject content. However, what was most significant for participants was learning about different methodologies and new ways of working with and relating to students. Balzhan described her experience of training:

Oh. I went to a lot of training in Budapest, at [the] Open Society Institute in general management, [in] curriculum design and...And I have to say that content of these seminars wasn't very new for me. But the form of working as a group, methodic of teaching workgroups, was very informative."

Balzhan was but one of the many participants, old and young alike, excited about the new methods they had learned in training. Lyzzat said, “Recently we had a seminar on the methods of teaching. These methods, I think, were very useful to me. Though every teacher has his/her methods of teaching. But at this seminar they gave us some new, fresh approaches. When I applied them in my seminars, I liked how it worked.”

In describing what they had learned, teachers most-often mentioned interactive teaching methods designed to engage students more fully in the learning process. These methods included group work, role-plays, debates, and icebreakers. For example, Aliya, the philosophy teacher, found a course in American Parliamentary debates useful. She noted:

Also American Parliamentary debates; there are different kinds of debates like British. I learned that seminar can be conducted not as usual seminar – Question, Answer, but it could be conducted as a game or debates. Once I tried it; I decided to discuss Buddhist conception that Life is suffering. The whole class went as American Debates.

Botagoz elaborated on an experience in training organized by the World Bank, which helped her understand a more interactive way of conducting a class:

...They [the foreign professors] gave their lectures without any synopsis. They gave a lot of handouts and slides. It was very convenient. You could see the tables, figures, the dynamics and different programs. You could compare them and it was easier to remember. Because when you have to write it down all the time, it is very exhausting isn't it? During their lectures they also gave time for a feedback. They asked interesting questions or answered some questions. And they always spent 5 or 7

minutes for our questions, if anything was not clear for us.

Aigul shared a specific example of how she learned new tools to encourage student participation, “Last year I was studying at the program and we had a teacher, who told us about the methods of evaluation in percentage- participation, attendance. If a student attended and participate then he would get high grade, but if he didn’t, he would get points off. I liked this program very much.”

The most effective way for participants to learn new methods and new ways of working with students was by being a *student* in the class where the new methods were actually being utilized. Participants said they benefited greatly by experiencing a new method from a student’s perspective. Just hearing about or reading about new methods and new ways of working with students was not enough to allow teachers to really absorb the material. Karlygash described her experience of attending a *Training of Trainers in Finance* seminar in 1991 where training on methodology was supposed to be included in the course but was instead given on a handout:

They had to include teaching methodology, but unfortunately, they didn’t have enough time to cover it. They distributed handouts, which were based on the research conducted by an Economics Institute, I don’t remember. And these handouts included teaching methodology material. However it was not delivered and shown to us. If they read Finance and said that this is the methodology, it would be more effective. But since it was given separately, the results were not satisfactory. I came to a conclusion on methodology by myself. Unfortunately there were many examples that couldn’t be implemented in the classes.

*New approaches to teaching practice.* Interacting with foreigners and participating in training conducted by those with different perspectives on teaching made a real difference in how many of the participants approached teaching. These interactions caused many of the participants to reflect on their own teaching practice and initiated their changing understandings of teaching practice. When asked what, if anything, had caused her to reexamine her teaching, Balzhan said:

...My contacts with Western with American academicians. I was teaching, I mean in 1989, I was working as a curator of an Academic exhibition and I went to the US for the first time. I was working in [US city, name removed] in [the] Natural History Museum. There was an academic symposium on nomadic culture and I was very involved in the activities. The main organizer was the [US university, name removed]. And I met for the first time many professors and I saw the difference.... And I gave my presentation and I visited some presentations of my American colleagues, then I started to understand the difference and saw how I can use something I learned. Yeah, that was in my life the first experience of new, different approaches or methods.

Botagoz added, "I told you about the courses in Washington and Tashkent that the World Bank organized for Kazakh teachers. I saw how other people teach. This makes you have a stimulus to reexamine something in your teaching." Gulmira added to the point, "But it [training] was just interesting to attend. I learned something new. Why not? It's great to get some information. Widens your opinion, your vision."

Through these experiences and through reflection, teachers began to see their own

teaching differently. Some realized they wanted to use different methods of teaching. Lyzzat was one of the teachers who were reevaluating her methods as a result of participating in training. She said, “May be the seminars here at the university [caused me to reexamine my teaching]. I think that my methods of teaching are old-fashioned.” Olga described what she thought students now needed, “Probably these methods of teaching like lectures are not for them [undergraduate students]; the process of teaching should be more active, more practical examples. It could be new methods, new informational technologies. I think this is important now.”

Several teachers also realized that they wanted to create different relationships with their students. “Democratic”, “partnership”, “open,” and “facilitator” were among the words participants used to describe their vision of a new relationship with their students. Asel completed her MBA degree in the US. She explained how her interactions with foreign professors changed her view of the teacher-student relationship:

We respected our teachers. We were afraid of them. In our days it is different.

Communication with foreigners -- they [foreigners] are more democratic. That is why I respect these methods that they're free [open, communicative]. I want my students [to]...freely communicate with me, say everything, share with [me] their aims and problems. We may do [share] everything [with each other].

Gulmira further explained how she learned that she could take more of a facilitator role in her classroom. “So I think that [retraining] showed [me] that students need to work more themselves. Teachers give them the tasks and they should do the task mostly themselves, not the teacher should do it. [The] teacher should help, them but not constantly speak and do the

work.” Karlygash shared her vision as follows, “...cause teachers and students...it is their world. And all [the] educational process depends on this relationship; it should be [a] partnership.”

### *A New Model of Higher Education Emerging*

At the same time a new world opened up to teachers, a new model of higher education emerged in Kazakhstan. This model was based around the reality that the newly-created private universities operated as businesses. In this new model, universities began selling education in exchange for tuition. To keep perceived education quality high, private universities were also trying to combat corruption in education by creating new corporate cultures of quality and value. Students began to see themselves as clients of the universities, entitled to more because they, or their parents, were paying for more than students had in the past at State universities. In this new model, participants also saw a new role for themselves. Specifically, they believed that teachers were increasingly becoming service providers, responsible for providing a high-quality education to students who were now paying for that education.

*Universities as businesses.* A central component of the new model of higher education was the private university. As joint stock companies, private universities in Kazakhstan operated in exactly the same manner as other businesses in Kazakhstan. In order to function, they had to charge tuition in exchange for delivering education. According to participants, the ability of a private university to attract and retain students and to gain the confidence of businesses that were looking for well-qualified graduates was critical to the university’s survival. In effect, with the creation of private universities, a market function in

education emerged in Kazakhstan. Botagoz described how the business function worked in her university:

Because they [students] pay and we get our salaries from there. We have also extramural students. They pay 500 dollars and regular students pay 860 dollars. The third year students pay 900 dollars. The four-year students pay one thousand. The more we have students, the more we are paid. And financial situation of the college will be increased as well. They can buy computers, books for the library. They can send students to in-work training and improve the teachers' qualification at the expense of the college. Everything is interconnected. This is a commercial college.

In describing students at their universities, Karlygash and Vera both used the term *product*, indicating how ingrained the idea of *universities as businesses* had already become for them. Karlygash said, "...in general well-prepared students enter our university and we are trying to give them everything we know to keep up our image. We need to sell our products - our students - at a high price." Vera described her students by saying, "Yes. They are my product. I work with them."

According to teachers in this study, students expected education quality to correspond directly to tuition costs. Balzhan shared her thoughts on how students related what they were paying to the quality they expected from a university, "Most of them are studying at private universities, paying. Even at the governmental, public universities they do have to pay or government is paying for them. And they already know the amount, I mean, the amount of money they have to pay and the quality they really need."

Participants believed that one of the strategies private universities used to keep

education quality high was discouraging corruption. *Corruption*, as described by teachers in the study, primarily involved students paying bribes for grades when they didn't want to work for them or teachers expecting students to give gifts or payments in return for grades. Most of the participants said they were familiar with the practice of giving and taking money and gifts for grades. Some had direct experience with it as students of State universities; others had come in contact with corruption while they were teaching. Marat shared an experience that illustrates in detail how the pressure to engage in corruption at a State university affected his education:

I studied in [State university, name removed], which is in South Kazakhstan. Gifts were expected, and, moreover, they were required.... One teacher, by the way, [the] accounting teacher, she failed me. I mean I failed the exam. And I retook the exam in a week, [and] again failed. I was one of the good students and people knew it. But I was failing all the time. Then, the third time, when I was retaking the exam, she showed me a bill and asked me if I can pay it. It was [the] electricity bill for her house. I don't know what to pay for and I knew about it, I just didn't want to and I told her, "I know the material, I can pass the course." She said, "Everybody gives gifts, why don't you do it?" I said, "Because I know the material." If I did not know the material, I could give a gift and pass the exam but what's the reason for me to give a gift? I again failed the exam.

Some participants hypothesized that the low salaries teachers were paid might influence teachers to take bribes. Vera shared this idea by saying, "Why do we have this corruption? And I think [it is] because our teachers earn so little." Most participants believed, however,

that the greatest determinant of whether or not teachers engaged in corrupt practices in education was the organizational culture in which teachers worked. According to these participants, the two private universities where they worked had taken specific steps to create an organizational culture which deterred corruption in order to improve the quality of education that students were receiving.

*Students as clients.* Although Karlygash and Vera called students products of the university, most of the participants said that students were increasingly seeing themselves and being seen by teachers as *clients* of the new private universities. By extension, students were also clients of the teachers who taught at these universities. Vera was one of the teachers who highlighted the new relationship. She explained how the relationship between university, teacher, and student was changing as a result of changes in the education model:

...The Soviet system of education was good. Now the relations between students and teachers are lost. And these relations have a financial base. Many teachers say, especially young teachers, that a student is a client. He pays; you teach. The Soviet system of education was free. So I did not have any financial relations with a student. I had my financial relations only with the government. And I had only educational type of relations with students. So there was that system.

Because students were now paying clients, meeting student expectations was becoming more critical for universities and their teachers that wanted to stay in business. Participants described how student assessments were increasingly used as a tool to gauge student satisfaction and to help university administrators decide which teachers to keep. Teachers who received high assessments would likely be retained at the university. Teachers

who did not meet student expectations could be fired from their jobs. Botagoz elaborated further on the connection between student assessments and teacher retention by saying:

At the end of each year the students make assessment of our activity. According to this assessment new contracts with teachers are signed. If you had only three points you are automatically dismissed. You should have more than three; you should have four and more points. If I have 4.5 or 4.6 or 4.7 [out of a possible 5], it is an average result. If less than three, you are dismissed.

*Teachers as service providers.* Teachers believed that they, as extensions of the private universities where they worked, also had a responsibility to provide paying students with a high-quality education. With universities as businesses and students clients, teachers found themselves in a new role – that of a service provider in the new higher education model. Gulmira elaborated on this idea when asked, “What do your students need from you?” She said, “First of all, that I should come and conduct the class. It is important for them for that they paid for this class and they expect that they have to get knowledge.” Gulmira’s comments were typical of participants who believed they needed to give paying students increased attention. They were also indicative of the fact that teachers were coming to see themselves as having a business relationship with students and the universities where they worked; they were being paid for the quality of their teaching.

In this new business relationship, teachers had uncertain futures largely dependent on the quality of their teaching. Most of the teachers in the study were, in fact, working under contracts that could be cancelled or renewed annually by the university; many were working at more than one university on a contract basis. In the service provider role, these teachers

were very cognizant that their ability to continue teaching at a university was highly dependent on student satisfaction. As Botagoz said, “That’s it. If the students are displeased, the teacher should quit. The contract is cancelled.” They were also cognizant that a competitive market was developing among teachers and that good teachers would have good employment prospects in Kazakhstan. Karlygash elaborated on this understanding:

...The teachers themselves started to understand that they have a big competition among themselves. And they started to realize the importance of their reputation in the market. It is important and people are ready to pay for that. To invite from one university to another university – to make their salary higher and so on and so forth. It is very important for them. .... So they started to understand that the most important is to make their listeners interested and that would increase demand for teaching. It is as a market – for a good teacher, there is a good demand.

#### *Renewed Interest in Being a Teacher*

Several participants expressed excitement about having new contacts, having new access to information, using new methods and new technologies in their teaching, and getting to work with students in new ways. These teachers used words like “interesting”, “creative,” and “better” to describe teaching, in effect sharing their renewed interest in being a teacher.

Karlygash was one of the participants who expressed excitement about being a teacher. She described some of the aspects of the new world of possibilities that she valued:

...I like that the borders now are open, that we have a lot of foreign consultants, a lot of foreign companies with whom we may associate and from whom we may learn.

And that our population has the chance to go abroad to study and receive better

practice. It means that we have more access to information than in the past. Thanks to the Internet that let[s] us enter the new informational space.

Olga was another teacher who found renewed interest in teaching. She hinted at how new technologies made her teaching more interesting, “Actually, it is quite interesting...First of all, the teacher himself should use these information technologies; it is [a] very creative process.”

In addition to enjoying using new methods and having access to new information and to new technologies, these teachers appreciated working with students who were more engaged in the learning process. As one junior teacher commented, “It is also very interesting to work with youth for that they are always different, active, want to know something...new. And it actually makes you learn something new, develop and work on yourself. If you stay at the same level, you will feel yourself uncomfortable.” Gulmira described her students, “Students here at the university; they are open-minded, broad-minded, it seems to me and they can freely speak on different subjects...They have their own point of view...we can exchange our points of view.” Balzhan added, “...now most of the student they have more individual consciousness. And they are self-motivated, and it is very interesting to work with them. I really like it.”

Participants were also cognizant that their students appreciated the new instructional approaches teachers were using in the classroom. As Balzhan said, “We have to use new technologies which are extremely useful... Now we have a new generation of teachers who like to use new technologies in teaching and who share [the] new ideology of teaching and philosophy of teaching and who are using it. And students like very much [those] teachers.”

In discussing what happened when she used a new methodology in her classroom, Lyzzat said, “When I used this [new] approach, I saw that they started to discuss who would win the prize with great enthusiasm. And they really wanted to be the first to answer this. So they showed they really listen to me and that they try to fulfill the assignment.” Botagoz described how she felt her teaching practice was better as a result of what she was doing:

I can tell you that while I was studying at the university, our lecture would start with the statement from the 25<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> Soviet meeting, or with the statements of Lenin of Marx. It is not this way anymore. We have more freedom and can say or read whatever we want to. Also there are a lot of sources where we can get different kinds of information. It was limited during my university years. And everyone was told that capitalism is bad. However, when I went there and saw everything by myself, I understood that everything is good. Nowadays we teach much better.

#### *Teaching Practice Becomes More Difficult*

Although several teachers in the study found a renewed interest in being a teacher as a result of the changes in society and students, the majority of participants stressed that teaching was more difficult than it had been in the past. Despite the fact that they had new tools to use in teaching and new ways to work with learners, teachers faced increasing demands from universities and students. As a result of changes taking place in Kazakhstan, teachers were now expected to keep up with the rapidly changing fields of business and to use new technologies and new methodologies in teaching. Meeting these demands while also trying to meet their own financial needs required teachers to work longer and harder than before. Many had to also take other part-time jobs in order to supplement their income, thus

making life even more difficult. To add to the hardship, teachers were expected to meet increasing demands without the requisite knowledge and skills, or institutional resources, to do so. Botagoz summarized a sentiment expressed often by the group, “The requirements are so high now. They ask too much from us.”

*Increased demands and workload.* The general consensus among participants was that they had to work harder to keep up with increasing demands from their universities and their students. First, universities and students expected teachers to continue to improve their knowledge and teaching skills and to stay up-to-date. Staying current in their fields in a rapidly changing business environment, and helping the private universities give clients “what they paid for,” required increased time for research, course preparation, training, and development of networks. Galya, a banking teacher, described how the changing field of banking affected her teaching practice. “Well, I teach banking; major changes occurred in the banking system and I have to deliver everything on my lectures. If looking at the disciplines I teach, everything is new. Lectures have to be remade and follow these changes.” Vladimir described how the field of marketing changed rapidly, “There are no dogmas in marketing. Everything flows. Everything changes. You can find yourself in very different situations.” Botagoz a banking teacher, explained how keeping up with changes in banking affected her teaching:

For...ten years there happened a lot of changes in banking as well. So, [during the Soviet Union] we had one level bank system, we reported to Moscow. Now we have our own [banking system], the first level Central Bank of Kazakhstan. We have commercial banks. And we have entered the world economy. These are also big

changes. You should consider them when you prepare your theoretical and other material, when you get ready for your lectures...We all keep revising our lectures, as they should be updated [with] day-to-day changes.

Botagoz continued by sharing her impression of how important it was for teachers to stay current in the new environment of teaching. She said, “If you say something wrong, they [students] will not like it. They will have a bad impression of you. They will say, ‘You teach us the old data.’ You should constantly update your information. You should put everything right. That’s why you should be prepared and always be in the course of events.”

