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WORLDWIDE DIFFUSION OF XXI CENTURY EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN KAZAKHSTAN

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where states otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Assem Zhigerovna Berniyazova

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Lay summary

Many countries wish to improve their school education by introducing innovations and learning best practices from the other countries. For smooth international cooperation, it is important that there is a deep mutual understanding between the countries' educators. This understanding can be secured, if the countries have compatible "social imaginaries" - broad taken-for-granted aspects of the worldview. In this dissertation I have compared Kazakhstan and Scotland in terms of their social imaginaries as those relate to the school education.

To trace the social imaginaries, I interviewed teachers and people, who work in the organisations that bring innovative practices to schools. I also analysed relevant books, conferences, folk tales and prominent political speeches.

As the analysis showed, the social imaginaries included a number of stances on various issues: what do schools and teachers do; who is the educated person; who is responsible for the child; where can one find knowledge and know-how; attitude toward the new; what can be called an innovation in education; what is the role of technology; what the school premises should look like; opinions on the flow of time and when is the Future. According to the data, the social imaginaries were mostly nation-specific. Overall, it appeared that the social imaginaries in the two countries were compatible, especially given the current structure of cooperation between Kazakhstan and the UK. At the same time, in agreement with the dissertation of Oddrun Bråten, there were also some traces of supranational and sub-national imaginaries.

In conclusion, having considered the limitations of conducted research, I proposed several avenues for future work.

Abstract

Like many countries, Kazakhstan aspires to modernise its school education through the adoption of innovative ideas from the best practices worldwide. A considerable change is underway through the centrally organised exchange and cooperation with international counterparts, including those in the United Kingdom. The potential success of such cooperation, however, is contingent on the compatibility of the countries' social imaginaries of schooling - deep background understandings held by the practitioners working in schools and with schools. The present work is an attempt to discern, compare and reflect on the salient aspects of the social imaginaries of schooling in one region of Kazakhstan and two local authorities in Scotland. Its key objective is to consider how those imaginaries relate and what their relationship may imply for the prospects of international cooperation in bringing about the desirable school of the future.

In terms of theory, this dissertation leans on the works of philosophers, sociologists and anthropologists, who studied the shared character of social reality by looking at the roots of personal identity, nationalism, societal structure and cohesion. It primarily relies on Charles Taylor's construct of social imaginary as operationalised by the scholars of science and technology studies. As such, the present work adds to the line of recent research that has investigated the power of social imaginaries to affect educational practices within the national (India, Scotland) or international comparative (Norway-England) settings.

Drawing on the literature on innovations, massive open online courses and the social shaping of technology, this study is designed around the two sets of innovative initiatives implemented in school education in Kazakhstan and Scotland - one with a technological focus, and one with a social focus. The research design is further informed by the cultural and educational contexts of the two countries. The evidence base mainly consists of semi-structured interviews with the staff of organisations that bring innovative practices to state schools and the teachers working in those schools. It also includes the industry-wide conversations as exemplified by two relevant academic publications and two large-scale educational conferences. It further draws on the society-level understandings as reflected in two folklore pieces and two hallmark political speeches.

With respect to findings, a number of salient aspects of the social imaginaries are identified in the two countries, including: the views about the roles of the school and the teacher; the concept of educated person - the desirable one of us; the authority responsible for the child; the location of knowledge and know-how; the attitude toward the new; the definition and the content of educational innovation; the role of and the attitude toward the technology; the views about the school premises; the perception of the flow of time and the timing of the Future. The juxtaposition of these aspects demonstrates that the social imaginaries do possess some nation-specific features. At the same time, conforming to Oddrun Bråten, the material from each country also shows the traces of some supranational and sub-national imaginaries. In

response to the key research question, the interplay of the aspects of the national imaginaries suggests compatibility with the overall current configuration of cooperation: for example, the well-paired perceived location of knowledge and know-how, and the complementary views about technology and equipment. Another practical implication is in that a number of mismatching points need to be considered to secure the smooth cooperation: for example, the differently perceived timing of the Future, and the varied attitudes to the new. The reflection on the study's limitations and the further questions posed by its findings make it possible to propose several avenues for future research.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Focusing on the visions for the school of the future and the definitions of educational innovations shared by education practitioners in Kazakhstan and Scotland, this dissertation seeks to comparatively detect and examine the social imaginaries of school education at work in the two studied countries. The current introductory chapter sets the context, in which the research was originally initiated; outlines the theoretical, practical, and logistical impetuses for the evolution of the dissertation's focus; discusses the research questions; and describes the chapters' line-up.

1.1. The initial context and focus of the research

This research commenced in the wake of 2012, dubbed by the New York Times as "the Year of the MOOC" (Pappano 2012), with the "MOOC" standing for the massive open online courses. My decision to undertake it came on the heels of a decade of administrative work at a Kazakhstani University and the exciting first experience of being a virtual student on a MOOC offered by the Stanford University (2012). It was also right after the UNESCO (2012) reported a commendable 100% adult literacy rate in Kazakhstan and the new National Development Strategy "Kazakhstan-2050" firmly asserted: "In today's world, the simple universal literacy is clearly not enough" (Akorda 2012). Echoing the goals set in the State Programme for the Development of Education in 2011-2020 (Akorda 2010a), the new Strategy envisioned the introduction of innovative methods, solutions and tools, including distance education and online education affordable for all. Seeing the MOOCs as one such innovative educational solution, I applied to the University of Edinburgh, the UK's MOOC pioneer, with a provisional research title "Worldwide diffusion of 21 century educational innovations: opportunities and challenges for educational institutions in Kazakhstan". While my aspirations were quite MOOC-centred, as noted in the research statement sent to the University along with my application form, the intended scope of the study was rather broad:

> By addressing this topic I plan to learn about the wider themes of what constitutes innovation in education, what are the routes for dissemination of new technologies and teaching methods, how do conditions in social and professional environment shape activities of educational organisations, and whether there are regional discrepancies in the processes of change.

1.2. The evolution of the research focus

Within the first two years of the PhD, I had learnt and realised enough to amend the research plan by re-focusing it: from MOOCs to school education, and from the acquisition of innovation

to the parsing of the definitions of "innovation" in two different countries. Several avenues helped me to arrive at this decision.

1.2.1. Literature on innovations and MOOCs

Eager to examine the fate of educational innovations, I soon learnt that, in education, the word "innovation" was more often used than carefully defined (OECD 2009; Hofman et al 2013), which posed problems for the scholars willing to rely on this construct. Some had overcome these problems by basing their research on the definition set forth by their national authority body in education (Hofman et al 2013). In the case of Kazakhstan, however, neither the State Programme for Education Development for 2011-2020 (Akorda 2010a), nor the 2010-2014 National Programme of Forced Industrial and Innovative Development (Akorda 2010b) defined educational innovation. It meant that, to employ this construct, I had first to explore what understandings existed in Kazakhstan with regard to the innovations in the sphere of education.

The reflections on the generic spread of innovations tended to highlight their cultural and social embeddedness - the adoption of innovations necessarily entailed change both for the innovations themselves and the environments, where they landed (Williams, Edge 1996; Flichy 1995, 2007). One of the tools developed to illuminate how certain innovation agendas were fulfilled, while a concurrent multiplicity of others did not, was the construct of sociotechnical imaginaries (The Sociotechnical Imaginaries Project 2012). This construct suggested that, while the future imagined by the state had a strong driving force, its fruition depended on whether it became amplified, problematised or negated by the imaginaries at work in the corresponding democratic community (Jasanoff, Kim 2009; Felt et al 2007). Intrigued by this construct, I further learned about the construct of social imaginaries (Taylor 2002, 2004, 2007), a more detailed account of which is presented in Chapter 2.

Growing to know the scholarship surrounding the MOOCs, I learned that there were a number of discussion threads in the literature. Between 2008-2012, most authors contemplated what the MOOCs were, how they fit within higher education, what some specific MOOCs demonstrated, what pedagogies and technologies went well with them, what people tended to partake and what the providers were like (Liyanagunawardena et al 2013). Since 2013, Ebben and Murphy (2014) noted an upturn in publications that classified MOOCs, discussed learning analytics, tackled MOOC assessment and credentialing, or provided a critical eye on how MOOCs were unfolding. In crude terms, the key criticism had to do with MOOCs being 'not really new' and with the regrettably little reliance of the current MOOC providers on the wealth of valuable expertise accumulated over the decades in the field of Distance education (Baggaley 2013, 2014a,b). Overall, MOOCs disturbed the ways things normally went in higher education and the clash of the MOOC practices with the existing practices in the Universities

opened a well of questions about the apt philosophy and the helpful approaches to the education of adults.[1]

To my surprise, the discussions of MOOCs were also slowly filtering into the field of school education. The Western scholars (Hollands, Tirthali 2014), practitioners (Bill and Melinda Gates foundation n.d.; Coursera 2017) and statesmen (UK Department for Education 2014) hoped that MOOCs could help to solve a number of school-related issues. Among others, these issues included teacher professional development, preparation for state exams, stretching the potential of gifted children, provision of low take-up subjects, and homeschooling. This strand of MOOC developments formed an interesting parallel to some ideas from the Kazakhstani plans for the development of education. Namely, to the plans to introduce e-learning in all schools, with an expectation of their special benefit for the underfilled ungraded schools (Akorda 2010a), which have long been the least advantaged schools in Kazakhstan (Sange Research Center 2008). There was also some literature appearing in Kazakhstan, which began discussing the applicability of MOOCs in the countries of the former USSR (Sapargaliyev 2014).

1.2.2. Practical considerations

Fortunate to assist on a number of MOOCs during the first year of my PhD, I noticed that there were typically few Kazakhstani participants. Those, who were there, were unwilling to share time, when I solicited their participation for a pilot research. That should have come as no surprise. After all they were taking a MOOC - the most flexible type of learning, where the "flexible", in fact, stands for "fitting education around other priorities" (Sheail 2015, p.112). So, despite my excitement about MOOCs, the likelihood was high that my MOOC research would neither touch the lives of many Kazakhstanis, nor be based on any firsthand opinions of the Kazakhstani MOOC participants. As a state-sponsored student, I was eager to locate a field with a more immediate practical relevance for my country.

A field like that was easy to spot - one of the key features of the ongoing reforms in the Kazakhstani education sector had to do with establishing partnerships and cooperation with institutions in the UK (Nazarbayev University n.d.; Republican Institute for Development of Leading and Research-Pedagogical Staff of Education System of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2018; British Council 2018). Based on those, a large-scale programme of professional development for school teachers was set up and ran through 2 main organisations - the Center of Excellence under the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and the joint-stock company "National Center for Professional Development "Orleu"" (Turner et al. 2014). Aiming to eventually reach every teacher through the cascade model of professional development, this programme set out to touch the lives of over 2.5 million of Kazakhstani school pupils

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[1] Interestingly, I was to encounter some similar disturbance of the existing practice, similar lines of criticism and calls for having a discussion about the fundamental purposes of that, which we all do, in my conversations with school education practitioners in Kazakhstan.

(Kultumanova et al 2014, p. 91). Given its magnitude and the direct relevance to both Kazakhstan (where I belong) and the UK (where I was based), I was very keen to learn more about that ongoing change. My placement in the part of the UK, which was running its own large-scale overhaul of school education made me curious about how much the two reforms had in common and whether their directions were, in fact, compatible and mutually intelligible.