In addition to keeping up with their respective fields of business, teachers were also expected to use the technologies that had been introduced in Kazakhstan and to implement the new methods they learned through training. Using new technologies to bring new information to their courses and share that information with students in new ways required teachers to spend time learning how to use computers, working on equipment, and preparing materials. Implementing new teaching methods also took extra time, as teachers had to create new lesson plans and organize resources based on availability. Though participants had new tools, using them often required teachers to work harder. Sometimes using these tools and methods was not even possible due to the resource and other constraints teachers faced in the education context. Resource constraints are discussed below. Other constraints are discussed in later sections.

*Need to supplement income.* The declining purchasing power of a teacher’s salary made it difficult for many participants to survive financially as teachers. This increased personal financial pressure caused participants to look for other sources of income. Many of

the teachers in the study tried to compensate for the increased financial hardship by taking on additional part-time teaching jobs at other universities. When asked why she was teaching at other universities, Galya explained:

Because I have low salary...During the Soviet times you could work only at one university. There was only one economic institute in Kazakhstan. You were not allowed to work somewhere else...The need [to work at other universities] is only a financial need.

Vera, the head of a sub-faculty [department], described how financial pressure had affected her department:

Today I reported to the Rector whom I was going to dismiss and whom I was going to keep at my sub-faculty. Good teachers, whom I wanted to stay, did not want to work full time. I asked, 'Why?' They said, 'Because you give additional work besides lectures and workshops'. So they want to make more money, don't want to be too much occupied. They want to work in many places. This is bad.

Keeping up with more than one job was difficult for teachers emotionally, mentally, and physically. Galya described the physically difficult "...It is difficult; it is difficult physically. For that you have to run from one place to another. If a teacher got higher salary, it would be great to work at one university." Vera described how teachers who maintained several jobs experienced a loss of collegiality and group support among their colleagues and within their departments:

Also there was another tradition in Soviet time. Teachers of our sub-faculty [department] were a very good team. Now we don't have it. Why? Because teachers

work in three or four universities. They have classes here, and then in another university. They never want to take additional educational activity. They don't want to write reports or just to sit and talk with you. They never have time for that. They have classes at my sub-faculty, and then they go [another university] or [another university] or [another university]. So this cooperative culture is lost now.

*Insufficient resources.* Lack of knowledge and skills, as well as personal and institutional resource constraints, also made teaching more difficult for participants. Several participants, especially those teachers who learned their subjects from a theoretical perspective, recognized that they lacked practical experience in their chosen field that would have enhanced their teaching. Vladimir trained university teachers in marketing in order to improve their skills. He described how current marketing teachers lacked practical qualifications, "I deal with teachers, and these days I have contacts with [the] Marketing Association of Kazakhstan. The teachers always paraphrase what is written in marketing books...None of the teachers worked as a seller before. None of the teachers had an experience of selling goods. They just don't have this background." Lyzzat expressed her desire to get practical knowledge by saying, "Probably for the next few years, I would like to work in some sphere. When you teach, you teach only theory, but you have to know for yourself how to implement it in practice. Students may ask different questions, and in order to react you have to know it." As Lyzzat's comments indicate, teachers who lacked practical experience believed they had to leave teaching in order to gain such experience. Other participants lacked the technical skills needed to utilize new technologies. For example, while most teachers in the study knew how to use a computer for word processing and how

to use the Internet for email, many were not formally trained in Microsoft office products or in using the Internet for research. Only a few said they could put up and maintain a webpage for students.

A lack of institutional resources also made it more difficult for participants to be highly effective as instructors. Many teachers cited the fact that modern equipment and supplies were scarce in Kazakh universities. According to these teachers, universities did not have enough overhead projectors, LCDs, updated textbooks, computers for teachers and students to use, Internet access, and paper and toner to make copies of tests or handouts for students. Asem shared how a lack of equipment and facilities hampered her teaching efforts, “During the lecture...I usually stay on this place and I have all slides, it is difficult to have presentations in power point because we have only LCD rooms only for 30 students, but I had, for the first semester – 100 and something, [and] for the second – 60. It was impossible.” Aliya illustrated how resource constraints affected her by saying, “I would like to show more films, slides, or pictures or some signs. I have to draw everything...I would change if I had money to buy films and some additional material. It is very difficult to make some changes. I need to bring everything by myself.”

In another example, Balzhan suggested how important having more access to resources such as the Internet was for teachers. Internet access was often limited for teachers because it was expensive for universities. Therefore most teachers in the study who wanted to use the Internet had to do so at home or in Internet cafés, often paying for access out of their own limited funds. Balzhan said, “What would be important is to give technical assistance, for example to give Internet to all local universities as a net, because of lack of

books and teaching materials or handouts. Internet... I mean for teachers, for faculty. Local Internet network would just be excellent. That's it, not like conferences...even 3 hour per day.”

Even resources such as affordable venues where teachers could demonstrate business concepts in action constrained teachers in their practice. Alexey explained how financial constraints made it difficult for him to conduct his tourism lessons as follows:

...And [excursions] needs financial spending. So, the practice in tourism is complicated. If I taught mechanics, the university would have laboratories and machines...Tourism is very expensive...In order to explain the economics of tourism, it is necessary to show [students] different types of hotels. It is necessary to take students to the US or somewhere else. For example, [here is the] Rachat Palace; this is the hotel of [a] different class; this is [a] town hotel; and this is [a] city hotel...

Through their descriptions, participants repeatedly indicated that they would take more advantage of new technologies and methods if they only had the resources to do so.

During the study, several of the participants were questioning the rewards of teaching compared to the lack of adequate compensation. By the time of the second interviews, at least four of the teachers in the study had left university teaching altogether; others were looking for career options beyond the teaching profession. Two of these four teachers left their university faculty roles to become training consultants. Another older teacher left to work in education administration. I was unable to make contact with the fourth teacher because she had left her post. Three of the teachers who left teaching shared their reasons for making the move to another profession. These teachers cited financial difficulties, lack of

career growth opportunities, and philosophical conflicts with administrators as reasons for their departures.

*Leaving the Profession.* Participants who were leaving the profession stressed that they were primarily trying to ease increased economic pressures in seeking a new profession. One of the older teachers said he would leave as soon as he found another job with a higher salary. Lyzzat, a younger teacher, related why she wanted to leave, “Right now I want to change jobs because now I need to have a good salary...I would like to have my own family and I need financial stability.” When asked how she would improve teaching, Vera, one of the older teachers, eloquently explained how financial difficulties were impacting teachers and affecting education overall:

The first thing I would do, I would raise teachers’ salaries. I know a lot of teachers, I know what teachers they are. I know that their work is precious. We influence people. We help a lot the government in this. Our children are very educated, because they study here and appreciate that. That would be the first thing that I would do. I would properly estimate our work. And it would benefit the quality of education. Then the teachers that I want to stay would not run away from me to another university [to work part-time]; they would work here. I would do that evaluation of our work. And that would be all. That is the most important. We can do the rest. We make good programs and we work well... They set little store by our work. Young teachers, PhDs, don’t want to teach. They work for some companies or other organizations. They don’t want to teach. Who teaches now? In [university] they all are of pension age. I left this University. All the teachers are either of pension age or close to this

age. All of them are older than 50. Their average age is 50. The average age in our university is 42. It is better. And their average age is 50. So who teach? Young people don't want to. It affects the quality of education, of course.

As Vera's comments indicate, the difficult financial situation of teachers profoundly affected their ability to stay in teaching and prevented potential teachers from joining the profession.

*Summary of Perceived Impacts of Changes in Society and Students on the Profession and Practice of Teaching*

The impact of six changes in society and changes in students on teachers and their teaching practice was multi-faceted. On the positive side, the opening of borders, introduction of new technologies, and changes in students meant that a new world of possibilities was opening up for teachers. In this new world, teachers had new training opportunities and were exposed to new understandings of teaching through their contacts with foreigners and others with different perspectives. Interacting with and learning from those with different perspectives on teaching caused many participants to reflect on their own teaching practice and to begin to see the profession of teaching in new ways.

Another result of changes in society and students was that a new model of higher education as a business was also emerging. In this education model, private universities operated as businesses, charging tuition in exchange for providing a high-quality education. Students came to see themselves as clients because they were now paying for their education rather than receiving a free education from the State as in previous times. In this model, teachers increasingly saw themselves in the new role of service provider, responsible for providing a high quality of education because students, or their parents, were now paying for

it.

As a result of living in this new world, some teachers gained a renewed interest in being a teacher. These teachers were excited about using new methods and working with students in new ways. They also recognized that students appreciated their efforts. Most of the teachers in the study, however, felt that they were increasingly required to do more, for relatively less money, with less support from the education system in order to meet the increasing demands of universities and students. Many also had to supplement their teaching income by taking part-time teaching jobs. They also complained that scarce resources affected their ability to teach. For these participants, teaching had become more difficult. Several teachers concluded that teaching was no longer viable for them and left the profession. Others were looking for a way out of teaching to ease the financial pressure.

#### Participants' Understandings of Effective Teaching

Besides discussing what had changed in Kazakhstan and what it meant to them, participants also described what it meant to them to be a “good” or effective university teacher in Kazakhstan. Through rich description, participants related their goals for teaching, what they did in the classroom, the beliefs that guided their teaching, and how they knew their teaching was effective. Regardless of their age or experience, participants shared a common vision of effective teaching with regard to what they wanted to achieve through teaching-- they wanted to prepare students for work and life and to share knowledge. They also shared common general approaches to achieving these goals. These approaches included grounding learning in real life, making learning interactive, trying to reach every student, getting feedback, fostering an atmosphere of respect in the classroom, and preparing

themselves for teaching.

These teachers noted that four contextual factors were extremely influential in shaping classroom practice. These factors included the nature of the subject they taught, the course organization, the curriculum structure, and the resources available to teachers. These factors were particularly important because they either supported the use of a participant's teaching approach in the classroom or inhibited it, and thus affected participants' abilities to implement new methodologies in their classrooms.

#### *A Common Vision of Effective Teaching*

In the broadest sense, participants wanted to prepare students for the future and to share knowledge with them. In preparing students for their future, participants were focused on giving students the skills needed to adapt to changing life situations and on preparing them for specific jobs. Sharing knowledge included sharing knowledge about specific subjects and helping students get the information and skills needed to master *softer* skills such as communication, the ability to manage themselves, and the ability to work in teams.

#### *Preparing Students for Life and Work*

Most of the participants wanted to prepare students for their lives after university. In their descriptions, two distinct types of preparation emerged – preparing students for life and preparing students for work. While some teachers believed they had a responsibility to do both, they described the two areas separately.

*Preparing students for life.* For most of the participants in the study, preparing students meant teaching students skills to be effective in life, regardless of the job or career

these students pursued. These teachers focused on helping students to learn to think, to believe in themselves, to be effective communicators, and to develop a passion for learning. The one skill these teachers most wanted to help students develop was the ability to think independently. The concept of independent thinking included being able to analyze information, make decisions, and present ideas effectively. Participants recognized that students would be faced with a variety of problems and decisions in their personal and professional lives and would need to be able to make decisions independently in order to be successful. They also all shared a strong understanding that being able to think independently could help students be more competitive in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. While some of the teachers used the words *critical thinking* in describing this aspect of student development, the majority used the word *independent*. As Mariya stated:

I try to give them an idea how to be critical...how to have their own opinion about everything, how to analyze the question, how to use literature as a system, how to learn, how to get the information from different sources, [and] how to be competitive, probably.

Preparing students for life also meant helping students to believe in themselves. Teachers wanted to help students gain confidence in their abilities, learn who they are, help them learn to manage themselves, help them be more outgoing and communicative, and even help them believe that they could be successful without a traditional strong family network to find them a job. Galya summarized this idea as follows, “Probably I try not only to give them knowledge but [to] influence them from the other side; [I] help them to understand who they are.” These teachers also understood that self-confidence and a belief in oneself could have

wide-reaching effects in students' future lives.

*Preparing students for work.* In addition to preparing students for life, teachers also wanted to use their knowledge and skills to help prepare students for work in their chosen careers. As Botagoz said, "And our main goal is that our students after graduating will be able to find a good job. They [organizations] should accept them [students] as good specialists." These teachers also communicated how important preparing good specialists was for the overall society. Lyzzat suggested, "It is very bad for the economy as a whole. If you don't have good specialists, you don't have people that can make reforms or do something for the fields of the economy in which they work."

Two subgroups emerged from the group of participants who wanted to prepare students for work. The first subgroup stressed that students needed to learn content and also to develop soft skills such as communication, the ability to manage themselves, and the ability to work in groups. The second subgroup primarily focused on communicating particular content knowledge to students. Karlygash explained the views of the first group by saying:

If they know only corporate finance, but they can't manage themselves, they won't be effective, for that they will not know how to work with other people. How they can offer their proposals, be leaders, and defend their point of view? And vice versa...they can be very good persons, but if they do not have any skill, they can't defend their proposals.

Karlygash suggested some of the soft skill students needed to learn in saying, "So, therefore a teacher is not only a person who can give some knowledge, but who can help them to work

on themselves, on their personal qualities. And teach them skills how to work in a team, both as a leader and as a team member.”

Teachers in the second group all believed they had strong subject knowledge to share with students, as Asem suggested, “I think I can give them...I can share my knowledge and this practice, because I worked for State body. I worked for [an] actual foreign company, and I know accounting practice in our local companies. I think I can get them prepared to work in all these places.” In fact, all of the teachers in this category had practical work experience to bring to their teaching. They had been specialists themselves and saw their job as preparing new specialists for society.

### *Sharing Knowledge*

Sharing knowledge with students was seen as another key aim of teachers in the study. In fact, as Boris offered, “the Russian verb to teach, ‘*predavat*’, means *to give, share*.” Participants wanted to share information about specific subjects or specific content, as well as share more general knowledge about life. As Aliya said, “I read it somewhere. One Indian philosopher said, ‘You can be either a vessel full of knowledge or a candle which lights up others.’ So, I teach to share the knowledge.” Participants also believed that having knowledge to share gave them credibility among students and colleagues.

One group of participants related sharing general knowledge to sharing specific subject knowledge with students. Members of this group described a strong love for their subject. Most of these teachers also had practical work experience in their area of expertise (e.g. banking, accounting, diplomacy, marketing) that they wanted to share with students. These teachers said that working in the field had deepened their love for their area of

expertise and their desire to engage others in the area. Botagoz shared this sentiment:

I will tell you. After graduating the university in 1970, I started to work in the bank. First I worked at the Republican Bank -1<sup>st</sup> level bank – and then I transferred to a lower level bank in order to gain more practice. And while I was working there, we had students from colleges coming; they were interns. I enjoyed explaining to students where from and how do credits come, how do we give them, and how do we charge interest. This is where my desire to teach came from.

Another group of participants expanded the concept of sharing knowledge beyond sharing subject knowledge to include sharing their experiences, ideas, dreams, passions, and beliefs with students. These teachers were not focused on teaching one or more subjects; rather they indicated a desire to share knowledge as a means of helping students develop themselves and be successful in life. Balzhan noted, “But young people, like students, they need probably more teaching...not just like teaching, but teaching – helping them develop as an individual, as a personality. Somebody needs to teach [them] what does [a] human being need. That is another part of teaching.”

Having knowledge to share was also cited by many of the participants as a means of gaining and keeping credibility; by having a knowledge base, teachers had something to offer students. According to most of the participants, their knowledge, not their ability to teach, was the basis on which they were hired as teachers. Marat came back to Kazakhstan after getting an MBA in the US. He described how he was hired based on his US MBA:

After graduation, when I came back to Kazakhstan, I was looking for a decent job...I mean I was looking for something in financial management, and I couldn't find that

at that time. A friend of mine advised me to go to [university name removed] and look for some job there. I came to see them, and, after one interview they offered me a position of a lecturer in Finance and Accounting. And that happened like that. Younger teachers in this group also believed that having knowledge to share made them more credible as teachers. Asem explained this understanding as follows, “I think [if] I show them that I have good knowledge of the subject, that I can give them something, then they will take me seriously.”

### *Common Approaches Teachers Use to Be Effective*

Teachers reported using a variety of approaches in and outside the classroom in order to be effective in preparing students for work and life and in sharing their knowledge with students. Participants described how they set the tone in class, conducted lectures, conducted seminars, interacted with students inside and outside of class, got feedback, and even what they did to stay current in their fields. Six common approaches emerged from their discussions: (a) grounding learning in real-life, (b) making learning interactive, (c) getting feedback from students, (d) trying to reach every student, (e) fostering respect in the classroom, and (f) preparing themselves for teaching. This section describes how and why teachers utilized each of these approaches in their teaching.