1.2.3. Fortuitous circumstances and study logistics

A number of unexpected contacts brought me in touch with four organisations - 2 in Kazakhstan and 2 in Scotland - that worked with secondary schools to introduce innovative practices. In each country, one of the organisations had a social focus and organised volunteers' visits to schools in order to boost the pupils' aspirations; and the other had a technological focus and provided the schools with digital educational resources. Together, the 4 organisations formed two interestingly rhyming sets of the points of entry into the realms of school education in each country. Through them, I was able to contact the schools that surely had at least some appetite for educational innovations. A comparison of the views on educational innovations, held in those schools, I hoped, could afford me a valuable vantage point for commenting about the compatibility of the social imaginaries of education held in the UK and in Kazakhstan.

1.2.4. Research questions

Taking in the influences described above, I chose to focus my research on the exploration of the definitions of educational innovations and the social imaginaries of education held by the school education practitioners in Kazakhstan and Scotland. To do so, I formulated the following two main research questions.

Research question 1. Looking separately at each national context (Kazakhstan and Scotland), what priorities are perceived and suggested for the secondary education innovations? This question is supported by a set of sub-questions:

1.1. What are the secondary education innovations defined as?

1.2. What are the progress routes associated with innovative secondary education?

1.3. What are the benefits associated with those progress routes?

1.4. What are the notions (visions of future, conceptions of progress, educational ideologies, etc.) invoked to argue about those benefits?

Research question 2. What influence do international cooperative initiatives render upon the in-country priorities for secondary education innovations? To address it, the following sub-questions are put forth:

2.1. What idiosyncrasies of the national priority-setting for secondary education innovation are revealed through the comparison of Kazakhstan and Scotland?

2.2. How do national imaginaries compare and relate between countries?

2.3. What are the dynamic interrelationships between national imaginaries in the context of international cooperative initiatives?

While the specific object of my research had shifted from MOOCs to innovations in the school education, I feel that the main theme stayed intact. The research questions were still aiming to explore a rather similar area to the one which I had demarcated in the initial research statement. Therefore, I felt no need to re-title my research project.

1.3. Thesis structure

Together with this introduction, the thesis consists of seven chapters. In Chapter 2, I discuss the literature on which I had relied to formulate the theoretical framework of this research - mostly the writings on social imaginaries pertaining to the various scholarly fields, including the educational research. I also take a glimpse at scholarly books devoted to the topic of school education in Kazakhstan and Scotland. In Chapter 3, I describe the multiplicity of methodological decisions taken to pull together what, at times, promised to become an unwieldy two-country research endeavour. In particular, I explain the logic of the research design, comment on the specificities of collecting the research materials in the two countries, outline the approach to the analysis of interviews, and share my take on the issues of reflexivity. The following three chapters present the analysis of the various sets of research materials. In Chapter 4, I examine and discuss the primary evidence of this dissertation - the interviews with educational practitioners from Kazakhstan and Scotland. The aim of this chapter is to detect the social imaginaries of education at play in each of the two national contexts, and to comment on their general compatibility. In Chapter 5, I look at two large-scale educational conferences conducted in the two countries in Fall 2015. The purpose of this chapter is to ascertain whether the aspects of social imaginaries, detected in the interviews with the practitioners from each country, do persist at the level of the country's education sector as a whole. In Chapter 6, I study the societal level materials to see, whether they still carry the aspects of social imaginary similar to those detected at the level of practitioners' interviews and at the level of industry-wide conferences. For that, I look at one folk tale and one high-profile political speech in each country. Finally, in Chapter 7, I draw together the findings and conclusions from the entire thesis, address the research questions, comment on the implications of this dissertation, its limitations and outline the avenues for future research.

Chapter 2. Review of literature

In the present chapter I review the literature that guided the way in which I designed, conducted and articulated this research. I first discuss the many permutations of the construct of imaginary. I then operationalise this construct for the purposes of this thesis. At the end of the chapter I discuss the scholarly books on school education in Kazakhstan and Scotland - this is to provide some context for the planned comparative research.

2.1. The literature on the construct of social imaginaries

2.1.1. Encountering the literature on imaginaries
I first encountered the construct of imaginaries, when reading about the socio-cultural origins of innovations in the works of the scholars from Science and Technology Studies (STS) at Harvard Kennedy School of Government (STS Research Platform 2017). They focused their research around the construct of country-specific "sociotechnical imaginary", which they employed to illuminate how certain innovation agendas resonated with it and came to fruition, while a concurrent multiplicity of others did not. They based this construct on the "growing recognition in the social sciences and humanities that imagination (or the capacity to imagine) is a crucial, constitutive element in social and political life" which was "no longer seen as mere fantasy or illusion, but as an important cultural resource that enables new forms of life" (Jasanoff et al. n.d., p.5).

In general terms, the construct of sociotechnical imaginaries suggests that, while powerful actors may imbue own imaginations about the future with considerable driving force, the reason why grand programmatic narratives yield specific practical outcomes depends on what aspects of these imaginations are amplified, problematised or negated by the broader social imaginaries that are at work in the corresponding democratic community (Jasanoff and Kim 2009, Felt et al. 2007). In other words, defined as "feasible, desirable future visions", imaginaries have power to affect future developments "insofar as they guide a critical mass of self-confirming actions premised on their validity" (Jessop 2009, p.338, cited in Levidow, Papaioannou 2013, p.38).

The antecedents of the construct of sociotechnical imaginaries include the literature about the imagined nature of communities (for examples, Benedict Anderson, Cornelius Castoriadis), about the shared tacit assumptions that underwrite the epistemic authority of the scientific method (for example, Michael Polanyi, Bruno Latour), about the transformation of the explicit message by the powerful into an authorless hegemonic common sense (for example, Antonio Gramsci, Yaron Ezrahi, Michel Foucault, Sheila Jasanoff), and about the need for the unwittingly oppressed to nurture a collective consciousness and to collectively resist (for example, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Rachel Carson, Arundhati Roy). (STS Research Platform 2017)

Apart from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, the construct of imaginaries is the pivotal concept for a number of scholarly collectives, including those located in the USA (Arizona State University, Chicago-based Center for Transcultural Studies, UC Berkeley), Switzerland (ETH Zurich), the UK (Lancaster University), and Austria (University of Vienna). (STS Research Platform 2017)

On the personal level, the construct of imaginaries did readily resonate with the type of ontological thinking that I was drawn to before. Specifically speaking, having studied the 1994 Rwandan genocide in my master's, I had internalised a normative urge to view ethnic identities as non-primordial. I became persuaded by the eminent scholars of nationalism that the nature of a group identity was socially imagined and dynamically co-constructed (Gellner 2006; Hobsbawm 1983; Anderson 1991; Billig 1995).

From among the various definitions of the construct of imaginaries, I was particularly persuaded by the understanding put forth by Charles Taylor (2004). Taylor described the social imaginaries as the widely shared, complex, part-lived and part-assumed awareness of the social milieu[2] that grants the basis for the mutual expectations and collective efforts by the members of a society. This understanding matched well with my earlier ontological persuasion and helpfully furnished it with a conceptualisation of the ecology, within which the dynamic social co-construction of group identity takes place.

2.1.2. Reading the literature on imaginaries

2.1.2.1. The construct of (social) imaginaries

The literature on the imaginaries often comes in the form of smoothly penned, engaging narratives (Appadurai 1996; Taylor 2004), however, it makes for a complex reading, not in the least due to the very different angles, at which various authors choose to approach the discussion of this relatively recent construct[3]. For example, where Appadurai (1996) would immediately talk about the ways in which the drastic changes in the contemporary world disturb and mix up the institutions and the imaginaries of human societies, Taylor (2002, 2004, 2007) would engage in a painstaking explanation of what the social imaginary is and how it may mutate over time. Where the Lancaster group (Jessop 2009; Fairclough et al. 2013) would

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[2] Including the society's values, principles, normal/deviant practices, relationships and power hierarchies.

[3] In terms of the various vantage points that the imaginaries are considered from, I trust the broad overview by McNeil et al. (2017), who have traced four broad "categories of genealogical resources" on the concept of imaginary: "(1) Western philosophy, (2) psychoanalysis, (3) late twentieth-century sociopolitical theory, and (4) science fiction" (p.439). They associate the category of 'Western philosophy' with the "demarcation of "the real" from "the imaginary"" in the "works of Kant, Sartre, Le Doeuff" (McNeil et al. 2017, p.439). The category of 'psychoanalysis' - with "Jacques Lacan's conceptualization of the imaginary as a psychic realm of subjective identification with images that exist prior to identification through language" (McNeil et al. 2017, p.440). The category of 'late twentieth-century sociopolitical theory' - with the works of Benedict Anderson, Cornelius Castoriadis, Appadurai and Taylor (McNeil et al. 2017, p.440). The category of 'science fiction' they associate with Donna Harraway's refusal of the "reductive distinctions between science fiction and science fact" (McNeil et al. 2017, p.444). To these four categories I would add the fifth - the Lancaster school (Fairclough, Jessop, Sayer, Sum), which is concerned with critical realism, semiosis and political economy.

link the imaginaries to the "social construals" of the human need for complexity reduction in the collective experience of making sense of the world, the Harvard school would concentrate on the "sociotechnical imaginaries" at play in the mutually-influencing relationships between the advances in science and technology, state priorities and funding, and public views on what innovations do best serve the nation (Jasanoff, Kim 2009; Levidow, Papaioannou 2013). Such diversity of approaches is, probably, not surprising, if one considers the wide variety of disciplines that these authors represent - from anthropology to philosophy, sociology, political economy, linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and the STS.

Overall, the literature on the imaginaries tends to agree with the wider trend in the social sciences - the growing interest in the performative features of the human co-construction of meaning. The writers addressing the imaginaries will often contextualise their own work by making a note early in the text about this wider trend. Appadurai (1996), for example, mentions a recent shift, "in which the imagination has become a collective, social fact" (p.5). Similarly, Jasanoff and Kim (2009, p.122) note "the growing recognition that the capacity to imagine futures is a crucial constitutive element in social and political life". Jessop (2009) also writes about a "cultural turn", which he defines as "a concern with semiosis or meaning-making" (p.336). Possibly, this wider trend is part responsible for the ease, with which the concept is picked up and applied by the authors, who do not necessarily theorise about the construct of imaginaries themselves. As McNeil et al. (2017) elegantly put it: "... examining the clusters of STS research on the imaginary, we found limited reference to a theoretical hinterland of the concept. Authors frequently used it with little or no reference to a theoretical or a methodological repertoire but with, nonetheless, a strong sense of its relevance" (p.435). In this dissertation I mostly lean on how the construct of imaginaries was theorised by the scholarly hubs associated with the Harvard Kennedy School of Government (Jasanoff, Kim 2009) and the Chicago-based Center of Transcultural Studies (Appadurai 1996; Taylor 2002, 2004, 2007).

2.1.2.1.1. The Harvard group

As mentioned above, the Harvard group concerns itself with the sociotechnical imaginaries that they observe at the socio-cultural basis of the state-sponsored innovations by the science and technology specialists (Jasanoff, Kim 2009). They see the ability of societies to collectively imagine and establish the attainable parameters of the future, which is worthy of pursuing, as a powerful enabler for the corresponding actions and advances. Introducing the imaginaries as belonging within the "understudied regions between imagination and action, between discourse and decision, and between inchoate public opinion and instrumental state policy", these authors warn that "sociotechnical imaginaries should not be seen as static or tightly bounded belief systems" (Jasanoff, Kim 2009, p.123). Instead, the "powerful instruments of meaning-making and goal-selecting", which "often lie within the control of nation states" allow some sociotechnical imaginations "to be more durable at the national level" than "the multiple

contending sociotechnical imaginations at play in any society" (Jasanoff, Kim 2009, pp.123-124). Their comparative research has demonstrated that "despite the increasingly global flows of capital, media, knowledge, and skills, the framing and bounding of S&T projects and related policies remain closely intertwined with nation-building" (Jasanoff, Kim 2009, p.124). And they contend that the study of sociotechnical imaginaries requires the "systematic comparative analysis of the ways in which features of national political life - or, more accurately, of national political culture - both embed and are embedded in the development and reception of science and technology"(Jasanoff, Kim 2009, p.124).

2.1.2.1.2. The Center for Transcultural Studies

Two other authors that I focused on were Appadurai and Taylor, both of whom used to collaborate with "the Center for Transcultural Studies (CTS), a Chicago-based not-for-profit research network with close links to the Public Culture editorial collective, to investigate how globalization of culture and communication is transforming contemporary societies" (Gaonkar 2002, pp.1-2).

2.1.2.1.2.1. Arjun Appadurai

Appadurai addressed the construct of imaginaries in his 1996 book "Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization". He elegantly sums up the gist of his theorising by writing: "Implicit in this book is a theory of rupture that takes media and migration as its two major, and interconnected, diacritics and explores their joint effect on the *work of the imagination* as a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity" (Appadurai 1996, p.3, italics in the original). To unpack this, he believes that several seismic developments had taken place in the world in the late 20th century. First, the eruption of electronic media, which had radically widened the assortment, personalised the choice and increased the emotional impact of the available media content. Second, the nonstop massive migration of persons, which results in the variegated swirls of the multiple "diasporas of hope, diasporas of terror, and diasporas of despair" (Appadurai 1996, p.6). Parallel to these, the realm of collective imagination (collective assumptions) has become seen as much a social fact as the Durkheimian "collective representations" (Appadurai 1996, p.5). This, in turn, gave rise to "culturalism" - the increased scope for the collective imaginations to ferment collective agency in claiming cultural distinctiveness and engaging in identity politics (Appadurai 1996, p.15). Together, these changes "create specific irregularities because both viewers and images are in simultaneous circulation", which leads to the "the plurality of imagined worlds" (Appadurai 1996, p.4 and p.5). These irregularities help to further upset the already problematic yet traditional duality of the state and the nation, and, by doing so, trouble the universalising logic of the one-size-fits-all sort of modernity that rests on the notion of a world consisting of the modern nation-states. Focusing on the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization, Appadurai outlines a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order that governs the new global

cultural economy (Appadurai 1996, p.32). He offers a framework that distinguishes between five facets of global cultural flows, which he coins ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes (Appadurai 1996, p.33). "Ethnoscapes" roughly stands for the various people on the move (Appadurai 1996, p.33). "Technoscapes" - for the uneven, versatile and highly changeable global technological landscapes (Appadurai 1996, p.34). "Financescapes" - for the global movement of capital (Appadurai 1996, p.34). "Mediascapes" - for the global geography of electronic media production and the ways in which those portray the world[4](Appadurai 1996, p.35). And "ideoscapes" - for the images conveying the politically charged messages that often borrow the vocabulary of the Enlightenment worldview, "including *freedom*, *welfare, rights*, *sovereignty*, *representation*, and the master term *democracy"* (Appadurai 1996, p.36).

The relationship between these five facets of global cultural flows is "deeply disjunctive and profoundly unpredictable because each of these landscapes is subject to its own constraints and incentives (some political, some informational, and some technoenvironmental), at the same time as each acts as a constraint and a parameter for movements in the others" (Appadurai 1996, p.35).

To explain the "new role for the imagination in social life", Appadurai invokes three main terms: (1) "the old idea of images, especially mechanically produced images (in the Frankfurt School sense)", (2) "the idea of the imagined community (in Anderson's sense)", and (3) "the French idea of the imaginary (imaginaire) as a constructed landscape of collective aspirations, which is no more and no less real than the collective representations of Emile Durkheim, now mediated through the complex prism of modern media" (Appadurai 1996, p.31). Together these three terms point to "something critical and new in global cultural processes: the imagination as a social practice" (Appadurai 1996, p.31).

2.1.2.1.2.2. Charles Taylor

The main ideas behind the Taylor's construct of social imaginary persisted throughout the years of its honing from an article in the 2002 issue of "Public Culture", to the 2004 book "Modern Social Imaginaries", and then to a sub-chapter in the 2007 book "A Secular Age". Taylor sees the construct of social imaginary as akin to what some eminent 20th century philosophers[5] coined as the "background". To define it, he locates this construct in the vicinity of two well-recognizable ways of being aware about the affordances of social situations - "the intellectual schemes people may entertain when they think about social reality in a disengaged

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[4] These portrayals often invite the viewers to relate without the need to share a sense of a specific place or time period (Appadurai 1996, pp.29-31). Various time-space localities "become a synchronic warehouse of cultural scenarios, a kind of temporal central casting, to which recourse can be taken as appropriate, depending on the movie to be made, the scene to be enacted, the hostages to be rescued" (Appadurai 1996, p.30).
[5] H.L. Dreyfus and J.R. Searle, who built upon the work of M. Heidegger, L. Wittgenstein and M. Polanyi (Taylor 2007, p.794).

mode" and the explicitly-worded "social theory" (Taylor 2007, p.171). Social imaginary, however, has important differences from these two - it is more expansive and in-depth than the former and has a more folk lore-ish character than the latter.

For Taylor, "social imaginary at any given time is complex" (Taylor 2007, p.172). It includes an engaged, yet inarticulate awareness of the routine interconnections between the individuals in a community, and the mutual expectations they have of each other. Implicit and seemingly boundless, social imaginary is carried in imagery and narratives that posit how things typically unfold. It includes what Taylor calls a "normative" understanding of what courses of action may validate or invalidate a collective practice (Taylor 2007, p.172). Shared by large audiences, social imaginary enables individuals to partake in and contribute to collective practices, whereby co-composing social life. And just as social imaginary lends a system of meaning that makes a practice possible, the practice becomes a lived prototype that both reflects and reveals that meaning (Taylor 2007, p.173).

According to Taylor, an important component of social imaginary that helps create the context of action is "a sense of moral order", which surpasses the immediate norms as the basis of social practice (Taylor 2007, p.175). The sense of moral order includes the deeper "images of moral order" that render those norms viable - the moral lenses "through which we understand human life and history" (Taylor 2007, p.175). Although the sense of moral order is typically evoked in support of the status quo, it may also help to undermine it, since the question of how satisfactorily the existing norms conform to the deeper images of moral order is essentially always open to revisiting (Taylor 2007, p.175).

With the unfolding of ""secularization" in the modern West" at the heart of his exploration (Taylor 2007, p.ix), Taylor looks deeply into the process through which a social theory[6] permeates and transforms an existing social imaginary (Taylor 2007, p.175).

In terms of the mechanism of this permeation, he identifies two main routes: adoption of the new outlook and/or adapting into the new social practices. The adoption of the new outlook may occur through a voluntary "take up", an "improvisation" aimed at optimising some circumstances, or purposeful "induction" (Taylor 2007, p.175). The new social practices may come about as fresh inventions, as mutations of the existing practices that gradually eclipse them, or may be directly superimposed onto the existing practices. The ease of introducing the new social practices depends on how well their theoretical idealization ties with the existing practices and the sense of moral order underlying those existing practices (Taylor 2007, p.175). Through engagement in the new social practices, the theory's "new understanding comes to be accessible to the participants in a way it wasn't before" (Taylor 2007, p.176). In other words, the practice not only conforms to the theory and illustrates it, but also shapes it by providing a specific context for grasping the theory's tenets. As Taylor puts it: "The new

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[6] In his case, the "modern theory of moral order" (Taylor 2007, p.175).

practice, with the implicit understanding it generates, can be the basis for modifications of theory, which in turn can inflect practice, and so on" (Taylor 2007, p.176).

In terms of the agency behind the change, Taylor points toward three possible driving forces: improvisation by the social groups keen to amend some aspects of the status quo; introduction of theory's ideas and associated practices by the elites to win wider support; or serendipitous gradual extension and evolution of the existing practices, accompanied by the shifts in the meaning that they carry (Taylor 2007, p.176).

While Taylor's examples for illustrating his thinking vary between political and cultural (Taylor 2007, pp.172-175), they all have to do with public space, public life. This is not surprising given his personal research focus, as well as that of the Center for Transcultural Studies, which hosted a group of scholars enthusiastic to study the worldwide social and political rapprochement and the proliferation of democratic values in the wake of the "winds of change" of the late 1980s - early 1990s.

2.1.2.2. The construct of (social) imaginaries in education

Generally speaking, the sensibilities behind Taylor's construct of social imaginaries fit well with education studies and with a number of cognate fields, which highlight the socially established nature of meaning and see phenomena as emerging rather than generated by either the structure or the agency[7]. However, the specific use of the construct of social imaginaries in the education literature has only been picked up relatively recently (Dale, Robertson 2009; Dussel 2009; Lingard 2009; Popkewitz, Rizvi 2009; Rizvi, Lingard 2010; Mannion et al. 2011; Marshall 2011; Gidley 2012; Rizvi 2017; Ross, Sheail 2017).

Apart from the above seasoned researchers, who used the construct of imaginaries as part of their terminology, there were also a number of inspiring doctoral dissertations devoted to the exploration of social imaginaries in education (Bråten 2009; Connelly 2013; Drew 2013).

Below I present the overview of this literature in two separate sections - general scholarly literature on education and doctoral theses.

2.1.2.2.1. The construct of (social) imaginaries in general scholarly literature on education

The education authors, who used the construct of social imaginary, were almost invariably examining the issues of globalization and how it was affecting the future of education. Such accord is probably not surprising - globalization (however defined) disturbs the habitual ways, in which societies do education, compelling the scholars to re-examine the deep societal assumptions about education and the ways of doing it. Thus, Dale and Robertson (2009) study

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[7]Among these, the literature that argues that the animal is necessarily a constitutive part of its environment (Baggs 2015, Gibson 1979), that structure and agency continually contribute to mutual shaping (Giddens, Pierson 1998; Biesta et al. 2015), that the bifurcation between positivism (roughly, primacy of structure) and constructivism (roughly, primacy of agency) is unnecessary (Pring 2000, Dewey 1996).

how globalization damages the relevance and explanatory power of the routine notions of comparative education ("national", "education", and "systems") and demands replacing them with the new ways of conceptualising - the new imaginaries. In similar vein, Popkewitz and Rizvi's Introduction to the 2009 *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* focuses on "the particular conditions" of the present moment as they affect education (p.7). Writing in the wake of the global financial crisis, they call to revisit the assumptions we hold about globalization, imagine the alternative ways of understanding the current developments and engage in the pro-active shaping of the future "nation", "schooling", and "the governing of political spaces". Within the same *Yearbook*, Lingard (2009) considers the appropriate approaches to the analysis of education policy in the age of globalization. Making the case in favour of critical policy analysis, he says that it should be fine-tuned to accommodate for the globalization-induced undoing of the conventional duality of the nation and the state. In their co-authored book "Globalizing education policy", Rizvi and Lingard (2010) define social imaginary as "a way of thinking shared in a society by ordinary people, the common understandings that make everyday practices possible, giving them sense and legitimacy" (p.34). They devote the book to developing further their ideas on how "global processes are transforming education policy around the world" (p.3). Associating the dominant assumptions about globalization with the "neoliberal social imaginary", they provide an outline of the "critical education policy analysis, which attempts to show how education policies represent a particular configuration of values whose authority is allocated at the intersection of global, national and local processes" (p.3). In a recent paper for the UNESCO's Education Research and Foresight Working Papers, Rizvi (2017) seeks to further amplify the message that the uncritical application in education of the neoliberal social imaginary of globalization should be questioned. He suggests that it should be replaced with the "new ways of interpreting global interconnectivity and interdependence beyond globalization's economic possibilities, but also as underpinned by moral and intercultural concerns" (p.1).