### *Grounding Learning in Real Life*

One strategy teachers used to be effective was grounding learning in real life, or making learning practical. Participants stressed the need to provide students with actual examples from businesses and to give students practice applying what they had learned to

realistic situations. This effort was seen by participants as essential to giving students the practical skills they needed to be successful in Kazakhstan's competitive business environment. Grounding learning in real life by utilizing authentic information and teaching practical skills was also seen by participants as essential to keeping students engaged in the learning process. Galya described her understanding of students' needs for practical information:

I think they need to know a lot of cases from the current situation in Kazakhstan. For example, they need to know the legislation base for holding their activities in banking or in economics. Teachers need to teach students how to think; i.e. the legislation could change and they need to make some strategy and forecast tendencies.

Participants stressed that they organized seminars, and to some extent, lectures, so that they could provide authentic, real-life, practical knowledge and skills to students. To add authenticity to their teaching, teachers reported using actual examples from businesses, practical case studies from international and Kazakh companies, and business games. They also brought in expert guest lecturers, took students on excursions, gave them real business problems to solve, and even helped some students get internships. Aigul shared her approach:

I teach Taxation. During our tutorials, we mostly solve problems. We calculate, in which way we pay taxes, we examine different situations, like tax deferral, but mostly we solve problems. As for banking, we also solve problems, but at the same time, we analyze some situations. I try to give them not only theory, but also give them an opportunity to practice this theory.

Asel shared another example of how she made her courses more practical for students:

I also engage my contacts, I invite them for guest lectures, and they give lectures in the field about businesses or non-governmental organizations. I try to incorporate as many examples, current news, for example, the tax reform, political things, readings that are relevant...and I try to give also real-world assignments, world figures, for example, from the Internet.

Another teacher was even able to bring examples from her own business into the classroom.

Teachers also grounded learning in everyday life with the aim of making the process of learning interesting for students. Asem shared, “Because practice for them, you know, it’s real life, it’s more interesting for them. Just to look at the book and to study all these income statements, cash flows. They need to know how to apply.” Alexey described how he brought real-life situations into the classroom, “50 % of my lectures consist of examples. If I do not give my students examples they will not listen to my lecture. My students like me because I give many examples from business...If I do not give examples they will not listen to me.”

### *Making Learning Interactive*

Many of the teachers in the study stressed that they also used interactive teaching methods in their classroom practice. By using interactive teaching methods, participants hoped to engage students in learning, improve students’ soft skills (i.e. communication, ability to work in groups), and keep students interested in classroom activities. The choice of interactive methods that teachers used depended on the specific situation they faced, the interactive methods they knew, and the needs of the group. All of the teachers who reported using interactive methods said they liked the results.

Teachers described using a variety of methods to make their classes more interactive.

The methods they used in their classrooms included group work, role-plays, business games, and student-led activities such as presentations and checking homework. Participants also considered two-way dialogue as an interactive method. Gulmira, a language teacher, described how she used dialogue to engage with students:

...if it's reading, I listen to them; if they pronounce wrong, I have to correct them, their mistakes and discussions. I also participate in discussions. I express my opinion and my point of view and they express their point of view. Maybe they know better than me; we exchange.

Teachers were flexible in their approaches to making their classes more interactive. What methods they used depended on which ones they knew how to use, the situation they found themselves in, and how appropriate they believed the method to be for the situation. Balzhan described how she might utilize different methods:

And some group activity, if it's a big group, I'm dividing it into small groups. It's more flexible. But I'm changing. I'm trying to change leaders of the group. Every group has its own leader, two or three, but I'm trying to change, let's say. I say, "Today we will work with Olga as a top manager- leader of the group." Because some students need this help, pushing, some kind of assistance. And if it's small group activity, I'm using just plays, like for students to relax, questions of one group to another, Olympiads or intellectual games, jokes...sometimes, because they become tired. And competition, I like competition, because competition helps students to show their abilities like communication skills, creativeness of the group, [and a] certain motivation to work with others.

All of the participants in the study who talked about using interactive methods said they felt good about the results. Teachers believed that students enjoyed participating and were more engaged in learning when they participated in interactive class activities. As Asel emphasized:

I was effective. I taught a class this year in the spring and I tried to use [a] different style; it was kind of PR [public relations] learning. Students...they had to moderate discussions, they had to prepare questions for discussion, and ask or initiate discussion in the class. So this way... the attention is shifted from the teacher to the student. And the student feels more responsible for their learning.

Vladimir explained his rationale for using interactive methods, “I use games, dialogue regime, group works, and individual assignments....I think that the material can be better understood using these methods. And also knowledge, which is not understood, is information. And when students understand everything I give, solve some problems, and then read books on the subject, they get to know the subject very well.”

### *Getting Feedback from Students*

Another technique that many participants commonly used in teaching was getting feedback on student progress and teacher performance. These teachers felt that doing regular assessment and getting feedback on a frequent basis was important. As Olga said, “For sure it is important to assess each class...Any class should be concluded [evaluated]...In order to see the result, first of all, the result of my work, and also so that students can see the results of their work.” Sources of feedback included student responses on exams and homework, in-class assessments, and student comments to teachers. Teachers who focused on sharing

subject knowledge judged their accomplishments based on how students performed on tests and exams, chose the teacher's subject as the basis for a graduation paper, or demonstrated an ability to use the knowledge to solve practical problems. Teachers who focused on developing life skills felt they had succeeded when students could make decisions independently, work in groups and teams, follow their dreams, and communicate effectively. Several teachers also noted that they felt successful when students said "thank you" for the job the teacher had done – even if this occurred long after students left the class.

Most of the teachers in the study utilized exams, quizzes, and questioning to check knowledge and get feedback. As Alfiya described, "Every three lessons or if topics are difficult every two classes, I try to have mini-tests to consolidate the material and to check their knowledge. I like mini-tests." For many teachers in the study, performance on tests and exams was a strong indicator of whether or not the student learned the material. Mariya shared her thoughts on this by saying, "The grade is the index of how much they are trying to do, how much they would like to work." Gulmira, another teacher who valued exams as an indicator of her effectiveness, shared this idea as follows:

According to the program of the university they have this test. They study according to this program and afterwards they have to have a test. The result is the test; if they write it in a correct way- it means that they got the information, they know this. So, it shows and proves that the class was successful.

Grades, however, were not the only indicator of student and teacher effectiveness. Aliya was one of the teachers who gathered feedback from sources other than tests. She did not focus on testing students, "They write test OK. For example, I think that philosophy tests

are ineffective. If Socrates heard about it, he would laugh. Because the truth comes up from arguing.” For Aliya, a more effective method of getting feedback was offering students the opportunity to choose a position and defend it.

Teachers also used feedback to reflect on their performance and improve themselves. Asem described her early teaching experience and how she utilized the feedback from exams to change her teaching:

Ok, when I started to teach I had tutorial on Accounting I without lectures, only tutorials. And I started to teach but we just had some problems to solve in the class, questions to answer and then we had five exams – continuous assessment. And when it was the first exam, I looked at the grades and I realized that they are not very good. Then I thought maybe I’m not teaching, maybe not very clear, maybe we don’t do something. And I tried to change the style and I tried to involve them more, I thought how to do it. And then, for example, for the second exam their grades became much better, for the third – better. And I actually realized that, finally my class is [good].

Other teachers asked students for feedback in class and used that feedback to improve their teaching practice. Aigul shared her approach, “I come to a new class, hold 2-3 lectures, and then I leave 10-15 minutes to discuss whether students like my method of teaching or [if] they have any proposals for me. I listen to them and make some conclusions...Some of [the] students say that I should be more demanding; some say that I should be softer. So I try to find a compromise.”

### *Reaching Every Student*

Reaching each and every student they taught was critical for most of the participants.

Teachers wanted to insure that each student was involved, felt included, and got the knowledge or developed the skills the teacher was trying to communicate. Aigul communicated this theme when she stressed, “I think that a good teacher is the one who can find an individual approach to [each] student, stress the individuality of each student, and give him the opportunity to realize [his] ideas.” Lyzzat added, “The teacher has to work with each student, deliver the material to each student so that everyone understands it.”

Teachers used a variety of teaching methods to reach each student. These included learning and using students’ names, structuring assignments for individuals as needed, and meeting students outside of class. Aigul explained some of the approaches she and other teachers used as follows:

First of all, I know him by name. Probably, at first sight it is not that significant but it is very important to students; you become closer to students. When you see that a student is shy to answer questions orally - there are some students who graduated from Kazakh schools - I understand them. I’m not making up a situation where they would feel themselves uncomfortable. I try to give them written assignments, and when I see that it works better for them. I try to say that if they have any problems, they can easily come to my office and discuss them with me. I individually talk to them and...I try to psychologically influence them, so [they]...could open themselves. Like for some students I give an assignment to write a report, and for others I can ask them to write a paper...

As Aigul’s comments illustrate, participants varied their approaches depending on the group and the individuals in that group. Aliya added to this understanding with these comments:

There are different kinds of students. There are students who learn everything by heart, and there some who keep the conversation, they talk, express their own point of view. And there are passive students who just listen. But there is a point that you have to involve everyone. I had a student who would come to me and say that she can't talk in front of the class, so I would meet her outside of the class. There was one student who would write me essays. He wanted to write essays and express his own point of view. He had very good essays.

Finding the right approach for each student took time; in some cases, trying to involve each student actually slowed down the class. As Aigul stated, "I had a group where it took me two months to find an individual approach so they could trust me. In some classes I come into the room and it happens immediately." In fact, several participants struggled to find a middle ground that would allow them to meet individual needs while still moving the class along and communicating knowledge. Vladimir shared his experience of this struggle by saying, "I feel the responsibility for each one of my students. In some cases I have to...compromise. When a student does not want to accept the information, I sacrifice with the quality of understanding of one student for another." This struggle, however, did not change participants underlying beliefs that it was important that they reach all students in the class.

### *Fostering an Atmosphere of Respect*

Fostering an atmosphere of respect in the classroom was also very important to participants. Participants defined this process of fostering respect as a bi-directional set of relationships of respect – teacher to students, student to teacher, and student to student.

Teachers used a variety of techniques in the classroom to foster these relationships of

respect. To demonstrate respect for students, teachers called students by their names, showed up on time to class and kept their commitments to students, and treated students as partners and colleagues. They also made themselves available to students outside class. Galya shared one example of this type of approach by saying, “I try to be very respectable to students, to remember all the names of the students – call them by name. I’d like to establish [a] partners relationship with the students. I would always listen to their opinion; what they have to say and I would always answer all the questions during the lecture.” In another example, a teacher said she used the formal pronoun to denote *you* (as opposed to the informal pronoun for *you*) when talking to students as a way to show respect.

Teachers believed they had to show respect in order to gain respect. As one teacher explained, “In order for students to understand me, I have to understand them.” Another added, “I also was respected by my students because I respect them very much.” By showing respect to students, teachers believed they were helping students learn to respect themselves and others. Mariya shared this idea by saying, “I think you have to show the respect to the person and only after this, he’ll respect himself. He will see this attitude toward him. I think it’s very good.” Balzhan explained the importance of showing respect from the beginning when she said, “There should be some space, creative space, any class is a creative space. And we have to create it together, and usually I have no problems with creating this kind of atmosphere or space. [The] group would respect you and show this respect if you start in a right way, if you show them your respect.”

To encourage students to be respectful to the teacher and to each other, teachers tried to create an open classroom environment, treated students equally, solicited individual points

of view, and promoted dialogue in class. Aigul shared a common view regarding treating students equally as she said, “I don’t distinguish between them. I treat everyone equally, and I’m not trying to say that this is my favorite student and this is not.” Lyzzat added, “I believe students should be treated equally for that people are different. Each one of them has his own point of view, and we have to respect it.”

Participants said that students could demonstrate respect in a variety of ways. In describing their favorite students, teachers repeatedly talked about those students who paid attention in class, did their homework, put a lot of effort into learning, brought their own ideas to class, and treated other students respectfully. Participants believed that by engaging in these behaviors, student were demonstrating respect for the teacher and the class as a whole.

### *Preparing Themselves for Teaching*

Participants in this study expressed a strong conviction that good teachers needed to be prepared. For most of the teachers, being prepared meant being able to answer student questions and provide the information students needed as soon as they needed it. Marat expressed the majority sentiment when he said, “You never know what the student is going to ask....So, in some instance, I just wanted to be ready for any possible question, and I had to read a lot, study a lot by myself.” Botagoz added, “The strength of a teacher is to know subject very well and to be able to answer all the questions of the students” Galya shared another manifestation of this idea, “When you work in a bank, you may often have mechanical work, while when you work as a teacher – you monitor final diploma works, papers, final exams and etc., therefore you have to know everything what is going on, always

improve yourself.”

To be prepared, participants believed that teachers had to constantly develop themselves. As Galya relayed, “Here is one more value; teachers should always improve and work on themselves.” Both experienced and inexperienced teachers alike recognized the need to practice self-development in order to be better teachers. A comment that typifies this recognition was, “I’m a very young teacher, young trainer. I think that I frequently make some mistakes, and I’m in the process of improving my skills.” Alfiya, an older teacher, expressed this recognition by saying, “In order to become a good teacher, you should be the student.” Karlygash added, “It’s very important when every teacher tries to improve [his or her] own knowledge to be more modern.”

Participants used a variety of strategies and methods to stay current, including focusing on subject knowledge, focusing on methodology, seeking practical experience, participating in new training courses, or a mixture of these. To stay current in their subjects, teachers reported reading the newspaper, keeping up with professional journals, staying in touch with industry contacts, inviting guest lecturers into their classrooms, or attending training courses primarily focused on increasing subject knowledge. Teachers who wanted to improve their teaching methodology, including junior faculty with less teaching experience, actively sought opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills through courses focused on subject knowledge *and* methodology. Many of the junior teachers also spent time observing other teachers. Those junior teachers who started teaching right after university also recognized the need to go beyond theoretical knowledge and get some practical experience and knowledge to bring back to the classroom.

### *Contextual Factors Affecting Teaching Practice*

In reflecting on their current beliefs and instructional practices, teachers identified four factors in the educational context that supported or inhibited certain actions and thus affected their teaching practice. These factors included the nature of the subject taught, the course organization, the curriculum structure, and resources available to teachers. These contextual factors also helped determine whether or not teachers could implement new knowledge and skills learned through training once they returned to the teaching environment.

One factor shaping participants' teaching practice was the nature of the specific subject each of them taught. Participants believed that some subjects were more practical while others had more of a theoretical nature. Participants also believed that theoretical and practical subjects needed to be taught in different ways and thus participants tried to adjust their teaching practice to match the nature of the subject. However, teachers were not always able to use the techniques they wanted to because of other contextual factors which often constrained their ability to teach as they wanted. Constraining factors included the course organization, the curriculum structure, and the resource constraints teachers faced.

#### *Nature of the Subject Taught*

In many ways, the nature of the individual subjects that participants taught influenced how they went about teaching. Teachers believed that their subjects were either primarily theoretical or practical and that theoretical and practical subjects should be taught using different teaching methods. Alexey's comments illustrate this idea. He said, "Each subject has to be taught in a special way. You can't teach economics or tourism theoretically. You

can't teach mathematics only practically. You need theory for mathematics. How would you practice math? You need to learn formulas by heart. Just, it is the matter of different subjects.”

All of the teachers in this study taught subjects necessary for students to obtain a business or economics degree in Kazakhstan. As such, most of them considered their subjects to be more practical than theoretical in nature. Accordingly, participants tried to adjust their teaching to match the practical nature of their subjects. In another example, Aliya related how she used different evaluation methods for practical and theoretical courses. She stated, “Of course, mathematics I taught in a different way, not based on the questions....Of course, there are similar techniques. However there is one disadvantage of tests – they are very useful in math, but it is ineffective to implement them in philosophy. What is the point of knowing what year Socrates was born or when Hindi appeared?”

Participants were not always able to use the teaching methods they wanted to teach their subjects, however. The course structure and their role in the course restricted teachers' choices of teaching methods. The curriculum structure dictated much of what they needed to teach and in what order it should be taught. And, adequate resources including space, equipment, materials and other teaching tools were not always available to teachers so that they could cover the material in the way they wanted.

### *Course Organization*

Course organization and the teacher's role within the course was the second contextual factor that influenced how participants conducted their classes. For most subjects taught in business and economics education, there was a clear divide between the lecture

portion of the course and the seminar portion of the course. Participants lectured first, and then gave students a chance to practice with the material. This teaching structure was a legacy of the Soviet education system.

Botagoz described the general course organization, “Everything starts with the theory, then practice, and then [the] diploma.” Alexey gave more detail, “First of all, I read the lecture, and then I give students the break [let students take a break]. Mostly I implement games during practical classes. I give handouts to my students. Also I distribute problems and we solve them. Or I give them an assignment to determine the effectiveness of any project.”