Concentrating on the more palpable impacts of globalization, Mannion et al. (2011) write about the transnational influences that encourage governments to introduce new curricula. Using the example of global citizenship education, they show how the core meaning of those newly introduced curricula becomes the subject of debate and rivalry between the various discourses. As a means of exposing the various agendas at play within those debates/rivalry, Marshall (2011) offers a number of questions that serve as a conceptual toolset for uncovering the various intentions, assumptions and priorities.

Turning the spotlight toward the actual teaching and learning situations, Ines Dussel (2009) believes that, against the backdrop of globalization, it is important to study how teachers relate to the "global visual imaginary" - the landscape of the visual images and narratives, which emerges through the rapid circulation of "ethnoscapes", "mediascpaes" and "ideoscapes" discussed by Appadurai (1996). Similarly, Ross and Sheail (2017) explore the reflective schemas that the online distance post-graduate students employ, when thinking about the

physical location of their Universities. They argue that the steady expansion of online distance higher education makes learning about the "campus imaginaries" of the online master students especially pertinent.

With a slightly less direct link to globalization, Gidley (2012) examines the mega shifts that occurred in social and natural sciences during the 20th century and argues that they facilitate the evolutionary emergence of the new futures-oriented imaginaries of education that should unseat the earlier approaches, which she labels the "factory model of education".

In all these publications, the construct of imaginaries was typically employed as a piece of terminology to signify a shared set of explicit or tacit assumptions. The majority of publications devoted a distinct section to spelling out the approach to imaginaries that the authors were relying on (Dussel 2009; Lingard 2009; Popkewitz, Rizvi 2009; Rizvi, Lingard 2010; Rizvi 2017; Ross, Sheail 2017). The writers, whose works figured the most prominently in those sections, were Arjun Appadurai, Stephen Ball, Charles Taylor, Pierre Bourdieu, Manuel Castells, and Manfred Steger.

With regard to Appadurai, the authors often share his concern for the critical assessment of globalization. They cite his ideas about "the role that imagination has in the production of a globalized world" (Dussel 2009, p.89) by the means of sending "the neoliberal 'concatenations of images' circulate politically throughout the world" (Rizvi 2017, p. 6). They appreciate Appadurai's (2006) distinction between the "vertebrate" (nation-bound, with the vertically organized system of power) global politics of the Westphalian era and the "cellular" (running across borders, with the horizontal and networked system of power) politics of the contemporary post-Westphalian world (Lingard 2009, p.226). They follow him in distinguishing between globalization from below and globalization from above, between "the context-productive and context-generative effects of globalization" (Lingard 2009, p.239). They recognize what he labels as the "vernacular globalization", which refers to "the ways in which local sites and their histories, cultures, politics, and pedagogies mediate to greater or lesser extents the effects of top-down globalization" (Lingard 2009, p.239). They also embrace Appadurai's call (2000) for the emancipation, or the "deparochialization" of research - the movement "to deconstruct, in both an anthropological and pragmatic sense, the "taken-for-granted" assumptions of contemporary systems of research" (Lingard 2009, p.238).

With regard to Stephen Ball, the authors refer to his 1994 assertion that the language of education policy texts is often steeped in the discourses of the "global" (Lingard 2009, p.237) and to his 2008 observation about the "unmistakable trend toward a global policy convergence in dealing with the various pressures educational systems confront, through similar approaches to educational reform" (Rizvi 2017, p. 6). They also rely on Ball's classification of the approaches to education policy analysis (elite, trajectory, and implementation studies) and trust his opinion on the three contexts relevant to the policy cycle (that of the policy text production, of the influence, and of the practice) (Lingard 2009). In terms of doing research,

they appreciate Ball's advice of opting for a "pragmatic tool box" that prioritises the purpose of research and researcher's positionality over the formal precision of the employed methodology (Lingard 2009, p.231).

Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu, the authors noted the way that he had shown (2003) "how the allegedly descriptive accounts of globalization often slide into normative or performative prescriptions about an economics that must now encompass the whole globe" (Rizvi 2017, p. 5). They are particularly interested in how he explored "the ways in which global neoliberal politics have dented the relative autonomy of the logics of practice of many social fields, including that of the educational policy field, which has become more heteronomous, as a subset of economic policy" (Lingard 2009, p.241). Inspired by Bourdieu's call to refuse to reify the dominant construct of globalization, they tend to agree with his bid "to historicize it and to recognize its potentially hegemonic role" (Lingard 2009, p.241).

The book of Manuel Castells (2000) is referenced to comment on how capitalism has acquired a new form, extended its reach, and now "potentially shapes all aspects of human life and relations" (Popkewitz, Rizvi 2009, p.15). The authors highlight Castells' idea that "the concept of 'global economy' has now become ubiquitous in our lexicon, characterized as informational, knowledge-based, post-industrial and service oriented – and, of course, globally networked" (Rizvi 2017, p.4). Looking deeper into Castells' argument, Lingard notes that Castells, similar to Appadurai (1996), believes that "society is now organized around flows, namely, "flows of capital, flows of information, flows of technology, flows of organisational interaction, flows of images, sounds and symbols" (Castells, p. 442), with technology facilitating these flows via hubs and nodes located across the globe that are dominated by elites of various kinds" (2009, p.241).

Manfred Steger's writing about globalization (2003) is cited to remark on the need to critically assess the assumptions that support the specific neoliberal imaginary of globalization, which Steger's examination has demonstrated to be politically motivated (Popkewitz, Rizvi 2009; Rizvi 2017).

The works of Charles Taylor were cited for his definition of social imaginary (Rizvi 2017; Ross, Sheail 2017). The authors conveyed Taylor's social imaginary as a "powerful force", whose power "lies in its assumed and implicit character: it is embedded in ideas and practices and events, and carries within it deeper normative notions and images" (Rizvi 2017, p. 5). They highlighted the potential of the social imaginary to help "construct a sense of the future", noting that "a social imaginary is both factual and normative, connecting a sense of the future with the realities of the present: "that is, we have a sense of how things usually go, but this is interwoven with an idea of how they ought to go, of what missteps would invalidate the practice" (Taylor, 2004, p. 24)" (Rizvi 2017, p. 5).

2.1.2.2.2. The construct of (social) imaginaries in the doctoral theses on education

The three doctoral theses in education devoted to the construct of social imaginaries differ from the above literature in their approach to the discussion of social imaginary(-ies). Where the more general education literature employs the construct of imaginaries as a useful tag word, these doctoral works were written to track down, describe and analyse the social imaginaries as the phenomena at play in concrete educational circumstances. Oddrun Bråten (2009) at the University of Warwick explored national imaginaries through a comparative study of religious education in state schools in England and Norway. Adam Connelly (2013) graduated from Brunel University, having examined the imaginaries that young people internalised through their educational experience at a prestigious private school in Darjeeling, India. Valery Drew (2013) from the University of Stirling talked to secondary school teachers, staff and pupils in order to trace what kinds of imaginaries accompanied the implementation of the new Scottish curriculum - "Curriculum for Excellence".

In defining the imaginaries that their theses were after, these researchers relied on varying sets of theorists. To define it, Bråten writes: "The *social imaginary* is 'the dominant national self representation of a nation state', also called '*national imaginary*'. It refers to a symbolic imagery to which citizens of a nation state tie their identities" (Bråten 2009, p.195). She borrows this definition from the authors of a large European comparative study on the effects of immigration on national schooling (Schiffauer *et al.* 2004). According to her, Schiffauer et al. derived their understanding of social imaginary from Benedict Anderson and she finds it similar to that of Charles Taylor. Although the above definition does not explicitly include it, Bråten believes that the relationship between the state and religion is at the centre of the national imaginary.

Connelly's way of defining the social imaginaries is based on Taylor (2002, 2004, 2007). He writes: "In its simplest guise, Taylor's social imaginary is a reflexive framework of interpretation, which incorporates an understanding of a given social milieu with how one relates to others within that. In essence, this is an individually appropriated mechanism that demonstrates 'how we all fit together' (Taylor 2004: 24)" (Connelly 2013, p.34). Aware of the other writers from the Center for Transnational Studies and finding Taylor's construct of social imaginaries almost similar to Bourdieu's construct of habitus, Connelly defends own choice of relying specifically on Taylor's construct. He believes that "Taylor's model explores the ways in which intensified forms of communication have vastly expanded experiences of the everyday beyond the present moment increasing the significance of one's capacity to contemplate one's place within this milieu, but also that these acts of imagining are socially negotiated" (Connelly 2013, p.292).

Drew sets her thesis within the productive tension between two types of imaginaries - "new policy imaginary" (Rizvi, Lingard 2010) and "social imaginary" (Greene 1995). As the "new policy imaginary" she refers to the way, in which the school education sector internalises the imaginary encapsulated in specific national education policies that were developed in

conformity with the neoliberal social imaginary of globalization. To explain "social imaginary" she turns to the 1995 book by education philosopher and humanist Maxine Greene - "Releasing the imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts and Social Change". Although this book never specifically talks about "social imaginary", Drew seems to take Greene's writing on "social imagination" (i.e. "the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society, on the streets where we live, in our schools" (Greene 1995, p.5)) as directly interchangeable with "social imaginary".

In terms of their research design, Bråten's work was based on a widely-cast comparative framework - the development of the corresponding methodological approach became the cornerstone of the contribution to knowledge that her dissertation claimed. The two other dissertations engaged in immersive single-location case-studies. Connelly's approach was closer to that of a cultural anthropologist - he spent an academic year at his research site, observing, analysing, probing and documenting the various aspects of schooling experience. To elicit stakeholders' imagination, Drew applied an experimental research tool, which she coined "edu-imaginary interruption" - the schedule of these discussions was adapted from a specific form of unstructured focus-group meetings (Open Space Technology).

2.2. Operationalising the construct of social imaginary

For the purposes of this thesis, I chose to operationalise my use of the construct of social imaginary by relying on three main sources: the Harvard group's construct of "sociotechnical imaginaries", Taylor's construct of "social imaginary" and Bråten 's comparative methodology.

2.2.1. On relevance of "sociotechnical imaginaries"
Both the initial[8] and the eventual[9] focuses of my dissertation (Chapter 1) had to do with the critical reflection about the ongoing processes of educational change, about the in-progress journeys from a Before into an After. That was why, at my early encounter with the Harvard group's literature on "sociotechnical imaginaries", I sensed a very strong resonance between their forward-looking viewpoint[10] and my research agenda. Their definition of "sociotechnical imaginaries" as the "feasible, desirable future visions" (Levidow, Papaioannou 2013, p. 36) put me up to the idea of comparing the two countries' trajectories of reform by juxtaposing their visions about the school of the future. Focusing on the future would allow me to avoid the perplexing expedition for meaningful inferences from the comparison of the two countries' views about the a priori different current contextual circumstances of their school education.

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[8] The effects for Kazakhstan of the worldwide diffusion of 21st century educational innovations.
[9] The comparison of the trajectories of reform between secondary education in Kazakhstan and Scotland.
[10] For example, Jasanoff and Kim (2009) write: "imaginaries are instrumental and futuristic: they project visions of what is good, desirable, and worth attaining for a political community; they articulate feasible futures" (p.123).

By asking the two countries' educators about the school of the future I would be anchoring their musings to a 'common' (albeit abstract) goalpost of a 'happy ever after'. The presence of such 'common' anchoring, I believe, allowed me to somewhat compensate for the demonstrable differences between the two countries' current stations on their trajectories of educational reform. In other words, the focus on the desired future school made it less likely that the interviews with the Kazakhstani and Scottish educators would be completely swamped by the evidence of how different the two countries' schooling is now. Also, the fact that "sociotechnical imaginaries" literature examines state-funded scientific and technological advances also underscored the relevance of the Harvard group's literature to the issues that I was about to study - secondary education funded by the state.

2.2.2. On relevance of Taylor's "social imaginaries"

Both the initial and the eventual focuses of my dissertation had to do with critical reflection about the ongoing processes of adopting and adapting the educational practices, about the in-progress learning from an Elsewhere into an Here. In studying this, I was curious about the interaction between the practice, which is already taking place Here, and the practice, which is being adopted. That was why Taylor's theorising about the practice-entangled and slowly-mutating nature of social imaginaries appeared especially relevant for my research.

From Taylor (2002, 2004, 2007) I discerned the following way of defining the "social imaginary": the widely shared, complex, part-lived and part-assumed awareness of the social milieu[11] that grants the basis for the mutual expectations and collective efforts by the members of a society.

2.2.3. On relevance and use of comparative methodology

Both the initial and the eventual focuses of my dissertation had to do with the critical reflection about the ongoing processes of transnational permeation of professional practices and the ways of making sense of those practices. Appreciating that the changes in practices are entangled with the changes in social imaginaries, I believe that it is important to study and appreciate the idiosyncrasies of nation-bound social imaginaries, when observing and commenting on the processes of transnational permeation of practices. That was why Bråten's methodology for the comparative analysis of national imaginaries appeared crucially pertinent for the design of my research. In fact, both the works of the Harvard group and Charles Taylor (2004) tend to employ international comparison as a way to identify social imaginaries.

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[11] Including the society's values, principles, normal/deviant practices, relationships and power hierarchies.

2.2.3.1. The benefits of comparison

Deciphering a quote from the 19th century philologist and Orientalist Friedrich Max Müller - "He who knows one knows none" - Bråten writes: "he who only knows one religion, his own, does not even know that, because he does not know what is unique or what is similar to elements in other religions" (Bråten 2009, p.30). In similar vein, it can be argued that it is through an international juxtaposition of the ways, in which educators discuss the school of the future and the current state of affairs in their industry, that the distinctive national features of their social imaginary may be captured.

In relation to Kazakhstan, Scotland's belonging within the United Kingdom (UK) made it a good match for an aspirational comparison. As part of the UK, Scotland was automatically from within the circle of the highly developed and internationally competitive OECD countries, tying up with whom is one of Kazakhstan's strategic goals. Scotland was also from within the circle of the successful UK's experience of the 21st century educational change, which was one of the inspirations for the Kazakhstani school education reform guided by the experts from Cambridge University. Surely, Scotland has considerable educational specificities that distinguish it from the rest of the UK, but that would equally be true about any other potential comparison partner from within the countries of the UK or the countries of the OECD.

Because one of my focuses is the educators' views about the school of the future, I am, in a way, going to compare two countries in terms of how they construct their educational 'happy ever after'. However, drawing from Leo Tolstoy's wisdom about all happy families being alike, these visions can elude comparison, if the countries are similar. That is why I believe that the obvious differences between Kazakhstan and Scotland (political, economic, social, cultural) will provide a highly fertile basis for comparison of their positive future visions.

2.2.3.2. The challenges of comparison

Apart from its sizeable benefits, the task of undertaking an international comparative analysis is not without its challenges. Any deficit in the researcher's language proficiency, interpretive reserve, or context awareness may be detrimental to the quality and value of the undertaken study.

The problems with the researcher's language proficiency entail the inadequate ability to ask appropriate questions or the likelihood of incorrectly perceiving the informants' message. To avoid the first of them, I asked experienced scholars to run through my interview schedules and held a couple of pilot interviews to check the ease with which the interviewees would grasp the questions. To prevent the second, I resolved to ask additional questions every time, when I felt that I misheard a word, or was not sure about the meaning of a word or a phrase.

By the lack of interpretive reserve I mean giving in to the temptation of assigning disproportionate amount of meaning to random units of research material without seeking to corroborate the supposed findings with the support from elsewhere in the evidence base. Another example would be making sweeping generalisations or essentialising the differences

noticed between the research materials collected in different contexts. Countering these dangers by keeping a check on one's impulses or by reminding oneself about the inherently colourful diversity of the world is easier to commit to than to actually implement. However, being aware of those dangers, I did my best to avoid them, without being able to guarantee my having successfully done so.

The lack of context awareness may surface in a wide range of circumstances and, again, influence the ability to correctly convey or understand the message. For example, my formative years in the Soviet Union resulted in the assumption that words "country", "state" and "government" could be used interchangeably as the adjectives for "policy". However, for my friend, who grew up in the Northern Ireland, answering a question about the "country policy" (from Northern Ireland) was different from a question about "state policy" (UK-wide) or the "government policy" (introduced by the current Cabinet of Ministers). As another example, before learning a bit about the history and culture of Scotland, I would easily picture a thistle and miss the reference to the national anthem, if someone mentioned to me the Flower of Scotland. The main means of offsetting this type of challenges, is by acquainting oneself as much as possible with the historical, political and cultural background of the studied locale[12], and, of course, by asking clarifying questions, whenever in doubt.

As a way of highlighting some aspects of the national contexts of Kazakhstan and Scotland, the closing section of this chapter discusses the available scholarly books devoted to the theme of school education in the two countries.

2.2.3.3. Bråten's comparative methodology

Oddrun Bråten's methodology of comparison draws on two sets of ideas. On the one hand, she relied on the three-scale classification of factors influencing the education governance developed by Dale (2006) - supranational, national, and sub-national. On the other hand, she followed Goodlad and Su's (1992) writing about the levels of the curriculum - societal, institutional, instructional, and experiential.

By combining these two sets of approaches, she designed her research around the exploration of "a set of selected themes" that loosely corresponded to the above levels of curriculum. She chose to direct her research from the more general and remote from the learner toward the more specific and closer to the learner. The societal level was explored in her chapter 3 through the analysis of scholarly texts that represented the "academic debates". The institutional level was explored in her chapter 4 through documents on "legal and policy developments". The instructional level was explored in her chapter 6 through the empirical study of the "teacher's perspective" on curriculum practice - observation and interviews. And

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[12] As part of the effort to catch up on the various aspects of the Scottish national context, I visited the Scottish Art sections of several Arts Galleries, attended public talks by Scottish writers, went on a tourist mission to several historic attraction places in Scone, Stirling, Glasgow, Balmoral, Glencoe, and Edinburgh. I also attended a number of events at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, including the Celtic Summer School and the "Gifting every child" workshop held in summer 2015.

the experiential level was explored in her chapter 7 through the empirical study of the "pupil's perspective" - observation and interviews. (Bråten 2009, p.79)

By Bråten's admission, her initial key interest was "to understand the context of English RE"; however, the application of the comparative perspective and the use of her methodology did equally prioritise the Norwegian context, increasing her understanding of it as well (Bråten 2009, p.366).

The application of this methodology allowed Bråten to not only notice the differences and similarities in the two nations' historical, demographic, political, professional contexts, but also to identify and question some distinct national styles of interacting with the apparently similar international pressures and challenges (Bråten 2009, pp.346-355).

In her closing chapter, Bråten suggests that one way of using her methodology differently could be by "identifying a question based on fieldwork and analysing this through examining the levels of curriculum" (Bråten 2009, p.345).

2.2.3.4. Adapting Bråten's comparative methodology

Persuaded by Bråten, I chose to modify and apply her comparative methodology. As a way of addressing the gap that she herself had pointed out, I opted to reverse the order, in which to explore the different levels of analysis. I decided to first examine the Practitioners' level through the empirical study of the teachers' perspectives on the school of the future - based on the in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Second, to trace whether the findings from the Practitioners' level would persist at the Industry level, which I chose to examine through the study of education-sector-wide professional dialogue - based on the observation and the analysis of texts related to the large-scale education conferences. Third, to trace whether the findings from the Practitioners' and the Industry levels would persist at the Societal level. To examine the Societal level, I decided to undertake the analysis of the salient cultural and political texts - based on the folk tales recommended for study at schools, and the high profile political speeches.

Based on Bråten's experience, the use of this comparative approach would benefit my study by equally prioritising both studied locations. Thus, instead of showing what and how Kazakhstan could glean from the practices employed elsewhere, the dissertation would now focus on demonstrating what insights the comparison of the two countries' idiosyncrasies revealed for each location and for the interaction between them.

The actual implementation of this comparative framework, of course, required making many other decisions about the finer parameters of the study. I address those in more detail in Chapter 3 "Methodological choices".

2.3. The books on school education in Kazakhstan and Scotland

The ranges of scholarly books on the national systems of schooling available in the two countries are considerably different. In the case of Kazakhstan, this niche is scarcely filled and is dominated by a recently added tome published by the Cambridge University Press (Bridges 2014). Overseeing almost 25 years of school reforms undertaken in Kazakhstan since its independence in 1991, this book was collaboratively produced by the Graduate schools of education from Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan), the University of Cambridge (UK) and the University of Pennsylvania (USA), as well as their partners from the University of Cambridge International Examinations (UK) and the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (Kazakhstan). The other publications in this niche include the review of the national policies for education written by the OECD in 2014, the country background report prepared for the OECD by the central education authorities of Kazakhstan (Information-Analytical Centre 2014), and the analytical report on the status and the prospects of Kazakhstan's secondary education brought out by the National Academy of Education (2015). Both the Information-Analytical Centre and the National Academy of Education are the affiliated bodies of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Education and Science, which gives their analyses a slight administrative, management-focused flavour as opposed to a purely 'blue-sky' scholarly curiosity.

In the case of Scotland, the corresponding niche is much more populated. Among others, it enlists the four massive[13] "Scottish Education" anthologies brought out by the University of Edinburgh Press (Bryce et al. 1999, 2003, 2008, 2013), one monograph that overviews Scottish education throughout the 20th century (Paterson 2003), two analytical accounts by the OECD (2007, 2015), the Scottish Government's country background report prepared for the OECD (2015), and the long-term reflective analysis of Scottish comprehensive schooling by the Centre for Educational Sociology (Murphy et al. 2015).

2.3.1. Comparing the scholarly books

In order to gain some general feel for the contexts of the education sectors of the two countries I juxtaposed the contents of one Scottish and one Kazakhstani book. Based on four main reasons, I chose to concentrate on the "Educational Reform and Internationalisation: The Case of School Reform in Kazakhstan" (Bridges 2014) (further referred to as the Kazakhstani book) and the "Everyone's Future: Lessons from fifty years of Scottish comprehensive schooling" (Murphy et al. 2015) (further referred to as the Scottish book). First, the chosen Kazakhstani book appeared to be the only one among those mentioned above to fit the description of a strictly scholarly publication. Second, both chosen books were devoted specifically to the level of school education within their national systems. Third, both books

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[13] Over 1,000 pages each.

overview a substantial period of time since the latest seismic change in the school education of the country until now. Fourth, while both books were produced by collectives of authors (some native and some non-native to the discussed context), their primary outlooks appeared to be from within the national context, rather than from an outsider's perspective held by external observers like the OECD.