The division in course structure between lecture and seminar or tutorial, in many ways created a natural divide in course activities. Within this divide, lecturers (usually senior teachers) communicated theory, most often through lecturing during scheduled lecture sessions. Lecture sessions were attended by the entire class, which could include up to 80-100 people. Balzhan described a traditional lecture as follows, “Typical lecture, I mean, from my educational background- Soviet style; it means teacher comes, starts and [for] 45 or 90 minutes he’s talking, you know. He can show some tables, but mostly it’s monologue. He’s explaining and you have to put down this information and use it later.” During the seminar sessions, lecturers’ assistants (usually junior teachers or the senior teachers themselves if they did not have an assistant) followed up and helped students practice with the theoretical material. These sessions were held with smaller groups of up to 25 people and were related to materials reviewed during the lecture session. When discussing how she planned her seminar classes, Lyzzat said, “We elaborate together with [the] lecturer, because seminars are based

on the lectures.

A teacher's role as a lecturer or as a seminar leader influenced the teaching methods s/he used in class. For example, several participants said they did not know how to or did not believe it was possible to use interactive methods in lecture sessions. These teachers said that time constraints and the large class size prevented them from using interactive methods such as role plays, group work, and games in lecture sessions. Rather, these participants focused on making lectures interesting and to the extent possible, grounded in real life. Interactive teaching methods were often reserved for seminar sessions and thus more frequently used by junior teachers.

### *Curriculum Structure*

The structure of the curriculum itself also shaped participants' teaching practice. Because the Ministry of Education dictated the majority of the curriculum, participants had little flexibility in deciding what to teach or even in what order. Rather, teachers were required to communicate a certain amount of standardized knowledge in a limited time in order to prepare students for standardized tests or the next course in the sequence. This requirement limited the ability of participants to bring in new content and use new methodologies in their courses.

In Kazakhstan in 2002 and 2003, the majority of the curriculum was mandated by the State so as to maintain the consistency of education in particular fields across universities. In setting the curriculum, the Ministry of Education also set State Standards of Higher Education for all approved specialties [majors] offered at universities. The Standards specified...”the respective learning objectives, the number of courses required for

certification, the substantive content of all courses, the textbooks to be used, the sequence in which courses are to be taken...the number of classroom contact hours, the number of hours that students should expect to study, and the maximum course load” (McLendon, 2004, p. 283). Teachers had to work within this structure with very little flexibility. At the time of this study, a university only had control over the design of 30% of the business curriculum it offered. A full 70% of the classes and content that a student had to complete in order to get a business or economics degree was determined directly by the Ministry and standardized across universities (McLendon, 2004).

Working within the curriculum meant that teachers had to communicate a certain amount and type of knowledge in a certain amount of time in their courses in order to prepare students for standardized exams or for the next courses in the curriculum. As Galya shared, “The lecture can be different. Whatever the structure is, I have to deliver the material according to Study plan. And so, the only thing that can change is the methodology of teaching.” Botagoz added:

Every three years the standard programs are revised. In three years it should be revised and enriched. We follow these standard programs in our activity. They give us very specific tasks, [tell us] what are the issues [and] how many hours should be spent for them. So we should plan our lectures according to these programs. We cannot give them any material that we want. We should follow this program. It is like an instruction for us. Of course, there can be additions or changes, if there are any changes in banking. We make these amendments in our lectures too.

Working within the curriculum also meant that within courses, not only must topic A

come before topic B, but that more time needed to be allotted for certain topics than for others. Many participants found it difficult to talk about all the topics or conduct all the activities they would have liked to with students *and* (italics added) meet the demands of the curriculum structure. Boris elaborated on this idea, “Yes, [we teach] according to [the] *uchebny* [study] plan. The number of hours, number of disciplines is determined by the study plan. Last year, 72 hours were assigned for ‘Introduction to Diplomacy and Tactics of Negotiations’, but this year – only 54.”

#### *Resources Available to Teachers*

As discussed above in this chapter, participants stressed that a lack of personal and institutional resources also constrained their ability to utilize certain teaching methodologies in carrying out their teaching practice. In discussing resource constraints, participants most often identified a lack of institutional equipment and facilities as hampering their efforts to be effective teachers. Participants shared many examples that illustrated how a lack of resources affected their teaching practice. Asem, for example, wanted to use an LCD projector to show Powerpoint presentations to her class. She was unable to do this, however, because the rooms where LCD projectors could be used were too small to accommodate the size of the class she was teaching. In another example, Aliya wanted to show films to her class but there was not any budget to buy films, nor equipment to show them on, available to her at the University. Instead of showing films, Aliya resorted to drawing figures on the blackboard. Other teachers expressed frustration that they could not often utilize the computer labs at their universities for their individual classes because the universities did not have enough computers for the many students enrolled. In another example, a participant wanted to make copies of handouts

for her class in order to facilitate a class discussion. However, she was unable to even make copies because her department did not have sufficient paper or toner.

Some teachers tried to compensate for a lack of institutional resources by using their own equipment in their teaching or by using their own financial resources to procure paper, supplies, and even Internet access. Aliya described how she had to “bring everything” to class by herself. Balzhan was one of the many teachers who described how they used their own money to pay for Internet access at Internet cafés so that they could get information they needed for their classes. Despite their willingness to contribute personal resources to support their teaching, participants simply did not have sufficient funds to do so because of the considerable personal financial pressures they were under.

#### *Summary of Participant’s Understandings of Effective Teaching*

Teachers in this study shared a common vision with respect to what they wanted to achieve through teaching. Specifically, teachers wanted to 1) prepare students for work and life and 2) share their knowledge with students. To effectively prepare students and share knowledge, participants used six common approaches in teaching. These included grounding learning in real life, making learning interactive, getting feedback, fostering an atmosphere of respect in the classroom, and preparing themselves as teachers. It is important to note that participants did not describe these approaches as new or say that these approaches had developed since Kazakhstan gained independence. Rather, these common understandings of effective teaching were shared among younger and older teachers alike, suggesting that these understandings developed before Kazakhstan became independent.

Four contextual factors, the nature of the subject taught, course organization,

curriculum structure, and the resources available to teachers, supported or inhibited certain teaching actions. One of these was the nature of the subject participants taught. Participants believed that theoretical and practical subjects needed to be taught in different ways and tried to adjust their teaching accordingly. However the course structure and the teacher's role in it, the curriculum structure, and resource availability all affected participants' abilities to utilize their preferred teaching methods.

Courses were usually organized into lecture and seminar session, with teachers taking the role of lecturer or seminar leader. Lectures were supposed to communicate theory while seminars were more practical. Teachers were able to use different techniques in each session, but they often had difficulty using interactive methods in the lecture portion. Because the majority of the curriculum was structured and dictated by the Ministry of Education, teachers had to communicate a lot of standardized knowledge in a limited amount of time. Participants had limited flexibility with respect to adding topics, bringing in new information, or changing the order in which topics were taught. Teachers were also constrained in using certain teaching methods because they were often not able to access resources, such as equipment and supplies for teaching, at their universities.

#### Differences Between Teachers Identified as Soviet and Those Identified as Post-Soviet

Through their descriptions of themselves and their understandings of teaching, participants defined themselves in one of two groups of teachers – Soviet or post-Soviet. This perceptual grouping into Soviet and post-Soviet reflected participants' indoctrination into teaching at a particular time in Kazakhstan's history and in a particular cultural context. Because the indoctrination and cultural context were somewhat different for each of the two

groups, members of each group expressed subtle differences in their understandings of what it means to be an effective teacher.

It is important to note that the views expressed by participants classified as Soviet and those classified as post-Soviet are not completely separate and distinct from each other. In reality, participants' understandings of teaching methods, the commitment to the curriculum, and of changes taking place in Kazakhstan spanned a continuum, with some teachers expressing more than one understanding about a particular aspect of teaching. Along this continuum, two main groups of ideas were expressed with respect to teaching. Several of the participants expressly identified themselves as Soviet or post-Soviet. Others were added to the Soviet or post-Soviet group because the views they expressed generally agreed with views expressed by teachers who identified themselves specifically as Soviet or post-Soviet.

The group of Soviet teachers included those teachers who learned to teach prior to 1991 when Kazakhstan was part of the Soviet Union, or were mentored and significantly influenced by a Soviet teacher after 1991. Post-Soviet teachers generally started teaching after Kazakhstan's independence. Soviet teachers tended to be (a) older than their post-Soviet colleagues and (b) teaching in the role of senior lecturer more often than their post-Soviet colleagues.

Members of the Soviet and post-Soviet groups shared a common understanding regarding the goals of effective teachers. Likewise, members of these two groups generally agreed on the teaching strategies that effective teachers use to reach those goals. Members of each group had a desire and recognized the need to engage in training in order to better prepare themselves for teaching. As Botagoz explained:

During the Soviet times we read all the lectures with the piece of paper and students wrote what was said. However this method cannot be used nowadays. Now it is important to show factual data, show modern banks, and tell about their activities. We try and use all the positive methods, excepting everything negative.

Correspondingly, members of both groups participated in new training opportunities and tried to introduce new content, new technologies, and new teaching methodologies in their teaching practice.

Subtle differences emerged, however, between the groups in (a), their commitment to the curriculum, (b) their ability to adapt to changing teaching situations, and (c) the impact of increased economic pressure in Kazakhstan upon them. This section describes the two groups and the differences that emerged between them.

### *Descriptions of Soviet and Post-Soviet Teachers*

#### *Soviet Teachers*

Teachers identified as Soviet in this study either studied in a formal pedagogical program while living in the Soviet Union or said they were mentored and significantly influenced by a Soviet teacher following independence. According to participants, being a teacher in the Soviet Union was one of the most respected professions in Soviet society. Soviet teachers were therefore expected to maintain very high standards. As elaborated by Alfiya:

For example, a teacher should be an authority, more respectable and highly qualified, intellectual. As I represent [the] Soviet period, yes, we were taught that the most respectable specialty is the teacher. Because every, for example, official had taken

knowledge from the teacher. And teacher is everything and should be ahead...should stand at the top of the society.

During their indoctrination into teaching, Soviet teachers learned a particular set of methods for teaching, through courses such as “Methodology of Teaching” and through being mentored by Soviet teachers. Soviet participants believed that there was a *right* way to teach. According to these participants, teaching in the *right* way included conveying knowledge through lecturing to the class and checking knowledge through questioning students and through exams. Botagoz described her experience of learning to teach in this methodic style:

Yes. First I taught in college, then I entered Aspirantura at the university, and in 1974 I stayed to work at this university after I completed my dissertation. My professor wanted me to stay there. I was afraid to enter the class the first time for that the level of university students was higher than college’s. Therefore I asked my professor to come with me. Also I would attend his lectures and get a lot from him. First I taught Money, Credit in the USSR, then I taught Money and Credit during capitalism. So I learned how to conduct lectures methodically from those teachers.

Participants described a Soviet teacher as someone with strong to expert subject knowledge, who was demanding, who maintained distance from students, and was the ultimate authority in the classroom. In Galya’s words:

No, my mentality is still Soviet, probably Soviet. Before Soviet mentality meant commanding methods, when teachers were not as partners with students, but [the] teacher was on a different level than the student. The teacher had a right to pressure a

student if he didn't like something; if a student was late, looked not in a way he is supposed to. A teacher could refuse to put a grade for [his] exam. During the Soviet times it could be this way that teacher felt himself above the students.

In Soviet university-level classrooms, most of the communication in the classroom was one-way, with the teacher doing most of the talking. As Balzhan related, "I know that most old teachers were using monologue as the main way or method of teaching, just group of student and a mentor as a lecturer." Although Soviet teachers learned more interactive methods early in their careers, they admitted not using these methods often. Gulmira shared her understanding of how Soviet teachers used interactive methods of teaching, "The thing is that we know all these [interactive] methods. We just have different names. We were taught [these methods] at the university, but at that time we didn't pay that much attention to interactive methods, so we mostly used fundamental methods of teaching."

Participants reported that in Soviet classrooms teachers were also often strict. Another participant shared her experience as a student in Soviet classrooms. She said:

Our teachers were very strict, very strict. And they didn't like to discuss so many things with the students. We had only classes devoted to the subject. So we were very disciplined. We didn't miss classes, for that we knew that our teachers are strict and we will have problems. That is why. Sometimes I also want my students to be disciplined, sit like this, sometimes. But then I think of me when I was a student and I didn't like to sit like this.

### *Post-Soviet Teachers*

Most of the teachers in this study started teaching after Kazakhstan became

independent and are thus classified here as *post-Soviet* teachers. Post-Soviet teachers were not chosen to teach based on their teaching experience or training in a particular methodology. Rather, these post-Soviet teachers were usually chosen to teach because they were good students in particular subjects, had practical experience and knowledge of business courses, or had studied outside Kazakhstan and could bring a different perspective to the classroom. Because they started teaching after independence, post-Soviet teachers tended to be (a) younger than their Soviet colleagues and (b) teaching in the role of Junior Lecturer or teaching assistant more often than their Soviet colleagues.

Lyzzat, one of the post-Soviet teachers, described how she started teaching:

We were not taught. We have special pedagogical institute that prepares teachers, but mostly for schools. At that time, there were not many university teachers; young faculty [members] were needed. Also the University had a practice of leaving students who studied well to work in the department and then teach. Since we knew these disciplines, for that studied them as students, therefore we could deliver it to students.

In contrast to their Soviet colleagues, post-Soviet teachers generally did not receive substantial formal training in pedagogy or methodology before becoming university teachers. When asked how they learned to teach, the Post-Soviet teachers reported that they learned to teach by watching others and either imitating behaviors they liked or trying specifically to avoid teaching behaviors they disliked. “Maybe I’m too personal, but I try to conduct myself as those teachers I liked,” said Marat. As an example, Marat said he liked classes in which the teacher made things interesting, gave practical examples, established trusting

relationships with students, and even used humor in the classroom. Correspondingly, Marat focused on these aspects in his teaching practice.

Most of the post-Soviet teachers believed that they ultimately taught themselves to teach. Two comments illustrate this point. Karlygash said:

I didn't participate in some teaching methodology seminars and I have only my own experience. Of course, I, since I saw how other teachers taught, because it was very interesting for me, I saw how my lecturer teaches. Like, at the beginning I taught 4 courses: corporate finance, international finance, money and banking, and, in [university] as a post-graduato, I taught one course - securities market. And therefore I had an opportunity to observe four different lecturers. Therefore I saw the methods of each one of them. I was taking into account something for myself, and something was unacceptable for me. During this process, during [the] first two years, I myself as a teacher did not have high level of teaching, because no one showed me how to do that. I did as I could [by] myself. And only last year, and this year, I think, I've improved my teaching skills.

Aigul was another teacher who learned to teach by herself. She added:

I learned it from my teachers. I saw how they teach. I saw strong and weak sides of their teaching. And when I first time came to the auditorium I had a goal to realize – to take the positive skills of my teachers and at the same time not implement the moments that I didn't like. Taking into consideration my character, and my approach, I was, I learned from the books also. I was a teacher to myself.

In effect, post-Soviet teachers crafted their own individual models for teaching out of what

they liked in other teachers. Asel talked about combining methods from two teachers as follows:

One of them was very pedantic, I mean he is, he like to put everything in order, and he keeps the deadlines, and he also expects the same of his students. And, I try to combine his model with another one who was a little bit more flexible, would let you, for example, to push the deadline if it is needed, but who would be more focused on the content and on maybe presentations.

Post-Soviet teachers imitated or avoided the teaching behaviors of other teachers in order to structure their classes in the way that they believed would most engage students, would be most interesting and practical, and would thus be most effective. To be effective, participants used interactive methods in class, tried to create open classroom environments, treated students equally, and in some cases as colleagues, fostered respect, and encouraged dialogue. Behaviors that teachers mentioned wanting to avoid included relying on giving a monologue in class, dividing the class into “smart and stupid” (Mariya), making students feel as if the teacher didn’t care about them, maintaining a lot of distance between teacher and student, and being too rigid. For example, Marat shared why he didn’t want to use lecture as the dominant instructional strategy in his classroom. He said, “What was boring is when a teacher comes to a class and he just starts talking about the subject matter, he just keeps talking and talking, and you listen to him and listen. And of course if you have questions, you ask, but it kind of gets boring, because it’s like one way communication.”

#### *Differences in Commitment to the Curriculum*

Soviet and post-Soviet teachers differed in the way they understood the legitimacy of

the curriculum plan they were required to follow. Soviet teachers were more likely to be loyal to the curriculum or study plan, as if the curriculum structure given to them by the University was the *right* curriculum structure and they *should* follow it. Galya described her commitment by saying, “Whatever the structure is, I have to deliver the material according to the study plan. And so, the only thing that can change is the methodology of teaching.” Botagoz added, “If you were a new teacher, we would explain to you that there is a certain curriculum that you have to follow.”

Post-Soviet teachers were less likely than Soviet teachers to believe in the idea of a *right* curriculum. In fact, they stressed that the curriculum provided by the Ministry was outdated. Vladimir, a teacher responsible for faculty development, shared his frustration with teachers having to follow the curriculum, “But they are complaining for the education program, as they depend on the Department of Public Education, so it is called now. The program is approved by this Department [Ministry of Education], and you have to teach within these limits. The students do not appreciate too much what they are taught.’ Lyzzat shared a commonly expressed sentiment when she said, “Probably that there should be less control over the plan of the seminar; if you have anything to add or change. Sometimes you find topics not that important. I’d like to teach the way I want to.” Post-Soviet teachers wanted to teach their way and wanted the curriculum to be flexible enough to accommodate their judgment about what should and should not be included in lesson plans.