In juxtaposing the contents of the two books I focused on their back-of-the-book indexes. I reasoned that comparing the tables of content or, indeed, the entire texts of the two books would be more confusing, because it would bring me to interpreting the mismatch of the two necessarily different national stories and current agendas. The comparison of the indexes, on the other hand, is a comparison of the likely-to-be-sought items (University of Chicago Press 2017, ¶16:3), the conventionally "pertinent" aspects (University of Georgia Press n.d., ¶1), the issues that both the writers and readers see as potentially important within each national context (Mulvany 2004, p.77). Of course, "two people seldom index the same way" (Fetters 2013, p.5), however, the process of indexing is not random. Indexing as a distinct aspect of the publishing practice "began in the 13th century" (Wellisch 1992, cited in Mulvany 2004, p.77). "Indexing preparation standards are available from several organizations" (Fetters 2013, p.7), including the International Organization for Standardization (Geneva, Switzerland), BSI British Standards (London, United Kingdom) and National Information Standards Organization (Baltimore, MD, USA) (Fetters 2013, p.8). And the authoritative "Chicago manual of style" devotes the entire Chapter 16 to the meticulous guidelines on indexing (University of Chicago Press 2017).

2.3.2. Sorting the back-of-the-book indexes

Overall, the two back-of-the-book indexes (further referred to as Indexes) contained differing numbers of items. The Index of the thinner Scottish book (213 pages) featured 449 items, whereas the Index of the thicker Kazakhstani book (340 pages) consisted of 361 items. I categorised these items in terms of the types of issues that they touched upon and in terms of the locations that corresponded to those types of issues (please, view Figure 2.1. and Figure 2.2).

The types of issues that emerged from the two Indexes were largely similar. At the same time, the number of individual Index items that fell into this or that type of issues differed between the Kazakhstani book and the Scottish book. Also, the kinds of locations that corresponded to those types of issues differed between the two compared Indexes.

Figure 2.1. The composition of the Index in the Scottish book.
Frequency of topic types and corresponding locations

Frequency of topic types and corresponding locations

Grouping	Topic	Scotland	UK	International
Professional environment, 257	Aspects of school system, 127	90	37	
	Aspects of education system, 76	48	27	1
	Concrete document, 37	22	14	1
	Specific educational initiative, 17	13	4	
Acting agents, 152	Personality, 82	26	47	9
	Organisation, 40	24	12	4
	The role of stakeholder, 30	29		1
Wider environment, 40	Societal issues, 29	21	7	1
	Geography, 7		3	3
	Economy, 4			4

□ Scotland   □ UK   ■ International

Judging by the prevalence of Index items belonging to the three large thematic groupings - Professional environment, Acting agents and Wider environment (please, view Figure 2.1. and Figure 2.2), the Scottish Index devoted the majority of its items to aspects of the Professional environment of the education sector (257), one third - to the Acting agents within that sector (152), and as few as 9% - to the Wider context (40). In the Kazakhstani Index the relative weights of these three groupings were much more even: explaining the Wider context (96 items) appeared almost as essential as charting the aspects of Professional environment (141 items) or presenting the various Acting agents within it (124 items). This distribution between the three thematic groupings appeared to suggest that the Kazakhstani book aimed to present a more panoramic view for the various potential readership, while the Scottish book aimed to reach the people, who were already well-acquainted with the specific national context of Scotland.

2.3.3. Professional environment

In both Indexes, the *Aspects of school system* were the most numerous and the *Specific educational initiatives* were the least numerous among the features of the Professional environment thematic grouping. The noticeable dominance of the *Aspects of school system* within this thematic grouping in the Scottish index (127 out of 257, or 49%) may be pointing toward the more specialist-oriented nature of the Scottish book.

Among the 37 items on *Concrete documents* from the Scottish Index, 17 were education-related laws and regulations, 16 were expert publications in the sphere of education, 3 were legal acts on the rights of individuals, and 1 was the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Among the 34 items of *Concrete documents* from the Kazakhstani Index, 14 were education-related laws and regulations, 7 were the State of the Nation Addresses by the President, 5 were the country's Constitution and key national strategies, 5 were legal acts on the use of languages, 2 were legal acts on individuals' rights, and 1 was the President's Decree. The wider variety and the broader scope of the *Concrete documents* in the Kazakhstani Index seems to be highlighting again the book's intention to faithfully situate its story within the

context of a meticulously drawn national background, in case the people unfamiliar with it are reading.

2.3.4. Acting agents

The emphases that the two Indexes placed within this thematic grouping differed. In the Scottish Index, this thematic grouping was dominated by *Personalities* (82 out of 152, or 54%), among whom there were 41 scholars (like "Bernstein, Basil"), 13 establishment figures (like "Thatcher, Margaret"), 10 education experts (like "Donaldson, G."), 6 education authority figures (like "Russel, Mike"), 6 co-authors of the book, 3 researchers (like "Aylett, A."), 2 writers (like "Orwell, George") and even 1 musical band ("Proclaimers, the").

In the Kazakhstani Index, this thematic grouping was dominated by *Organisations* (63 out of 124, or 51%), among which there were 17 foreign aid/sponsorship/donor bodies (like "Aga Khan Foundation"), 17 bodies related to Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, Nazarbayev University and their international partners (like "Centre for Pedagogical Excellence (CPM)" or "Johns Hopkins University"), 13 central educational authority bodies (like "Altynsarin National Academy of Education"), 11 educational expert organisations (like "Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)"), 2 government related entries (like "State Statistics Agency"), 2 individual schools (like "Haileybury School") and 1 entry for "non-governmental organisations".

I interpret this discrepancy as the relative difference between the two countries in their perception of what types of actors from the education sector possess and exercise agency the most. Also there seems to be a difference between the two countries in what kinds of things grant the acting agents their authority. The rundown of *Personalities* from the Scottish Index highlights two main sources of authority - the expertise (scholarly or practice-based) and the power of the state office. The rundown of *Organisations* from the Kazakhstani Index highlights a different set of the sources of authority - the resources (having the control over them or the secure access to them), the power of state affiliation, and, finally, the expertise.

The circle of acting agents mentioned in the two Indexes does also differ because the Scottish Index highlights the Role of stakeholder (30 items), while the Kazakhstani Index - the Role of education practitioner (18 items). Obviously, the former type includes the broader variety of actors than the latter.

2.3.5. Corresponding location

The sharp difference between the two books is noticed with regard to the *corresponding location* of the items in their Indexes. The high proportion of the *International* items in the Kazakhstani Index (84 out of total 361) but not in the Scottish Index (19 out of 449) comes across as quite counter-intuitive. Even if we offset this discrepancy by noting that "Internationalisation" is one of the key words in the title of the Kazakhstani book, the difference is still striking.

The bulk of the 19 *International* items in the Scottish Index come from 9 scholars, including the long-time Scotland-based Scotland-focused scientists like Sotiria Grek, who simply happens to be from a different country. Other *International* items on the Scottish Index include 4 international organisations (like "OECD"), 3 foreign countries (like "Finland"), the societal issue of the "'veil of ignorance' (Rawls)", the legal document "United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child", and the "international" aspect of education system.

A large part of *International* items in the Kazakhstani Index is made up by the international *Organisations* (33 items) whose presence among the acting agents in the Kazakhstani education sector was discussed above. Another large part is presented by the international *Personalities* (26 items), mostly scholars (23) like "Foucault, Michel", whose presence in the Index looks also unsurprising given the salience of their work for the contemporary discussions of education.

Perhaps more idiosyncratically, the Kazakhstani Index features 9 international items of *Geography* (like "Mongolia" or "Finland"), 5 international *Aspects of education system* (like "policy borrowing"), 4 international *Educational initiatives* (like "London City Challenge"), 3 *Research instruments* (like "NVivo Software") , 2 *Documents* (like "Convention on the Rights of the Child (1994)"), one international approach to *the role of education practitioner* "Dewey's laboratory schools", and one *History* event "First World War".

In all these types of topics, the thinner Kazakhstani Index lists more international items than the thicker Scottish Index. For example, the London challenge is mentioned in both Indexes. In the 449-items Scottish Index it is mentioned once as "London Challenge". In the 361-items Kazakhstani Index it is mentioned twice - once for each phase of this initiative - as "City Challenge schools (London)" and as "London City Challenge". I interpret this difference not as the sign of the higher relevance of the London challenge to the Kazakhstani educational reality in comparison with the Scottish. Rather, I perceive this as a symptom of the tacit desire to appear up-to-date and well-informed about global agendas, which is often palpable, even if unspoken, in the education sector of Kazakhstan. Resonating with the country's drive to quickly propel itself into the club of the top-30 developed nations, this thirst to keep up with the top notch international developments is one of the manifestations of the times-catching mindset that one can frequently sense in Kazakhstan.

2.3.6. Summing up

In sum, the analysis of the two Indexes highlighted some salient features of the ways, in which the education sectors of the two countries appeared to make sense of themselves. The Scottish book appeared to imagine its audience as consisting of the detail-oriented specialists in education, well-acquainted with the Scottish context. The Kazakhstani book imagined a wider and less-specialist readership - it adorned the picture of the educational realm with a detailed panoramic depiction of the broader national context.

The composition of the Indexes did also hint at what acting agents were perceived as the most relevant in the education sectors of the two countries. In Scotland, it was the individuals who figured as the key agents of the education system. Judging by the types of individuals listed in the Scottish Index, it was the expertise (scholarly or practice-based) and/or the power of the state office that helped sustain the authority of the individuals' agency. By similar logic, it appeared that the key agents of the education system in Kazakhstan were various organisations. And it was either the command of resources, or the power of the state affiliation, or the proven expertise that could help prop the authority of the agency exercised by those organisations.

The Indexes of the two books did also reveal what types of geographical locations were perceived and portrayed as relevant to the education sectors of the two countries. The Scottish Index featured two main locations of significance - Scotland itself and the wider UK. Both of these locations lay within the UK's state borders. Judging by the Scottish Index, the further abroad International realm was viewed as holding less relevance to the education sector of Scotland.

The Index of the Kazakhstani book highlighted Kazakhstan itself and the International realm as the two main locations of significance. I speculated that the salience of the International type of location was emblematic of the tacit desire of Kazakhstani education sector to stand abreast with the world's frontrunners in education. This desire goes in synch with the times-catching mindset behind the country's ambitious plans of rapid development. There were also two other noteworthy locations in the Kazakhstani Index: the geographical neighbourhood with historical kinship - CIS and former USSR; and the affinity of action with common aspirations - Collaboration (Kazakhstan - abroad). I reasoned that the presence of the latter underscores the resolve of the Kazakhstani education to pursue international partnership and accession into the established worldwide practices and processes.

Overall, it is important to offset the findings above by reminding ourselves about the particular intended focuses of the two compared books. The Scottish book - "Everyone's Future: Lessons from fifty years of Scottish comprehensive schooling" (Murphy et al. 2015) - from the outset aimed to discuss the basic principles, the details of implementation and the lessons from Scotland's long experience with comprehensive schooling. The Kazakhstani book - "Educational Reform and Internationalisation: The Case of School Reform in Kazakhstan" (Bridges 2014) - from the outset aimed to discuss the issues of internationalisation and associated reforms.

While curbing any excessive enthusiasm about the above findings, this reminder does not, however, completely dampen their helpfulness. It simply cautions in favour of a disciplined systematic examination of a variety of materials that may eventually, as a set, mutually corroborate the tentative intuitions gained during the examination of each of them.