#### *Differences in Adaptability to Changing Teaching Situations*

Soviet and post-Soviet teachers in this study expressed different comfort levels with adapting their teaching practice to changing teaching situations. Specifically, Soviet teachers

expressed more difficulty making changes to their teaching practice to respond to the changes taking place in Kazakhstan. Because Soviet teachers were indoctrinated into a “right” way to teach and believed in the legitimacy of the curriculum as structured by others, adapting new ways of teaching was more difficult for them. Also, these Soviet teachers felt more limited in their ability to use interactive methods in the role of lecturer, a role they were more frequently called upon to assume. Finally, Soviet teachers, who were trained to be the “experts” in their classrooms seemingly had more difficulty adjusting to their new role of being service providers and to students’ desires to take a more active role in the teaching process. As an example, Soviet teachers were more likely to describe the downsides for teachers of increased student involvement in the classroom than were their post-Soviet counterparts.

Post-Soviet teachers who started teaching after private universities were created also expressed difficulty adjusting to all of the changes in society and students. However, post-Soviet teachers expressed less frustration adapting their teaching to the changing situation and to the new higher education model than did the Soviet teachers. Because they taught themselves to teach while the new model of education was emerging, post-Soviet teachers were more flexible in their teaching approaches and thus better able to adapt. Additionally, because they often taught seminars as junior teachers, post-Soviet teachers had more opportunities to practice with and integrate the new interactive teaching methods they were learning than did their Soviet colleagues.

#### *Impact of Increased Economic Pressure*

Soviet teachers also expressed more difficulty dealing with the increased economic

pressure they felt as a result of the weakening of teachers' salaries. Soviet teachers had generally been teaching longer, they were older, and they tended to have more financial commitments than their post-Soviet counterparts. Consequently, they shared more frustration in dealing with increased economic pressure than did their post-Soviet counterparts. Adding to this pressure, Soviet teachers expressed concern that being older limited their possibilities to find financially rewarding employment outside of teaching. In discussing the possibility of working at a bank, for example, Botagoz shared how her age affected her, "Now they will not take me, I am 55 already. That time when in the [1990s] commercial banks were opened I could go to work there. The salary was even higher there. But I liked teaching."

Because they tended to be younger with fewer commitments, post-Soviet teachers seemingly adjusted more easily to increased financial pressure than their Soviet counterparts. Many of the post-Soviet teachers had been trained outside of Kazakhstan and were more likely to know English and have computer skills than their Soviet colleagues. Consequently, these post-Soviet teachers believed it was easier for them to find jobs outside of teaching.

#### *Summary of Differences Between Soviet and Post-Soviet Teachers*

Subtle but important differences emerged between Soviet and post-Soviet teachers in the study. The manner in which each group was indoctrinated into teaching and the roles they took in the classroom shaped their teaching practices. Soviet teachers trained in a particular pedagogy were more likely to believe in a right way to teach and to be more loyal to the curriculum. Post-Soviet teachers who learned to teach by themselves structured their teaching according to what they thought would most engage their students.

Differences emerged between the groups in their commitment to the curriculum, their

adaptability to changing teaching situations, and in the impact of increased economic pressure on them. Soviet teachers were more likely to believe in the legitimacy of the curriculum handed down by the Ministry of Education and the University than their post-Soviet counterparts. Soviet teachers also had more difficulty adjusting their teaching to changing teaching situations as a result of their indoctrination to a *right* way to teach and belief in the legitimacy of a dictated curriculum. Increased economic pressures also hit Soviet teachers harder than post-Soviet teachers because Soviet teachers tended to be older, tended to have more commitments, and felt they had less opportunity to find financially rewarding jobs outside of teaching.

## CHAPTER FIVE

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of cultural change on teaching perspectives. Research in the area of teaching perspectives has demonstrated that there are many ways to be a good teacher (Pratt, 1992; Kember, 1997; Pratt & Associates, 1998) and that perspectives on teaching are grounded in the culture in which they are developed (Pratt et al., 1998; 1999). Research on teaching perspectives has further demonstrated that it can be difficult for an individual from one culture to understand how a different perspective, rooted in another culture, or the teaching actions associated with that different perspective, can be representative of good teaching (Pratt et al., 1998). While much research has been done on what it means to teach in a variety of cultures, little research has been done to understand how cultural change affects one's perspectives on teaching.

This study sought to add to the adult education literature on perspectives on teaching by exploring what happens to these perspectives when the cultures in which they are grounded change. Kazakhstan was chosen as a context for exploring the phenomena of teaching and cultural change because of the immense political, economic, and social change the country has experienced since gaining its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Business and economics teachers at Kazakhstan's new private universities were selected as participants in the study because of the key role they play in preparing students to be future managers in Kazakhstan's changing economy. The specific questions that guided the study were:

1. What are the current perspectives on teaching held by business and economics

- teachers in Kazakhstan?
2. How do these perspectives on teaching manifest in practice?
  3. What do teachers perceive as influencing their perspectives on teaching?
  4. How do teachers understand the cultural changes taking place in Kazakhstan as related to their teaching?

The study is important in that it extends research on teaching perspectives to a new teaching context – business and economics education in Kazakhstan. This study is more significant, however, because it expands research on teaching perspectives to a new area of exploration – the influence of cultural change on teaching. Prior to this study, the influence of cultural change on teaching perspectives was not widely explored by adult education researchers.

In addition to its importance for research, this study has practical significance. The Ministry of Education in Kazakhstan and other organizations, including donor organizations, remain interested in supporting business and economics education in Kazakhstan (USAID, 2004b). Organizations wanting to help business and economics teachers can do a better job of providing support *if* they understand how teachers have been affected by the changes they have experienced since Kazakhstan gained independence. This chapter summarizes this study's findings, draws conclusions from those findings, and suggests implications for future research and for future practice.

### Summary of Findings

According to participants in this study, changes taking place in Kazakhstan have

significantly impacted business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan and their teaching practice. Findings are reported and discussed in three broad categories related to three constructs in the conceptual framework of the study. These include: (a) participants' perceptions of the impact of changes in Kazakhstan on the practice and profession of teaching, (b) participants' understandings of effective teaching, and (c) differences between teachers identified as Soviet and those identified as Post-Soviet.

*Summary of Participants' Perceptions of the Impact of Changes in Kazakhstan on the Practice and Profession of Teaching*

Two areas of change – changes in society and changes in students – were identified as having the greatest impact on participants' teaching practice. Participants highlighted the *opening of Kazakhstan's borders, the introduction of new technologies, the rise of private universities, increased economic pressures on teachers, businesses hiring students more competitively, and chaos in the education system* as changes in society which had an important impact on teaching. Participants also stressed that changes in students – specifically changes in student attitudes, their preparedness for learning, and the roles they wanted to play in the classroom – significantly affected teacher's practice.

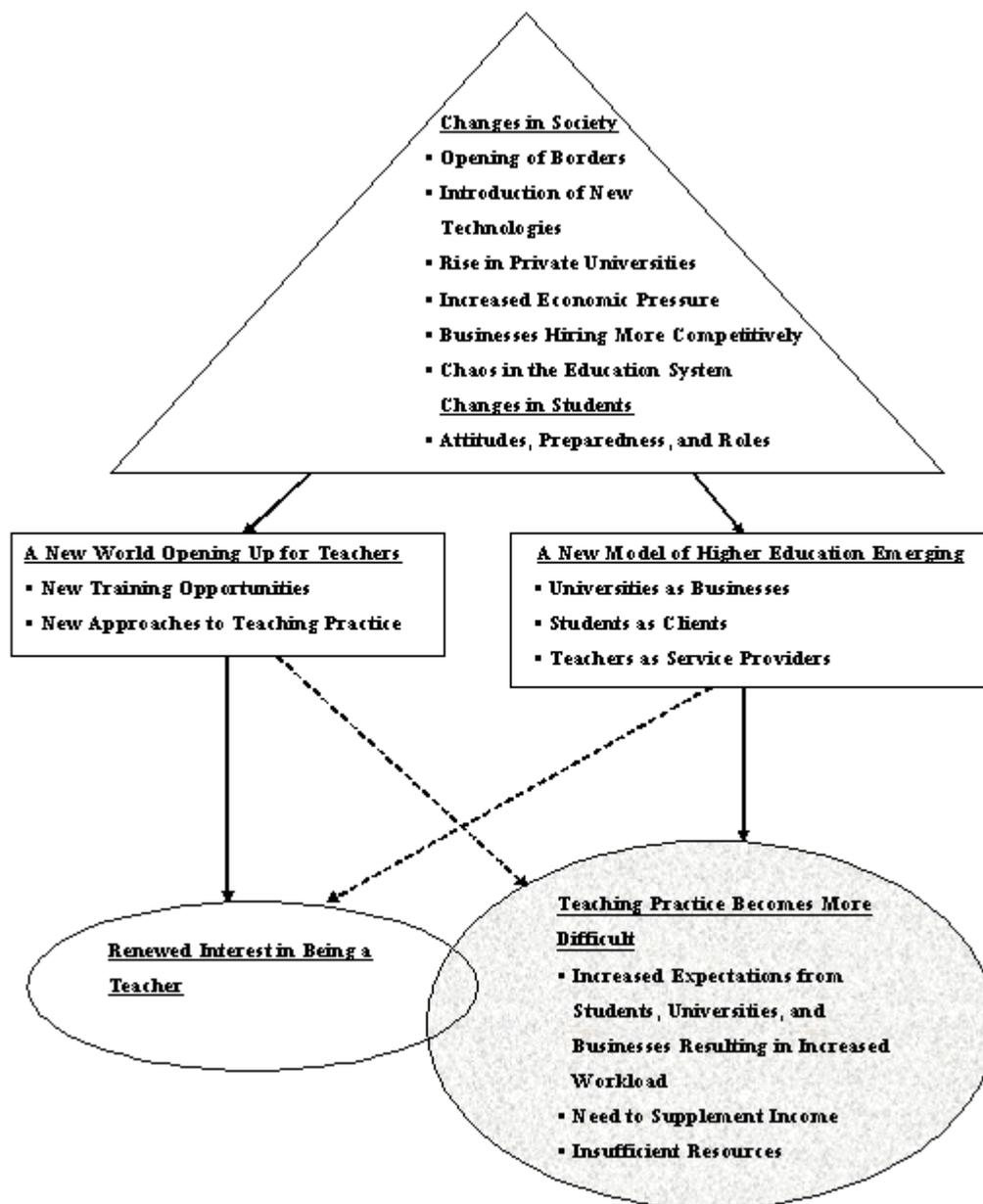
The model below, as presented and discussed in chapter four, summarizes participants' perceptions about the impact of these changes in society and changes in students on teachers in Kazakhstan and on their teaching practice. Participants described these changes and their impacts in both positive and negative terms. On the positive side, a new world of possibilities was opening for teachers with the changes taking place in Kazakhstan. Teachers now had access to new people, new information, and new ideas. Many met Westerners for the first time as a result of taking advantage of new training opportunities that were provided through

donor funding. By participating in new training available, teachers were able to learn new content in their areas of expertise. The greatest contribution of the new training, however, was that it allowed participants learn new methodologies and new ways of working with students.

Furthermore, participants were most able to learn new teaching methodologies when they had opportunities to *experience* the new methodologies as learners, rather than read or to hear about these methodologies from others. Interacting with foreigners and learning from other people with different perspectives led many participants to reflect on their own teaching. As a result of these interactions, participants realized that they wanted to approach teaching differently. Specifically, these participants wanted to teach in more interactive ways and to relate to students more as partners in the learning process.

Participants also stressed that a new model of higher education had emerged in Kazakhstan as a result of changes in society and students. This model was based on a new understanding of the university as a business with students as the university's clients. In this model, participants felt required to assume the new role of a service provider in education. In this role, teachers were expected to meet the increasing demands of (a) universities wanting to recruit and retain students and (b) students who expected more from universities because they or their parents were now paying more for higher education than students had in the past.

Some of the participants found a renewed interest in being a teacher as a result of the changes in Kazakhstan's society and students. These teachers enjoyed having increased access to information, people, and ideas. They also enjoyed learning new ways of working



*Figure 4.* Participants' Perceptions of the Impact of Changes in Society and Students in Kazakhstan on the Profession and Practice of Teaching.

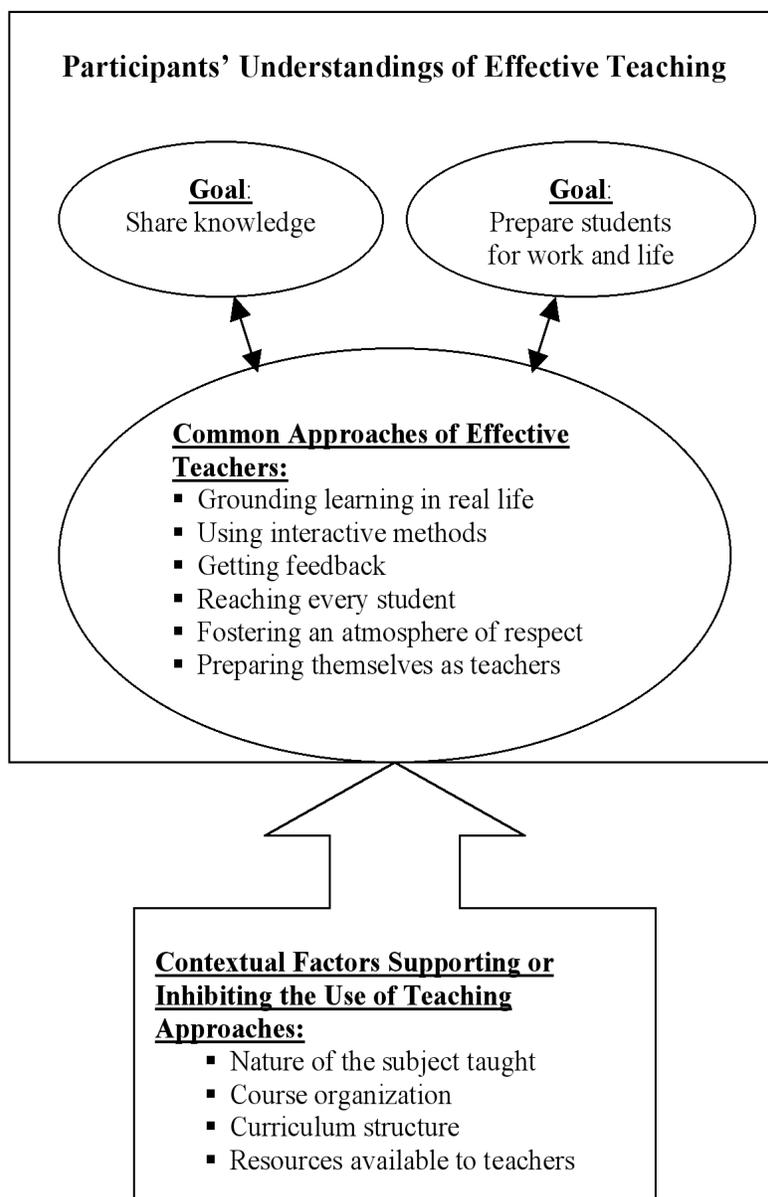
with students and enjoyed working within the new model of higher education.

Despite discussing positive aspects of teaching, the majority of teachers in the study also said that being a teacher was more difficult as a result of the changes taking place in

Kazakhstan. These teachers had to work harder to meet increasing demands from universities and students while simultaneously trying to implement new content and new methodologies in an environment of increasingly scarce resources. Many also had to take part-time jobs and search for other income sources to ease increasing personal economic pressure. In the face of all of these difficulties, several participants decided they could no longer remain in teaching and subsequently left the profession altogether.

#### *Summary of Participants' Understandings of Effective Teaching*

A second category of findings in this study related to participants' understandings of what it means to be an effective teacher in Kazakhstan. During this study, participants went beyond describing how changes in Kazakhstan impacted their teaching and shared (a) what they wanted to achieve through their teaching practice and (b) what they actually did to achieve their goals. Figure 5 below summarizes the findings in this area. In discussing what they wanted to achieve in teaching, participants shared two common goals – to *prepare students for work and life* and to *share knowledge* with students. Preparing students for work involved helping students learn content related to their chosen field as well as helping students develop soft skills such as effective communication and the ability to work well with others. Teachers prepared students for life by helping students learn to think independently and believe in themselves. Participants shared knowledge with students by sharing specific content knowledge or by sharing their own life experiences, beliefs, and dreams with students. Those focused on sharing content knowledge usually had practical work experience and a love of their subject they wanted to share with students. By sharing their life experiences, teachers hoped to help students develop themselves as individuals. Participants



*Figure 5. Participant's Understandings of Effective Teaching*

also believed that having knowledge to share was essential for teachers to gain *and* keep credibility with students and universities.

To achieve their goals of preparing students and sharing knowledge, participants used

six common approaches in their teaching practice. These included *grounding learning in real life, using interactive methods, getting feedback, reaching every student, fostering an atmosphere of respect in the classroom, and preparing themselves for teaching*. It is important to note that participants did not discuss these approaches as being *new* or used only by *certain* teachers. Rather, participants' descriptions suggested that use of these six teaching strategies was well-integrated into teachers' understandings of what it means to teach in Kazakhstan. Grounding learning in real life was important so that students could practice using knowledge and skills they had learned and thus be better prepared to work in Kazakhstan's competitive and rapidly changing business environment. By using interactive methods, teachers provided students with an opportunity to develop and practice using the soft skills they needed for business and life. Participants also gave students an opportunity to practice connecting what they had learned to real-life situations and utilized interactive teaching methods in order to involve students and keep classes interesting. While teaching, participants tried to reach every student in the class to make sure that he or she was engaged in the learning process.

Getting feedback was important for many participants, with most relying on exams, quizzes, and questions to students to gather information about student and teacher performance. Furthermore, participants also worked to foster respect in the classroom. Fostering respect included encouraging relationships of respect between student and teacher and student and student. Finally, participants stressed the need to prepare themselves for teaching by staying current with content knowledge and with teaching methodologies.

Four contextual factors affected participants' abilities to use these common teaching

approaches in the classroom: *the nature of the subject taught*, the *course organization*, the *curriculum structure*, and *the resources available to teachers*. These contextual factors were important because they (a) either supported or inhibited teachers' use of particular teaching methods and (b) determined to what extent teachers were able to integrate new content and implement new teaching methodologies they gained through training and other sources.

The nature of the subject that each participant taught influenced participant's use of teaching methods. Participants believed that some subjects were inherently more practical while others were inherently more theoretical. As Alexey pointed out, "You can't teach mathematics only practically. You need theory for mathematics. How would you practice math? You need to learn formulas by heart. Just, it is the matter of different subjects." Accordingly, participants tried to use different methodologies to match the theoretical or practical nature of the course they were teaching.

A participant's choice and use of teaching methodologies also depended on how the course was organized and the participant's corresponding role in that organization. As was true in Soviet times, most university courses in Kazakhstan were divided into lecture and seminar portions. Senior teachers most often conducted lectures and junior teachers or lecturer's assistants conducted seminars. During lecture sessions, teachers primarily expected to deliver lectures. Correspondingly these teachers utilized lecturing and one-way communication methods more frequently with students. Participants often reserved interactive methods for seminar sessions.

Because the majority of the curriculum structure was dictated by the Ministry of Education, teachers had to communicate a lot of standardized knowledge in a limited amount

of time. Participants, therefore, had limited flexibility with respect to adding topics, bringing in new information, or changing the order in which topics were taught. The availability of institutional resources, including equipment and supplies for teachers to use in teaching, also shaped, and most often constrained, participants' teaching practice.

*Summary of Differences Between Teachers Identified as Soviet and Those Identified as Post-Soviet*

The third area of findings in this study related to differences in perceptions between teachers categorized as *Soviet* and those categorized as *post-Soviet*. Soviet teachers were those who started teaching while living in the Soviet Union under the Soviet system or were mentored and significantly influenced by a Soviet teacher. These teachers most often had formal training in methodology as part of their indoctrination into teaching and believed there was a *right* way to teach. Soviet teachers tended to be more committed to the curriculum structure handed down by the Ministry of Education or their university. Soviet teachers also tended to be older than their post-Soviet counterparts, to have more teaching experience, and to be more often placed in the role of lecturer in the classroom.

The category of post-Soviet teachers primarily included those teachers who started teaching after Kazakhstan gained its independence. In contrast to Soviet participants, *post-Soviet* participants generally started teaching without training in pedagogy. These teachers were hired after Kazakhstan's independence, usually because they were good students, had studied outside Kazakhstan, or were specialists in their field and had practical knowledge to bring to business and economics education. Post-Soviet teachers generally had to develop their own teaching methodologies by imitating behaviors they liked, avoiding teaching behaviors they didn't like, and through trial and error. As a result, post-Soviet teachers

tended to be more flexible in their choices of teaching methods and classroom approaches. They were also more likely to want to teach “as I want” and displayed less commitment to the curriculum structure.

Both groups of teachers were very interested in developing themselves and being prepared as teachers. Consequently, both groups participated in training and tried to adapt and implement what they learned in their classrooms. However, because they were indoctrinated into teaching by different means and in different time periods and cultural contexts, Soviet and post-Soviet teachers expressed slight differences in their (a) commitment to the curriculum, (b) ability to adapt their teaching to changing situations, and (c) the effect of increased economic pressure upon them. Table 5 below, summarizes the differences that emerged between the groups as discussed in chapter four.

Soviet teachers had more difficulty adapting their teaching practice to changing teaching situations because they believed in a right way to teach and were more committed to the curriculum than their post-Soviet counterparts. Soviet teachers also expressed more difficulty adapting to the new role of service providers whereas post-Soviet teachers who learned to teach while this new role was emerging expressed less frustration. Finally, soviet teachers tended to be more affected by increased economic pressures than their post-Soviet colleagues because they (a) were older and tended to have more financial commitments and (c) believed they would have more difficulty than their post-Soviet counterparts in finding financially rewarding work outside of teaching because of their age.

Table 5

*Differences Between Teachers Identified as Soviet and Those Identified as Post-Soviet*

<b>Group</b>	<b>SOVIET</b>	<b>POST-SOVIET</b>
How members generally learned to teach	Formal training on methodology	By themselves, “trial and error”
Interest in self-development	Strong	Strong
Desire to implement new content and new methods	Strong	Strong
Ability to adapt teaching to the changing situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More rigid – a “right” way to teach</li> <li>▪ More difficulty adapting to new role of service provider.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More flexible – imitating behaviors they liked</li> <li>▪ Less difficulty adapting to new role.</li> </ul>
Commitment to the curriculum	Strong	Weaker – want to teach “as I want”
Effects of increased economic pressures	Significant. Soviet teachers tend to be older, to have more financial commitments, and to believe they have fewer career options.	Less significant. Most of the post-Soviet teachers started teaching less than eight years prior to the study and believed they had career options.

## Conclusions

The goal of this study was to understand how teachers in Kazakhstan understand teaching in the face of cultural change. The study sought to add to the literature on teaching perspectives by exploring what happens to perspectives on teaching when the context in which they are grounded change. Findings from this study clearly show that participants' understandings of and experiences of teaching were significantly affected by changes taking place in Kazakhstan. A general conclusion of this study is that teaching became more difficult for most participants as a result of changes in society and in students in Kazakhstan. This finding supports other research on business and economics education which highlights difficulties faced by teachers and the education system overall following Kazakhstan's independence (CARANA, 2005; Destler, 2000; DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997; Heyneman, 1994, 2004; McLendon, 2004; Safavi, 1997). While they did describe some of the conditions in which teachers found themselves after independence, these researchers did not primarily orient their research from the teacher's perspective. Rather they focused their studies on the overall system of business and economics education or some particular aspect of that system (e.g., education financing). This study adds to those findings because it shares teacher's own understandings of how cultural change has impacted teaching in Kazakhstan. This section draws specific conclusions from these findings and relates the study's conclusions to relevant research in adult education on teaching perspectives.

Pratt and Nesbit (2000) suggest that cultural contexts are not static: "we create them [social structures] as they create us" (p. 9). Changes in culture are, therefore, understood as changes in the interpretations people use to make sense of their experiences or changes in the

social relations and practices in which they find membership. This can include, but is not limited to, changes in beliefs, actions, values, interpretations, and rituals that guide their actions and affect meaning making.

Pratt (1999) suggests that researchers engaged in cross-cultural research run the risk of interpreting teaching practices in other cultures through their own cultural lens. To counteract this tendency, Pratt suggests that researchers focus on three indicators of teaching perspective common to across cultures: *epistemic beliefs*, *normative expectations*, and *pedagogical procedures*. Epistemic beliefs reflect one's understanding of knowledge, how authority over knowledge is granted, and how knowledge should be evaluated. Normative expectations are conceptualizations of the social roles of the teacher and learner. Pedagogical procedures are the actions and approaches to teaching considered to be *right*, or socially acceptable by teachers.

Six conclusions on teaching perspectives in Kazakhstan and cultural change are drawn in consideration of the definition of cultural change used in this study and the interpretive framework of epistemic beliefs, normative expectations, and pedagogical procedures suggested by Pratt (1999). These conclusions are:

- participants' normative expectations were most affected by changes taking place in Kazakhstan;
- participants' pedagogical procedures, or how they carried out the process of teaching, were largely determined by how participants were indoctrinated into teaching;
- participants desired to and were able to change their pedagogical procedures in response to changes taking place in Kazakhstan;

- Soviet teachers had more difficulty adapting their teaching practices because they believed more strongly in a right way to teach and had a stronger commitment to the curriculum as structured by others;
- the context for teaching in Kazakhstan constrained teachers in their ability to adapt to changes in society and students;
- Most of participant's beliefs regarding their goals for teaching and their ideas about the approaches they should utilize in the classroom were well rooted in the culture of Soviet Kazakhstan. However, beliefs about participants' roles and responsibilities to paying students in the new model of higher education, as well as participants' understandings of how they wanted to relate to students, were changing as a result of the changes taking place in Kazakhstan.

The following subsection elaborates on each of these conclusions within the framework suggested by Pratt (1999).

#### *Conclusions About Normative Expectations*

This study concludes that participants' normative expectations were most affected by changes taking place in Kazakhstan. Participants were significantly affected by having to (a) adapt to the new role of service provider; (b) take on new responsibilities, including using new technologies, integrating new content and methodologies, and even finding new part-time jobs; and, (c) alter their relationships with universities and students. The findings also suggest that participants, especially those trained as teachers during the Soviet Union, were not well prepared for their changing roles, responsibilities, and relationships and thus experienced much difficulty adapting. Despite the fact that all of the participants received

training in new content and new teaching methodologies, none mentioned being counseled or coached in how to function as a service provider, manage new responsibilities, or navigate their changing relationships. Post-Soviet teachers were somewhat better able to adapt to the new roles of teachers than their Soviet colleagues, perhaps because the post-Soviet teachers started teaching when normative expectations were already changing. Thus, the post-Soviet teachers had fewer adaptations to make than their Soviet counterparts. Additionally, several of the post-Soviet teachers studied outside of Kazakhstan and thus experienced other models of education that may have helped better prepare them for working in the new model of higher education in Kazakhstan.

#### *Conclusions About Pedagogical Procedures*

A second conclusion of the study is that participants' pedagogical procedures, or how they carried out the process of teaching, were largely determined by how they were indoctrinated into teaching and how they learned to teach. Soviet teachers were trained in formal teaching, while post-Soviet teachers taught themselves to teach. These findings support research which suggests that major influences on perspective formation, for teachers, are their formal training as teachers (Berg et al, 2002), their experiences as learners (Taylor et al., 2001), and the on-the job training they receive working with learners (Hativa, 2000). Berg et al. (2002) demonstrated how values learned during teacher training, such as the commitment to the curriculum expressed by Soviet teachers, were carried through teachers' professional lives. Hativa (2000) found that many university teachers have strong content and subject backgrounds but lack formal training in pedagogy. This was certainly true of post-Soviet teachers represented in this study. Taylor et al. (2001) suggested that teachers base

their practice on their own past experiences as learners. If these learning experiences were positive, teachers will tend to recreate similar classroom environments. If they were negative, teachers may actually “rebel” and try to consciously create environments the “opposite” of what they experienced. In this study, post-Soviet teachers explicitly described this process of imitation and avoidance when sharing how they learned to teach.

A third conclusion is that, regardless of how they learned to teach, participants desired to and were able to change their pedagogical procedures in response to changes taking place in Kazakhstan. New training in content and methodology and access to new technologies gave teachers new tools to use in teaching. Both Soviet and post-Soviet teachers worked to integrate these new tools into their teaching practice. However, from the findings, this study concludes that Soviet teachers had more difficulty adapting their teaching practices because they believed more strongly in a right way to teach and because they had a stronger commitment to a curriculum structured by others including the Ministry of Education and the university. With these underlying beliefs in place, Soviet teachers were less flexible than their post-Soviet counterparts in adapting their pedagogical procedures.

Four factors in the educational context also affected teachers’ abilities to teach utilize particular teaching methodologies: the nature of the subject taught, the course organization, the curriculum structure, and the resources available to teachers. The fifth conclusion is, therefore, that the context for teaching in Kazakhstan constrained teachers in their ability to adapt to changes in society and students. Participants were constrained in their ability to implement new techniques, introduce new content, and utilize new technologies by the subjects they taught, how their courses were organized, the structure of the curriculum, and

resource insufficiency. What teachers wanted to do, and what the context supported these teachers in actually doing, often differed. These findings support research by Pratt (1998) and Kember (1997), which suggests that perspective cannot be judged simply by looking at a teacher's actions in the classroom.

Frame factor theory is useful for describing how the four contextual factors identified by participants affect the practice of teaching. Frame factor theory was initially conceived in Sweden in the early 1970s by Dahllöf and Lundgren to address the question, "Why does teaching turn out the way it does?" (Imsen, 1999). Frame factor theory describes how aspects of teaching, such as the time given in the curriculum for a particular activity, shape a teacher's practice. In describing frame factor theory, Lundgren (as cited in Nesbit, 1998) suggests that frames are "anything that limits the teaching process and is determined outside of the control of the teacher" (p. 160). Lundgren (1999) suggests, however, that frames do not cause actions. Frames are, rather " 'frames of possibility,' which enabled or opposed the possibilities of or for certain kinds of processes" (p. 128).

Pratt and Nesbit (2000) write that "the cultural, political, economic, and social structures of society have effects on educational processes and can be regarded as frames" (p. 8). Findings from this study clearly indicate that the subject taught, available resources, the course organization, and the curriculum structure are all *frames* within which business and economics teachers were able to act in response to changes taking place in Kazakhstan. Findings from the study suggest that other potential frames also shaped teachers' practice in Kazakhstan. These included changing expectations from universities and students as to how teachers should behave in the classroom, and teachers' own beliefs about their roles and

responsibilities to paying “customers.”

This study supports other research regarding the particular contextual constraints identified by participants in this study. Kember (1997) suggested that institutional policies and orientations could affect a teacher’s actions in the classroom. Specifically, “the extent to which a faculty member’s teaching approach and conception of teaching is a reflection of the individual or the department presumably depends upon the balance of individual autonomy and departmental and institutional pressures (p. 270).” This study confirms Kember’s work. Furthermore, findings suggest that, in both the Soviet education system and in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, the concept of *institution* as described by Kember (1997) must also be extended to the Ministry of Education in Kazakhstan by virtue of its control over the curriculum, accreditation, licensing, and other aspects of the higher education system. This study demonstrates that the curriculum structure set by the Ministry of Education in Kazakhstan framed, and significantly constrained, teaching practice.

In a report on business and economics education in the Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyzstan, Crum and Kraft (2000) highlighted the important role that ministries play in defining the curriculum in post-Soviet Central Asia. Crum and Kraft suggested that Ministry of Education in Kyrgyzstan needed to give business and economics schools considerable latitude in designing the school’s curriculum and in pursuing different missions and objectives. “The key concept is flexibility to adapt the program to the environment as needs and faculty capabilities change” (p. 15). This study suggests that recommendations made by Crum and Kraft regarding curriculum structure for Kyrgyzstan are also applicable for Kazakhstan.

The findings in this study regarding the influence of resource insufficiency on teaching also support other research done in the former Soviet Union. Heyneman (1994), DeYoung and Suzhikova (1997), Destler (2000), and McLendon (2004), Niyozov (2004) have all highlighted how a lack of resources has negatively impacted the education system in Central Asia. In a comparison study of teaching in England and in the USSR, Poppleton, Gershunsky, and Pullin (1994) demonstrated that resource constraints were barriers for implementation of new teaching methods. According to Poppleton, Gershunsky and Pullin, teachers in Russia who had more freedom to chose “how and what to teach (within limits of the prescribed curriculum)” still felt “constrained in their ability to adopt new content and methods by a ‘almost total absence of resources.’ As one teacher summarized ‘My greatest difficulty is that, with the changing attitude, I have not got appropriate materials that I can use and I have got the most old-fashioned textbooks’” (p. 332).