2.4. Conclusion

The look at the literature on the construct of social imaginaries allowed me to draw together the theoretical and the research frameworks for this dissertation. In terms of theory, I am choosing to rely on the future-oriented outlook of the Harvard group's "sociotechnical imaginaries" (STS Research Platform 2017; Jasanoff et al. n.d.; Jasanoff, Kim 2009) and take Taylor's (2002, 2004, 2007) definition of "social imaginaries" as the basis for my research. In terms of the research framework, I am opting to modify and apply the comparative methodology developed by Bråten (2009).

In order to begin exploring the national contexts of school education in Kazakhstan and Scotland, I examined the relevant scholarly books and compared two specific publications. The comparison of two back-of-the-book indexes allowed an appreciation of the fact that the two countries did considerably differ in how they made sense of the context of school education. This finding confirmed the potential fruitfulness of the proposed theoretical approach and the comparative study design. It also cautioned that far-reaching conclusions should not be drawn based on the selective comparison of isolated items. Instead, a wide net should be cast to see, whether the national idiosyncrasies observed in one type of the research material would still hold throughout the larger set of research materials.

The next chapter will detail the logistical and methodological issues of the undertaken work.

Chapter 3. Methodological choices

This chapter details the comparative research design and explains the evidence base of this dissertation. It also describes the logistics of data collection and the processing of research materials. The chapter closes with some reflections about the role of the researcher within the study.

3.1. Research design

3.1.1. Comparative research design

Having centred this research around the construct of the social imaginary, it was uncontroversial for me to adopt a comparative study design (Chapter 2). The Harvard-based scholars (Jasanoff et al. n.d.; Jasanoff, Kim 2009; STS Research Platform 2017), through whose "sociotechnical imaginaries" I initially encountered the construct of imaginaries, and Charles Taylor (2002, 2004, 2007), one of the key theorists of "modern social imaginaries" - all employed the comparative approach to study these phenomena. Moreover, a pioneering work in comparative religious education by Oddrun Bråten (2009) had developed a comparative methodology for the study of social imaginaries that surround school education. It was also suggested that future research could try to reverse the order of considered "levels" in Bråten's methodology. Taking these together, I was inspired to undertake a comparative analysis of the social imaginaries that surrounded the notion of the school of the future in Kazakhstan and Scotland. My idea was to trace those social imaginaries through the three large levels: the practitioners' level, where I would talk to actual educators; the industry level, where I would observe what goes on in the industry-wide professional dialogue; and the societal level, where I would ask whether the same imaginaries manifested at the level of nation-wide conversations.

But how exactly could I approach such comparison? If I were to simply compare the totality of all teachers' visions held in Kazakhstan and in Scotland, it would be both unfeasible in terms of logistics and not very useful. It would not be useful, because the totality of all individual opinions would form some sort of a "white noise" (Oxford Dictionaries 2018b) in each country, and the comparison of two "white noises" could yield unfairly high level of correspondence.

That is why I decided to dip a toe into the water by teasing out the imaginaries of a select number of educators, whom I would reach through two key[14] organisations that bring new practices to schools in Kazakhstan and two similar key organisations in Scotland. I first identified the key Kazakhstani organisations. Organisation A has a technological focus. It deals with developing, localising and distributing digital educational resources in Kazakhstan in

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[14] By "key" organisation I mean the organisation, which is both the subject of research and the gatekeeper, through whom I will be accessing other relevant research subjects.

partnership with a Scotland-based internationally-operating digital media company. Organisation B focuses on the social issues - it aspires to motivate Kazakhstan's youth to set higher goals in terms of their academic and life projections. It does not involve international collaborators and is inspired by "Kazakhstan-2050" national development strategy. In rhyme with them I identified the key Scottish organisations. Organisation C is the Scotland-based internationally-operating digital media company, who partners with Organisation A. Organisation D works with schools to encourage educational attainment and help widen participation in higher education.

This way, I would be entering the fields of education of the two countries through the routes of two sets of organisations that work with schools to introduce novel practices - one set with a social focus and one set with a technological focus. The attention to these particular focuses - social and technological - and the opinion about them as representing two poles of the spectrum in the preferences for the future educational change is highly topical in the contemporary debates. For example, the literature on massive open online courses (MOOCs) would readily distinguish between the xMOOCs, which are seen as maximising on the technological affordances of the "massive" and "online" aspects of MOOCs, and cMOOCs, which stress the social "connectivist" affordances by foregrounding the "massively open" aspect of MOOCs (Bates 2014; Mackness 2013). The literature on innovations would also talk about the productive tension between "social" and "technological" by exploring, for example, the social shaping of technology (Flichy 2007; Williams, Edge 1996). I personally was impressed about the dissonance between the "social" and "technological" after a talk by Stanford's Amy Collier (2014), who came to Edinburgh in August 2014 and discussed the processes of educational innovation at her University. In that speech she made it clear that there is a difference between what is possible technically and organizationally and what is morally desirable in order to promote change in education.

3.1.2. Evidence base

3.1.2.1. Types of evidence

To explore the social imaginaries, I chose to concentrate on the same primary research material as Bråten (2009) - interviews with teachers. By talking to teachers about their visions of the school of the future and the possible routes for bringing today's schools into that state, I was able to glean the various aspects of the social imaginary that surrounded schooling and its future aims. Since I was to contact the teachers through the key organisations, I decided that I would also talk to the staff of those organisations. My reasoning was that these organisations, while placed outside the school system, were actively co-imagining the school of the future and, by working with the schools, were co-producing the educational tomorrow.

To make sure that the teacher interviews were not exclusively drawn from the non-typical schools[15] I planned to base the purposive selection of schools on the Kazakhstani structure of school system. The plan was to involve state schools, controlling for the balance of schools from urban and rural locations, and with different languages of instruction. I also chose to refrain from the schools located in the better-resourced special status cities - Astana and Almaty. From each school I planned to talk to one teacher only. And I wished to invite for conversation mid-career teachers with pastoral care responsibilities, who looked after the graduating class of pupils. Their mid-career status, I thought, would allow sober evaluation of current educational fashions. Their pastoral care remit I saw as conducive to contemplating the purpose and the prospects of education. And their responsibility for the graduating class, who were specifically under the attention of organisation B, I believed, would make them wonder what difference did the school education bring to the young people's lives. Such choice of teachers, I hoped, would induce an element of comparability between their interviewes, and would also preclude the headmasters from simply assigning me the persons, whom they saw as "the most innovation-aware" in the school.

With the interviews from the staff of the key organisations, I also wished to collect a range of opinions. Therefore, I planned to interview two persons from each organisation. One person, who was responsible for representing the organisation externally and was well-versed in the organisation's "official" selling viewpoint. And another person, who was involved in the essential activities of the organisation, a sort of core staff, who would know and be able to explain the educational philosophy of the organisation.

Neither the teachers, nor the key organisations, of course, operated in a vacuum. Therefore, it was important to explore whether the social imaginaries, the aspects of which I could catch through the interviews, would be in synch with the larger conversations that went on in the school education sector and further on - at the level of society as a whole. To explore that I relied on a number of secondary research materials. In the case of the industry level I used my own observations and the printed materials from two large-scale educational conferences - one in Scotland and one in Kazakhstan - to draw the clouds of words, images and ideas that hang over the education sectors of the two countries. In the case of the societal level, I compared the aspects of social imaginary traceable from two folk tales and two high profile political speeches.

3.1.2.2. Use of languages

Planning the fieldwork and knowing that one half of it would be in Kazakhstan, I made the research instruments available in the three languages - English (the language of the research project and the main language in Scotland), Kazakh (the official state language in Kazakhstan)

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[15] The cooperation with the key organisations, who were introducing the novel practices, did already make these schools rather special. They at least had some desire to innovate.

and Russian (the widest spoken and constitutionally recognised as the language of inter-ethnic communication in Kazakhstan) (Appendix 1).

3.1.2.2.1. Uneven, yet well-balanced

The differing attention to the languages in the two countries and in their spheres of education persuaded me that the uneven approach to the languages of my research instruments - 1 language for Scotland and 2 languages for Kazakhstan - would actually be a well-balanced approach.

3.1.2.2.1.1. Differing attention to languages

Although the diversity of population did feature in both countries, a brief look at its socio-political texture persuaded me of the different standing of languages within each of the two diverse environments. A comparison of the messages from the two countries' Censuses suggested that there was a greater attention to the issue of the linguistic multiplicity in Kazakhstan than in Scotland.

According to the recent Census, in 2009 the population of Kazakhstan consisted of the representatives of 125 distinct ethnoses (Smailov 2011, p.20). The ethnos in the context of the Census was construed as a synonym for a separate people complete with their specific culture and language (e.g. the Azeri, Poles, Uzbeks). Over 93% of the individuals said that they considered the language of their ethnos to be their native language (Smailov 2011, p.22). Parallel to that, 74% of individuals could understand spoken Kazakh and over 94% could understand spoken Russian (Smailov 2011, pp.23-24).

The Scotland's Census of 2011 drew the picture of the respondents' origins in terms of a different construct - the double-layered "ethnic group" (National Records of Scotland 2013). The first layer consisted of 6 race-related groupings (e.g. African, White) and the second broke those down into 19 ethnic groups that could be as specific as the Irish and Polish, or as bundled as any Other Asian. Therefore, some ethnic groups, recognised in Scotland's Census, could be associated with their first languages, while others would be too composite to associate with any one language. Ninety three percent of the Census respondents said that they used only English at home (National Records of Scotland 2017).

The reasons for Kazakhstan's close attention to the issues of the ethnic diversity and the linguistic multiplicity derived from a wide range of historical, geographic and political factors is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, the presence of such close attention manifested itself in the many spheres of the society, including education.

3.1.2.2.1.2. Attention to languages in education

One educational manifestation was the availability of schools with different languages of instruction. As of 2014, the schools teaching in Kazakh (52%), Russian (18%) and a mix of languages (29%) were rather evenly presented throughout the country, while the schools with

the Tajik, Uigur, or Uzbek languages (together 1%) were mainly situated in the regions of the compact settlement of the related ethnoses (Yakavets, Dzhadrina 2014, p.42; Kultumanova et al 2014, p.94; National Centre of Educational Statistics and Assessment 2014, p.32). By comparison, Scotland made two languages of instruction available in schools - English and Gaelic - with the latter provision being in the early stages of unfolding. According to the information that underlies the 'Find a school' facility on the Parentzone section of the Education Scotland's website (Education Scotland 2017), in 2017-2018 the Gaelic provision is on offer in less than 5% of all Scotland's schools.

3.1.2.2.2. Languages and access

There were two ways, in which the production of the research instruments in the three languages was crucial for my access to the interviewees in Kazakhstan. First, it helped me to uphold the decorum, when approaching the key organisations. In the context, where Russian was still the most pervasive language and Kazakh was the most intensely promoted one[16], it was strategic to have the Information sheet and the Interview guide readily available in both languages. In Herzberg's (2003) terms, each of the two versions could turn out to be a "hygiene factor" - I would not be praised for bringing both, but I could trigger dissatisfaction should a certain one of them be missing. By preparing the Kazakh and Russian versions I also enhanced my own ability to fluently explain the aim and the rationale of my undertaking, when orally communicating with the key organisations, school directors, or indeed individual interviewees.

Second, my plan was to interview teachers from the schools with both major languages of instruction - Kazakh and Russian. That is why it was logical to have the research instruments available in both languages. Given the wide reach of the Russian language and due to my own higher proficiency in Russian rather than in Kazakh, whenever possible, I offered to interviewees to converse in Russian. "Methodologically," I would say to them "it would be desirable for all interviews from Kazakhstan to employ a uniform language." Yet, several respondents preferred to be interviewed in Kazakh. The same situation would have occurred, if I had invited all interviewees to converse in Kazakh. By their own admission, some of my interviewees would not be able to provide answers in any language other than Russian. Therefore, having the both versions of the instruments proved very valuable and benefited the actual interviews.