#### *Conclusions About Participants’ Beliefs*

A third indicator of a teacher’s perspective is his or her beliefs about what it means to teach and be an effective teacher (Pratt, 1998, 1999). The sixth conclusion of the study relates to participants’ belief structures. Findings indicated that most of participant’s beliefs regarding their goals for teaching and their ideas about the approaches they should utilize in the classroom were well rooted in the culture of Soviet Kazakhstan. However, findings also suggest that beliefs about participants’ roles and responsibilities to paying students in the new model of higher education, as well as participants’ understandings of how they wanted to relate to students, were changing as a result of the changes taking place in Kazakhstan.

In this study, participants’ beliefs about how knowledge was created or how it should

be evaluated did not change greatly as a result of changes taking place in Kazakhstan. Content remained fairly standardized and tests were still used to evaluate learning as they had been in Soviet times (DeYoung & Suzhikova, 1997). Soviet and post-Soviet teachers had a common understanding of the goals of teaching and the approaches that teachers use to reach those goals. Soviet teachers also continued to believe in a right way to teach and in the legitimacy of a curriculum created by the Ministry. This finding suggests that most of participant's beliefs regarding their goals for teaching and their ideas about the approaches they should utilize in the classroom were well rooted in the culture of Soviet Kazakhstan. For example, the job of a teacher in the Soviet Union was to prepare specialists to be productive workers (Bilyalov, 1999); teachers in this study continued to see themselves as responsible for preparing specialists, specifically in the fields of business and economics. In another example, participants worked to foster respect in the classroom. Showing respect, especially to elders, is a common value in Kazakh culture. This finding supports Pratt's (1998) proposition that "some beliefs are more central to one's being than others and therefore, less open to change" (p. 11).

Participants' conceptions in two areas, however, suggest that the belief structures underlying these conceptions developed in response to changes taking place in Kazakhstan's society and students and were, in fact, new for many participants. The first conception is that teachers need to give students a high-quality education because students, or more often their parents, were now paying for the education. This conception also reflects a post-independence idea – that education is a business and customers should get what they pay for from a university and its teachers. The second understanding is that teachers could change

their relationships with students and relate to students more as partners in the learning process. This understanding developed from participant's interactions with others who had perspectives and experiences different than their own. Relating to students as partners differs from the traditional Soviet view of teacher as expert and student as a recipient of knowledge. However, both Soviet and post-Soviet teachers expressed a desire to change their relationships with students. Both of the understandings discussed above relate to a participant's belief about his/her role as a teacher and further supports the study's conclusion that participants' normative expectations were most affected by change.

#### Implications for Research

The findings and the conclusions of this study suggest several areas where additional research on teaching perspectives and cultural change is warranted. First, while this study finds that teachers in Kazakhstan needed support in adjusting to changes in their roles, responsibilities, and relationships in times of cultural change, what remains unclear is *how* these teachers can best be supported in this area. Cranton (1996) and Sokol and Cranton (1998) suggest that programs designed to help teachers make their practice more current need to focus on perspective transformation through reflection, rather than solely on the acquisition of new content or new teaching methodologies. Only after examining their personal perspectives on teaching can teachers make empowering decisions regarding which views they hold currently work in teaching and which do not. According to Sokol and Cranton (1998), "Transforming, not training, is the key to adult educator development" (p. 17). Echoing this idea, other researchers (Brookfield, 1995; Taylor et al., 2001) suggest that faculty development efforts need to focus on reflective activities and reflective methods that

help teachers learn from their own practices *while* they are engaged in practice. Findings from these researchers suggest that reflective practice can help teachers adjust to changing situations. It would be useful, therefore, to understand how reflective practice could help teachers adapt to changing cultural environments

Contextual or frame factors significantly constrained teachers in Kazakhstan in their ability to adapt their teaching practice following independence. According to participants, much attention was given to providing teachers with training on new content and new methodologies. Some attention and funds were also directed at providing new resources for teachers. However, participants did not highlight significant efforts by ministries, universities, and donors to address these contextual constraints on a strategic level. It would be useful to understand how contextual constraints, or frame factors, such as those identified in this study, can be mitigated to allow teachers to more effectively adapt to changing cultural contexts. How can ministries of education, donors, and others wanting to support education in a changing context, ensure that the context framing education practice allows teachers the flexibility they need to adapt their teaching practice for changing times and changing students? Also, there are likely other frames beyond the four identified by participants which influence how teachers respond to changes taking place in Kazakhstan. Identifying these additional frames is an area for potential research.

Increased financial pressure on teachers caused them to look for other sources of income. Many took part-time jobs. In doing so, they stretched their primary resource, themselves, very thin. Because they were running between universities, these teachers also lost important social networks. A loss of social networks could impact the ability of

individual teachers in a faculty to learn together or weather changes in the environment as a community of learners. Understanding the influence of the social network of teachers in planned economies under transition is also a potential area of further research.

### Implications for Practice

Findings and conclusions in this study also contain several implications for practice. In this context, “practice” is used to describe how organizations, including ministries of education, donors, universities, and others supporting business and economics education in Kazakhstan actually go about providing that support. The implications below are thus directed at this audience.

Findings from this study showed that by engaging in new training opportunities, participants changed their teaching practices and their understandings of how they could relate to students. That participants changed their practice demonstrates that new training, including training supported through donor efforts, had a positive impact on teachers in Kazakhstan. Findings indicate, however, that training and support provided to teachers should be continued and refined as follows:

1. In addition to training on content and methodologies, teachers need additional help adjusting to the new roles, responsibilities, and relationships they now have in the new model of higher education as a business in Kazakhstan. Reflective practice should be considered as a means of helping teachers understand and adjust to new normative expectations.
2. Both Soviet and post-Soviet teachers alike benefited from participating in training and both groups worked to implement what they had learned in their classrooms. This

suggests that older teachers should continue to be included in training efforts.

3. Teachers need a broader understanding of how to utilize both practical and theoretical teaching approaches across a variety of subjects.
4. It is not enough for teachers to read about new interactive teaching methods, or be told about new methods. Hearing a lecture on new content in economics may help teachers include new content in their classes; however, it will not help them deliver the new content in an interactive way. Teachers are more likely to utilize interactive teaching methods if they have experienced these methods as students and can understand how students are affected. This means that organizations working to provide new content to teachers and improve their skills should ensure that whoever is delivering new content is doing so in an interactive way that teachers can experience *and* imitate.
5. The findings of this study strongly suggest that those wanting to help improve business and economics education in Kazakhstan should focus not only on providing training to teachers, but also on addressing the frames or contextual constraints that prevent teachers from implementing the training and new content they learn in the classroom. This means that:
  - a. Ministries should work to give universities and teachers more control over the curriculum.
  - b. Universities should examine course structures to determine how they could be more flexible and allow for a variety of teaching approaches.
6. All stakeholders should continue to search for ways to provide additional resources to teachers so that they can better utilize new methodologies and technologies to share new

content.

7. Universities or ministries of education should consider means of restructuring salaries and compensation plans for full-time teachers so as to reduce the number of part-time jobs that teachers need to have to survive economically.

It is fitting that this study should end on a rather practical note. The study was started with the intention of understanding how real teachers understand teaching in the very real changing cultural contexts in which they find themselves. As a researcher, one of my hopes was that, through this study, business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan could share their own perspectives, their own stories, in their own voices. I also hoped that donors, Ministries of Education, and others wanting to support business and economics education in Central Asia could utilize the information that participants' shared to develop programs which help teachers adapt effectively to the changes in culture taking place around them. It is my sincere hope that findings, conclusions, and implications for research and practice drawn in this study provide such insight.

In a study of primary and secondary teachers in Tajikistan, Niyozov (2004) concluded that:

there are many teachers in developing countries who are highly knowledgeable, committed, and dedicated. All those who want to reform education need to seriously listen to the aesthetics and ethics of these teachers' voices, contextualize and historicize these voices, explore teachers' work and lives as an integrated whole, and see them as partners in societal and educational reform (p. 59).

Findings from this study echo Niyozov's (2004) conclusions. Business and economics

teachers in Kazakhstan are indeed knowledgeable, caring, and dedicated to the profession of teaching and the students with whom they work. It is incumbent upon us as adult educators to listen to their voices, as well as other voices around this changing world as we seek to understand the impact of cultural change on teaching perspectives more fully.

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APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Informed Consent form (English Version)

North Carolina State University

## INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Study*Breathing in and out: Understanding perspectives of business and economics teachers in Kazakhstan in the face of cultural change*Principal Investigator

Leigh Shamblin

Faculty Sponsor (if applicable)Carol Kasworm, 300 POE Hall, Box 7801  
(919) 513-3706

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to examine business and economics teachers' beliefs about teaching. Specifically I would like to encourage you, through participation in this study, to think about your own practice and examine some of the assumptions that guide you in carrying out your role as a teacher. I would also like to explore with you how changes in Kazakhstan have influenced your teaching. If you are willing, I would like you to participate in this study as a research subject. Participation is voluntary and all information gathered in this study is confidential and anonymous.

## INFORMATION

Procedures/time required of you: If you choose to participate in this study, I will ask you to complete a short survey and participate in one or two interview sessions with me. If you participated in the pilot study "Breathing out: Understanding perspectives of management teachers in Kazakhstan" during June-September 2002, you will be asked to update the survey you filled out during the pilot. If you did not participate in the pilot study, then completing a new survey form will take approximately 15 minutes. If you participated in the pilot study, I will give you a transcript of the information you shared during the pilot study interview and ask you to take it home and review the information. This will help you remember what we discussed during that interview. When we meet we will discuss that interview for approximately 15 minutes so that I can check my understanding of your responses to my questions and you can provide any additional information you want to provide. Following this discussion, I will ask you to participate in one interview for this study. This interview should last approximately 30-45 minutes. If you did not participate in the pilot study, then I will ask you to participate in two interviews. The first of these will last approximately 45-60 minutes, depending on your comfort level. The second will last approximately 30-45 minutes. Between these interviews you will get a transcript of the first interview and we will discuss my understandings of your responses. All interviews will be held at a location convenient for you. After interview sessions, I may follow up with you to ask you to clarify comments, or discuss particular issues in more depth. Follow up discussions for clarification will last approximately 15-30 minutes. A translator will be present during all interviews, and in any follow-up discussions to help us understand each other better.

## RISKS

The risks of participating are minimal.

One risk is that your department head might want access to your specific comments as a way to gain information about your teaching. To protect your anonymity and the confidentiality of the study data, all participants will be identified by a randomly-generated number, not by name. No information about you as a participant will be provided to the university or your department head or anyone except me and the translator involved in this study. Furthermore, the translator has agreed to keep all data confidential by signing a confidentiality agreement with me. I can provide you a copy of that confidentiality agreement if you would like to see it.

Another risk is that, while discussing your experience, you might feel inclined to discuss issues that might make you feel emotional. As a researcher, I am committed to open inquiry. It is my intent not to ask sensitive questions but I am completely open to hearing anything you have to say. Because I am a foreigner in Kazakhstan and do not yet know all of the cultural norms, I may inadvertently ask sensitive questions. If this happens, please feel free not to answer or to inform me about any guiding cultural norms that make particular questions sensitive. I too am a learner and your guidance is appreciated. Finally, please know that I will honor your feelings and wishes and will terminate interviews at any time you decide to do so.

A final risk is that I, as an American working in a foreign environment and struggling with the language, might misinterpret your comments or the translation of your comments. For this reason I may follow up with you later and ask you to clarify comments you made during any interviews.

## BENEFITS

The benefits of participation in this study are that you may learn something new about yourself or your teaching that you can use to improve your work or your life.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. No names will be used on demographic surveys or interview data. All study participants will be identified with a randomly-generated number rather than by name. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless you specifically give permission in writing to do otherwise. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study.

## COMPENSATION

I am not offering any financial compensation for participating in this study. You will, however, have my grateful appreciation as a fellow teacher and researcher.

## CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Leigh Shamblin, at 32 Ormanova, or 930145. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Dr. Matthew Zingraff, Chair of the NCSU IRB for the Use of Human Subjects in Research Committee, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (919/513-1834) or Mr. Matthew Ronning, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Research Administration, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (919/513-2148)

## PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

## CONSENT

To protect your confidentiality, you are not being asked to sign a consent form. Rather your completion of a demographic survey and participation in an interview indicates your consent to participate in this study.

Appendix A: Informed Consent form (Russian Version)

Университет Штата Северная Каролина  
Форма- согласие

Тема исследования:

*Понимание перспектив преподавателей бизнеса и экономики в Казахстане в процессе культурных изменений*

Исследователь

Ли Шамблин

Куратор

Карол Касуорм, 300 POE Hall, Box 7801  
001-919-513-3706

Вы приглашены принять участие в исследовании. Цель исследования: Рассмотреть взгляды и убеждения учителей бизнеса и экономики о преподавании. В особенности, мне бы хотелось, чтобы Вы, приняв участие в этом исследовании, подумали о собственном опыте и просмотрели некоторые предположения, направляющие Вас в исполнении роли учителя. Мне также хотелось бы узнать как изменения в Казахстане повлияли на ваше преподавание. Если у Вас есть желание, то я предлагаю Вам принять участие в исследовании в виде субъекта исследования. Участие добровольно, вся полученная информация строго конфиденциальна.

## ИНФОРМАЦИЯ

Процедуры/Необходимое время: Если Вы решите принять участие в этом исследовании, то мне бы хотелось попросить Вас сделать небольшой обзор и вместе со мной провести одно или два интервью. Если Вы принимали участие в первом исследовании «Понимание перспектив для преподавателей менеджмента в Казахстане», проведенном в период с июня по сентябрь 2002 года, то Вы должны будете обновить информацию опросника. Если вы ранее не принимали участие в исследовании, то Вас попросят заполнить форму вопросника- это займет примерно 15 минут. Если вы принимали участие в первом исследовании, то я раздам транскрипцию предоставленной Вами информации во время проведения пилотного исследования и попрошу внимательно просмотреть ее дома.

Это поможет Вам вспомнить о чем мы говорили в прошлом интервью. В течение 15 минут нашей встречи мы поговорим о первом интервью, чтобы выяснить правильно ли я поняла то, что вы хотели сказать и желаете ли Вы что-то добавить. После этой дискуссии, я попрошу Вас дать мне 30-45-минутное повторное интервью. Если Вы впервые принимаете участие в исследовании, то я попрошу Вас дать мне 2 интервью. Первое интервью займет около 45-60 минут, его продолжительность будет зависеть от вашего расположения принимать в нем участие. Второе интервью продлится около 30-45 минут. Между двумя интервью Вы получите транскрипцию первого интервью, и мы обсудим, правильно ли я поняла ваши ответы. Все интервью будут проводиться в месте удобном для Вас. После проведения интервью, мне необходимо будет встретиться с Вами для разъяснения Ваших комментариев или получения более глубоких ответов на поставленные вопросы. Эти дискуссии займут 15-30 минут. Переводчик будет присутствовать во время 1-го и 2-го интервью, а также во время разъяснительных дискуссий, что бы мы смогли лучше понять друг друга.

## РИСКИ

Риски от принятия участия минимальны.

Один из рисков состоит в том, что заведующий кафедрой, где Вы работаете, пожелает получить доступ к Вашим комментариям, для того, чтобы получить информацию о методике вашего преподавания. Все данные строго конфиденциальны; имена всех участников получают цифровой код из случайно подобранных чисел, информация о вашем участии в исследовании не будет предоставлена заведующему кафедры или кому-либо другому, кроме меня и переводчика. Переводчик подписал письменное соглашение о неразглашении информации. Если необходимо, я могу предоставить копию данного соглашения.

Следующий риск- во время обсуждения того или иного вопроса, вы можете почувствовать себя неудобно. Как исследователь, я постараюсь не задавать подобных вопросов, но выслушаю все, что вы считаете необходимым сказать. Так как я гражданин другой страны, мне неизвестны многие культурные нормы, и я могу случайно задать вопросы, которые могут привести вас в затруднение. Если это

произойдет, пожалуйста, вы можете не отвечать или рассказать причину сложности вопроса. Я также учусь, и мне будет полезна Ваша помощь. Я очень ценю Ваши чувства и пожелания, поэтому завершу интервью, когда вы этого захотите.

И последний риск. Как Американка, я могу неправильно понять ваши комментарии или же перевод. Поэтому, мне может быть необходимо связаться с вами повторно и попросить разъяснить некоторые вопросы.

#### ПОЛЬЗА

Участвуя в этом исследовании, вы сможете узнать что-то новое о себе и вашем преподавании, что поможет Вам улучшить работу и поможет в дальнейшем.

#### КОНФИДЕНЦИАЛЬНОСТЬ

Информация исследования будет строго конфиденциальна. Имена участников исследования не будут указаны в демографических вопросниках или данных интервью. Все участники исследования будут идентифицированы случайно подобранными числами. Данные будут храниться в безопасном месте и будут доступны только лицам, проводящим исследование. Ссылки не будут указывать на Вас или ваше причастие к исследованию.

#### КОМПЕНСАЦИЯ

Я не могу предложить финансовую компенсацию. Но как преподаватель и исследователь я высоко ценю Ваше участие в исследовании.

#### КОНТАКТНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ

Если у Вас возникли какие-либо вопросы касательно исследованию или процедурах, вы можете связаться с исследователем, Ли Шамблин по адресу: Ormanova, 32 или по телефону 930145. Если Вы считаете, что Ваши права были нарушены, и исследователь не следовал условиям данного соглашения, вы можете связаться с Dr. Matthew Zingraff, Заведующий кафедрой Университета штата Северная Каролина, а/я 7514, NCSU Campus (919/513-1834) или Mr. Matthew Ronning, Ассистент Вице-консула, Администрация по Исследованиям, а/я 7514, NCSU Campus (919/513-2148)

#### УЧАСТИЕ

Ваше участие в этом исследовании добровольно; вы можете отказаться от участия в нем в любое время. Если вы отказываетесь продолжить исследование до полного сбора данных, вся информация будет возвращена Вам или уничтожена.

#### СОГЛАСИЕ

Для сохранности вашей конфиденциальности, вам не придется подписывать форму согласия. Заполнение демографического вопросника и прохождение интервью будет указывать на ваше согласие участвовать в исследовании.

## Appendix B: Demographic Survey Form

Subject Number \_\_\_\_\_

1. Male (Мужчина) \_\_\_\_ Female (женщина) \_\_\_\_
2. Primary place of work (Постоянное место работы) \_\_\_\_\_
3. When did you start teaching? (Когда Вы начали преподавать?) Year (год) \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many years of full-time teaching experience do you have? (Сколько лет вы преподаете? \_\_\_\_\_ (полная ставка))
5. Which subjects do you teach now? (Какие предметы Вы преподаете?)  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What degrees do you hold and from where (Какое и где Вы получили образование):  
Degree (Степень): \_\_\_\_\_  
University/College/Institute (Университет/Техникум/Институт) \_\_\_\_\_  
Degree: \_\_\_\_\_ University/College/Institute: \_\_\_\_\_  
Degree: \_\_\_\_\_ University/College/Institute: \_\_\_\_\_  
Degree: \_\_\_\_\_ University/College/Institute: \_\_\_\_\_

What additional training have you taken since you graduated from university to help you be effective as a teacher (Какие дополнительные курсы повышения квалификации Вы проходили?)

Course (Курс)	Year Taken (Год)	Location (Учреждение)

## Appendix C: Interview #1

1. Why are you a teacher? (Почему Вы преподаете?)
2. How would you describe yourself as a teacher? (Как бы Вы описали себя как учителя?)
3. Do you have a particular conviction or set of beliefs that are important to your teaching? (Существуют ли какие-либо убеждения или взгляды о преподавании, которые важны для Вас?)
4. How do you know that you've been effective as a teacher? (Как вы определяете, что ваше преподавание было эффективным?)
5. If I observed your teaching, what kinds of activities would I see? (Если бы я присутствовала на Вашей лекции, что бы я увидела?)
6. How do you view your role in helping prepare students to be effective in business in Kazakhstan today? (Какова Ваша роль в подготовке студентов быть эффективными в бизнесе в Казахстане?)
7. What, if anything, has caused you to re-examine your teaching? (Что заставило Вас пересмотреть Ваше преподавание?)

## Appendix D: Interview #2

1. What are the main things you are trying to achieve in your teaching of your subject?  
(Какие основные цели Вы хотите достигнуть в преподавании Вашего предмета?)
2. What values guide your teaching? (Какими ценностями вы руководствуетесь в Вашем преподавании?)
3. Why are these values important to you as a teacher? (Почему эти ценности Важны для Вас, как для учителя?)
4. How do you demonstrate these values in the classroom? (Как Вы демонстрируете эти ценности на занятиях?)
5. What, if anything, has caused you to re-examine your teaching? (Что заставило Вас пересмотреть Ваше преподавание?)
6. Describe the characteristics of your favorite students. What values do they demonstrate?  
(Как бы Вы охарактеризовали Ваших любимых учеников? Какие ценности они демонстрируют?)
7. Describe some of the changes taking place in Kazakhstan – in education, or elsewhere.  
(Какие изменения произошли в Казахстане- в образовании или ещё где-либо?)
8. How have these changes influenced your teaching? (Как эти изменения повлияли на Ваше преподавание?)
9. Imagine that you woke up tomorrow morning and you could teach any way you wanted. How would you conduct your teaching? (Представьте, что Вы просыпаетесь завтра, и Вам предоставляется возможность преподавать так, как Вы этого хотите. Как бы Вы тогда преподавали?)

### Appendix E: Researcher Bias Statement

I came into this study in 2002 with definite beliefs about what it meant to be a good teacher. In fact, I arrived in Kazakhstan two years earlier with these beliefs. Prior to coming to Kazakhstan, I had completed coursework in North Carolina State University's Adult and Community College Education program. I also had six years of experience working on international development projects for USAID and several years experience teaching part-time at universities and community colleges.

When I came to Kazakhstan, I was relatively sure that effective teaching involved the teacher as facilitator, not expert, and that effective teachers encouraged students to be engaged in course conduct and in knowledge creation. In this area, I was decidedly "Western" (Kember, 1997; Pratt et al., 1999). Another belief I had was that teachers are successful when students could think for themselves, deal with uncertainty, and solve problems without relying on set formulas. According to the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (Pratt, Collins, & Selinger, 2001) I took online ([www.teachingperspectives.com](http://www.teachingperspectives.com)) on 9/19/02, I held dominant developing and nurturing perspectives on teaching. Why shouldn't I have had those beliefs? I was trained as an adult educator at a time when andragogy (Knowles, 1980) was popular. Every teacher should be a facilitator to help self-directed adults find what they needed in education. I taught at universities and community colleges where I was free to structure my courses as I wanted to. I could even choose the book students would use in my class. I could decide how to evaluate the course, what percentage to give to exams, what to participation, and what to student-led activities. I could be any kind of teacher I wanted to, as long as students liked me.

During my first year in Kazakhstan, my beliefs colored how I viewed teaching in that country. I saw teachers lecturing to undergraduate students and occasionally thought, “that [lecturing] is so outdated” and “why can’t they be more facilitative.” I heard that teachers were teaching to an end-of-year test and thought, “that is so uncreative.” I didn’t understand. My heart was in the right place; I wanted to help improve the business environment, and business and economics education. But I didn’t understand. Fortunately, I was open to learning.

At first I learned through conducting faculty development seminars, watching teachers, and listening. During seminars I conducted before the study, I asked many teachers to share their views on teaching. I was fortunate that many shared their ideas, perhaps because they knew me. At one end of the spectrum teachers expressed the honest desire to learn more about encouraging participation and critical thinking amongst students. At the other was the teacher who told the class after a role-play that teachers are experts and the Russian equivalent of “Sit down and shut up, I am the teacher” is an appropriate response to university students who are questioning the teacher’s point of view. Somewhere in the middle were the teachers who were just trying to subsist on a teacher’s salary. From my work with these teachers, I understood that some of those teaching business and economics might not ever have had a course on pedagogy. Thus, while these teachers understood content from books, many seemed “methodology poor” to me. These were the same teachers who taught groups of sixty to one-hundred fifty students in classrooms that were cold and poorly lighted, and who just wanted to get through the teaching day and go home to their families or off to the other part-time jobs they held to make ends meet. For these teachers, following the

*uchebny plan* [curriculum] offered by the Ministry and supplemented by the various departments, was the path of least resistance. I felt then that following the plan and lecturing to students; these things were expected from teachers.

As a member of the management team at UIB, I also learned first-hand about the constraints that the university and its teachers faced in trying to deliver a high-quality education to students. These included lack of money for equipment, supplies, salaries, and capital investments; faculty who lacked up-to-date content knowledge, computer skills, and teaching experiences; pressure from students and parents to move students along in return for tuition payments, and a curriculum structure imposed by the Ministry of Education which did not afford teachers the flexibility needed to respond to the changing business environment.

I also learned about some of the political realities in Kazakh education. While I was Dean, the Rector whom I admired so much was edged out by the University President who then took over running the administration. I was working at UIB when he fired some teachers and cut others' salaries to save money. Perhaps he felt he had to do that to help the university survive. The new president and I were at odds at first because I didn't agree with his management approach. However, I believe we developed a mutual respect during my tenure there. When I left the university, he presented me with an honorary doctorate from UIB, to help me persevere in getting the real one.

I still have a developmental and nurturing perspective according to the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (Pratt et al., 2001) I took online ([www.teachingperspectives.com](http://www.teachingperspectives.com)) on 1/30/06. How I want to teach hasn't changed during the time I've been engaged in this study. That is just part of who I am. What has changed is how I view other teachers and understand

their practice. Pratt (1992, 1999) suggested that we should adopt a pluralistic view of good teaching. Engaging with teachers in Kazakhstan, living with them as colleagues, and conducting this research has helped me do that. In this study I met eighteen teachers committed, deeply committed, to teaching. Even when they could not stay in the profession for economical or career reasons, their commitment to development of students and youth remained. They taught me that there are many ways to teach well. I now recognize that what teachers in Kazakhstan want to do, and what they have to do are not always the same. I realize that the way they teach, the methods they use...these are often just the tools they have in their toolboxes and that they would be open to having more tools to use in teaching. I realize they care deeply about student learning.

Doing this study in the face of full-time life has been difficult. During this study, I struggled to remain engaged in a variety of roles: mother to two children, wife, employee in four countries with three organizations, a dependent spouse in an additional country, and a student in the ACCE doctoral program at NC State. I understand what “busy” looks like and have tried to remain flexible and patient with myself and others during the process of conducting this study. Despite the difficulties inherent in such a study, I am a better researcher, and a better teacher, because I interacted with these teachers.

## Appendix F: Participants' Thoughts on the Future of Teaching

During this study, participants shared many things. They shared their ideas about what had changed in Kazakhstan and how these changes impacted their teaching. They also shared what they wanted to achieve through their teaching and how they went about it. The findings related to these themes are presented above. In discussing their teaching practices, teachers also shared their recommendations for teaching in response to questions such as “What would you like people outside Kazakhstan to know about teaching and teachers in Kazakhstan?” These recommendations are listed below. Recommendations are included as participants gave them and in alphabetical order based on the participant’s pseudonym.

*Aliya:*

1. As one philosopher said in order to make some significant changes, the old generation has to die...Understand who is at the top... the structure of the ministry of education. If the top management changes, the structure changes.
2. If I was the president of the university, I would recruit the teachers by myself, check the handouts, assess all the programs and the way they’re taught. I would conduct frequent trainings to increase qualification of teachers. I would improve the quality, increase the salary, and reward teachers. If not, I have to quit.

*Balzhan:*

1. If [I was] designing a program for people of 40-50-60 years old, first of all I will respect them. I will show them that everything is possible. That it is not too difficult. That everybody can do it. I will do different kind of retraining courses for different kind of teachers...I would make some training for different ages [of] faculty and for

mixed groups. First, probably, [I would conduct and] introductory part only for one age [group of] people. But... next, probably, I would make mixed training and show that some of people of their old generation already do that. And, probably, next I would do mixed trainings with young faculty and show if the young people can do it, [the] old generation, who is very experienced and very respected can do it also. There should be different kind of trainings. But nobody cares about it now...because it takes time, it takes money, you know. It takes trainings, trainers and space and...a lot of organization, administration, and finance.

2. Workshops, seminars, and training courses...first we need that institute of re-training and probably it could be supported by Soros or Open Society or EdNet. And we need to...regular seminars, regular courses and from any local universities. For example, in [the] fall semester, we need trainers from, if it is possible from other universities. But if not, there are a lot of trainers, like me or other people who were trained and who understand the necessity of these new approaches. And this Educational Net[work] or [the] Soros Foundation for Higher Education program, they can make this. And interactive methodic should be one of the key moments and we need some games, trainings and home task, to control how they understand. We have to be in touch with these faculty members. We have to distribute questionnaires, like [every] one in three months, or once in one semester; [to see] how they are doing. It should be a detailed questionnaire; what kind of games or case studies or books...they are using.

*Boris:*

[The] amount of hours spent on diplomacy, external policy, and international organizations should be increased. For example, business ethics is assigned 4 hours, international organizations, international affairs and external policy – 10 hours. I would increase the number of hours for the Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan. It is only 10 hours. When we talk about foreign policy of Kazakhstan, we have to take into consideration the whole world: the relations with Asian countries, with European countries, with CIS countries. I think it would be more specific: with Latin American countries, with African countries, with Middle East. Now it is very short.

*Botagoz:*

Experience exchange. We should go abroad, so that they invite us and we will invite them, we see each other. But there are financial problems, aren't there? When I was in Washington, they did not know where Kazakhstan was and who the Kazakhs were. Only they knew Nazarbaev. When I said: "President Nazarbaev": "Oh!" They knew. They did not know where Kazakhstan was situated, where was its territory. Or they were not interested in it too much. They could do without it. How can we make them know about us?

*Karlygash:*

1. Well, maybe you should show them [people outside Kazakhstan] positive changes...First of all in the educational system there are some changes. We have privatized universities into stock companies. Also they should know that now there is strict control and a grant program supporting strategically important fields. Such

- fields where the State gives grants and credits. You can study free if the entering students show a high level of knowledge. This is a plus; you can show this. Also you can show that very good programs are developing right now such as the Master's Program.
2. It will be great if every teacher has business experience...it would be great if the university had negotiations with some companies, where teachers could get their experience or assign some projects which can be implemented with us or with our clients, i.e. sell the projects. Also it would be great if we had corporate clients and partners where students could practice, i.e. more practice.

*Lyzzat:*

I would like them to know that here we have very good teachers who like their profession; they like to help students improve their knowledge. We are good teachers and we try to be better.

*Marat:*

1. [They should know that] first of all, that we feel thirsty, students feel thirsty, and we need good knowledge, good experience, and good skills. We feel thirsty, that's the first thing I want them to know. Second, we do have really good students. Let's take an average student at [university]. She will be performing great and we can teach them what he or she needs. There are people who want to learn, feel thirsty, but there is not knowledge to give. This is what I want them to know.
2. We have more young teachers than I mean, compared with other Western Universities, for example, where most professors would be about the age of 30, here we

have most of the teachers below the age of 30 and most teacher have only masters' degree here cause we cannot afford PhDs. And maybe [a] very important thing is that we do not have teaching culture yet. I perceive it like that – we do not have teaching culture...a tenure path, I hadn't seen a young teacher at [university] with Masters Degree who was planning to stay in teaching after 30 years.

*Vera:*

1. Teachers of Kazakhstan are very friendly to teachers of other countries, because we want to learn, we want to know what they are doing and what can we take for ourselves from them. And I think that if we had removed the ideological control on education and had accepted the Soviet system of education that would have been an advantage...I think that Kazakhstan should not completely reject that Soviet system of education. It should accept some Western technologies, of course, such as distance system of education, handouts, Internet, computers, etc. The Western technology should be synthesized with the Soviet system. I don't know how it is going to be but I think that it should be that way. I judge by my experience as I knew perfectly well the old system, and I am teaching now in the new system as well.
2. I think the government should establish a number of elite universities, for example, as Oxford or Harvard. The government should establish a number of universities. Let it be [the] Kazakh National University. The government should support these universities. It should not be students who pay, or poor Kazakh people who have no money. It should not be Soros or any other organizations. The government should establish and support these universities. It's high time. It can be two or three

- universities. They can be established in Astana, or they can be established in some special field, for example, in economy or law or some technologies, depending on the necessity of the republic. Now we have 160 private universities that are quartered in the buildings of kindergartens. I saw these universities where nobody wants to teach. Who teaches there? Schoolteachers go to work there. So this quantity should be transformed to a new quality. When we have these three elite universities the others will align themselves with them. And the rest will weed out. Those that cannot compete. The government should create this competition as now no one else has money to establish such universities. There is no money for that in the system of education either. As everything we receive we spend for salaries and other everyday needs. Only the government has the money for that.
3. And also something should be changed in the technology of education. Now 90% of all the graduates are lawyers, economists and accountants. There are no graduates in other fields. This should be changed. It should be done for economy of the republic. We should do it quickly otherwise our graduates will not be wanted any more if there are too many specialists in this field. It should be reformed in such a way, that the government should take it under its control. The government now does not follow this situation. And these people who paid for their education then are not able to find job. This happens.

*Vladimir:*

I think that they should know much about teaching in Kazakhstan, about methods worked out in Kazakhstan. The problem is that intellectual property is not legally

protected in Kazakhstan. I know a lot of talented, genius people who had their own inventions. Now there are Check and Chinese people who both try to buy an invention of one friend of mine. And due to the fact that his rights for his invention are not legally protected, they try to cheat him, not to pay him anything. I have the same problem. I have many inventions but the law here does not protect them, so I am not going to publish them in Kazakhstan where copyright is not preserved at all. Due to the above Kazakhstan loses a lot of money. Foreigners are ready to pay money for Kazakh inventions, but as there is no legal base for that, they cannot do that.