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[16] According to the latest Census, 74% of Kazakhstan's population understood spoken Kazakh and over 94% understood spoken Russian (Smailov 2011, p.23). Yet, the official targets for the development and functioning of languages were to ensure that by 2020 most citizens spoke both Kazakh (95%) and Russian (90%) (Mehisto et al. 2014, p.162).

3.1.2.2.3. Languages and trust

The explanation about the desirability of a uniform language was not an act of deception. I honestly hoped that, if the interviewees did find it comfortable to use the offered language, the linguistic uniformity of Kazakhstani interviews would greatly simplify their thematic analysis. I had learnt about the practicability of such approach from two friends, who conducted all their Kazakhstani interviews in English or Russian (Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education 2016; Ilyassova-Schoenfeld 2017). Their experiences, however, had several important contextual differences from mine. The all-English interviews were part of the study that looked at the internationalisation of Kazakhstan's higher education and involved the English-proficient University administrators responsible for keeping the contact with the foreign bodies. The all-Russian interviews were part of astudy conducted in the Northern region of the country, where the Russian language is even more pervasive than overall in the Republic. My effort to replicate their experience made me alive to two important issues: (1) the innate North-South tension of researching a non-English speaking context through the medium of the English language, as well as (2) the considerable diversity of Kazakhstan's geographical regions.

In the end I was glad about having both the Russian and the Kazakh versions to use with the interviewees. For most of them, being interviewed and audio-recorded was in itself a self-conscious and spine-tingling experience. Being asked questions and invited to express themselves in a comfortable language was a good starting point to begin nurturing trust and engaging in an open and thoughtful conversation. In addition, I hoped that my preparedness to convey my own message and communicate in both languages would contribute to a positive image of myself as a responsible researcher, sensitive to the complexities of the political and cultural reality of Kazakhstan. I appreciated that by crafting that image I was treading the borderline between delicately adapting to the context and engaging in conformity with the dominant power relations. However, the key domain of my concern was accessing individual interviewees and fruitfully connecting with them, as opposed to addressing the languages' policy in Kazakhstan.

3.1.2.2.4. The use of English

The discussion so far could make the impression that the use of the English language posed no methodological concerns. In fact, my concerns about the use of English had to do with interviewing in English and drafting a workable Interview guide.

I was rather confident about the ability to converse fluently in English. At the same time, I knew that there was a wealth of English language phraseology, terminology, figurative expressions, as well as the cultural and historical stamps that I would not be aware of. This unawareness could limit my chances of fully comprehending what my interviewees had to share and timely reacting in order to clarify ambiguities, to invite details, or to appropriately empathise. Throughout 2015 I made a conscious effort of acquainting myself with some Scotland-related

cultural background by visiting tourist attractions, calling the museums and galleries, frequenting the heritage and storytelling events, participating in conferences and seminars about schools and teacher education in Scotland, and attending the Scottish Learning Festival - the annual gigantic September occasion that gathers policy makers, teachers, academics, community professionals, learning technologists, trade unionists, librarians and arts and culture organisations to collectively imagine how to improve Scottish schools in the commencing year. Although I did not notice a direct influence of this culture hunting upon my comprehension of a shared word, it still turned out to be a very enlightening undertaking that made me feel more confident during the interviews.

In terms of drafting the English language research instruments, there were several stages of their development and the eventual tweaking upon the conducting of the two pilot interviews.

3.1.2.2.5. Difficulties of translation

Once the English language instrument was ready, it had to be translated into Kazakh and Russian (Appendix 1). Since Russian was the language that I was the most comfortable with, I began by translating the English Information sheet into Russian. Using the automatic translation occurred to me as a clever idea and I opened the respectable online automatic translation facility - www.translate.ru. The first item to translate was the official letterhead: "Moray House School of Education". When I inserted this first phrase into the online facility I was taken aback: www.translate.ru suggested a strange equivalent "Стая Дома Мурен Образования", which stood for "The School [as in group of fish] from the House of the Moray Eels [sea creatures] of Education". I quickly reconsidered employing the automatic translation.

Figure 3.1. Translation attempt with an online facility

Photo source: Traynor 2009   My drawing
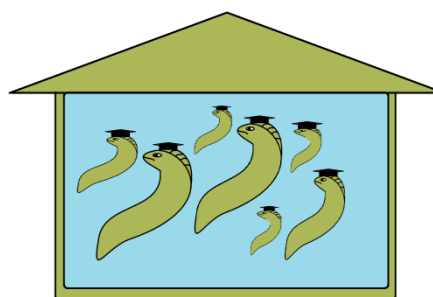
The manual translation turned out to be a non-straightforward task. Under the magnifying lens of the translation effort, the meaning of even the most basic terms seemed to ramify, mutate and evade being pinned down by finding an equivalent from another language. For example, the direct translation of Education into its Russian equivalent Образование (Obrazovaniye) often seemed to convey something slightly not the same.

Out of the five definitions of Education suggested by the web-based Oxford Dictionaries (2018a), Образование (Obrazovaniye) I felt really close only to two: "a body of knowledge acquired while being educated" and "information about or training in a particular subject". The other definitions seemed to require different translations. Education as "the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university" called for either Учеба (Uchoba) - Studies, or Обучение (Obucheniye) - Teaching. Education as "an enlightening experience" was more reminiscent of Урок (Urok) - Lesson, or Воспитание (Vospitaniye) - Upbringing/Fostering. Education as "the theory and practice of teaching" rang the bell as Педагогика (Pedagogika) - Pedagogy or Pedagogics. In the Russian language, the traditional name for the University Department that prepared future teachers would be Педагогический Факультет (Pedagogicheskiy Fakultet) - the Faculty of Pedagogics, not the School of Education.

It took me a considerable time to prepare the Russian versions of the research instruments. And, when the turn came to the Kazakh translations, I decided to outsource this task. It was immediately obvious to me that the direct Kazakh equivalent for Education, Білім Беру (Bilim Beru), which literally meant the Giving of Knowledge, would be as cumbersome an equivalent as the Russian Образование (Obrazovaniye). To be undertaken within a reasonable time, the task required high proficiency in Kazakh. That is why outsourcing it to the professional translator proved to be a sound decision. Even after being translated by a specialist, the Kazakh version still benefitted from my checking and tweaking to better match the meaning that I implied, when developing the research instruments in the English language.

One more difficulty of the translation process stemmed from my misgivings about the chances of introducing an in-built bias. If the translations were not satisfactorily similar, I could have introduced an in-built discrepancy into how the interviewees would consequently approach our conversation and what themes, ideas they would choose to share. While I quieted some of these concerns by persuading myself that any research, even quantitative, ran the similar risks, I still sought the opinion of my family and my former colleagues from Kazakhstan about the sense of equivalence that they would catch from looking at the three language versions of the research instruments.

3.1.2.2.6. The non-uniqueness of the difficulties

The difficulties that I experienced during the process of translation were far from unique. Considerable literature discusses translation as the open-ended process of second-guessing the meaning implied in the original language. A classical author in this regard, philosopher Willard Van Orman Quine (1960), argued that the vagueness and ambiguity of reference in the original language went parallel with the indeterminacy of translation.

There were many others, who experienced similar difficulties with translating, when researching education in Kazakhstan. For example, Bridges et al (2014, p.279) drew attention to the difficulty faced by Kazakhstani education practitioners when translating the English

language terminology from UK pedagogical practice into Russian and Kazakh. They reported how tempting it could be for practitioners to translate the newly introduced English terminology by substituting it with the existing Russian terms that referred to the outwardly analogous procedures that, nevertheless, featured a completely different set of assumptions, purposes and expectations.

The dangers of introducing bias when preparing different language versions of the same documents was articulately discussed by Peter Ashton and Mathew Dean (The University of Cambridge 2015) from the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). The CIE team collaborated with Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) on preparing identical examination papers in the three languages of instruction employed at the NIS - English, Kazakh and Russian. Ashton and Dean drew attention to the multiple problems that emerged during the process of translation. For example, the text of the same question, when translated into a different language, could give away the answer. They also discussed the extensive, laborious and iterative process of cross-checks that could satisfactorily assure the quality of the achieved correspondence.

Given the clear rationale for producing the Kazakh and the Russian language instruments, I decided that it was worthy of withstanding the associated difficulties (Appendix 1). At the same time, the level of investment required by translation and the debatable level of achievable equivalence persuaded me that I would not engage in the translation of the transcriptions of interviews conducted in languages other than English. I addressed this issue in some detail in section about non-translation of transcripts.

3.1.3. Ethical considerations

In conducting this study, I followed the ethical guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (2011): upholding research quality by competent use of methods, acknowledgement of contribution, avoidance of fraud, and dissemination of gained knowledge; ethical conduct by ensuring the informed and willing involvement of participants, their awareness of the right to withdraw, safety from harm and disproportionate incentive, protection of their privacy and non-disclosure of their information without grave reason and proper deliberation; overall safety of the participants, researcher and data. On the side of Kazakhstan, at the time of research, the ethical guidelines for research projects in the field of education existed only at the level of the Autonomous educational organisation "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" - "Code of ethics" (Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools 2015). The parameters of this "Code of ethics" do not contradict the BERA guidelines.

In accordance with the quality assurance regulations of the University of Edinburgh, at the proposal stage in 2015, the study underwent a routine procedure for ethical approval by the

Ethics Committee of the Moray House School of Education[17]. All research participants were adult education-related specialists in various settings in Kazakhstan and Scotland. They were participating on the basis of informed consent. To accommodate for the various languages that the interviewees would be comfortable using, I prepared three sets of the information sheet and consent form (in the English, Kazakh and Russian languages). Before approaching the individual interviewees, I sought and secured the consent of the key organisations, who provided me with the relevant information on potential respondents.

The research works did not involve risks to the participants' or researcher's safety. On occasion, some interviewees expressed emotion, but none reported (or displayed) serious distress. Most found the conversation to be refreshing and gladly shared their own views. None of the interviewees, who consented to the conversation, chose to withdraw from the research at any point. The research did not aim to and likely did not yield any direct and substantial personal benefits for the participants. The souvenirs that I brought as a gesture of courtesy were negligibly small and could not be counted as benefits. Since this research aims to, in broad terms, be of benefit for the further progress of school education, a fraction of that benefit may reach the participants much later, indirectly, and in a highly distributed way.

In accordance with the principles stipulated in the UK Data Protection Act 1998 (University of Edinburgh 2012), the interview transcripts were anonymised and kept separately from the participants' contact details. The electronic documents were stored in two password-protected locations – my personal folder on the University of Edinburgh server and, during my stay in the UK, on my personal computer. Upon the completion of the degree works, this information will be disposed of in keeping with the University's regulations.

3.2. Research materials

3.2.1. Data collection

The fieldwork for collecting the primary research materials for this thesis - interviews with practitioners[18] - consisted of two parts: the Kazakhstani in Fall-Winter 2015-2016 and the Scottish in Spring-Summer 2016[19] . This order of the fieldwork primarily had to do with the length of the school year: in Kazakhstan the classes end on 25 May and in Scotland - at the end of June. Also, by going to Kazakhstan in early November, I hoped to collect enough interviews by the close of the year and to avoid the extremes of the Kazakhstani winter weather[20]. Below I discuss the following aspects of the process of data collection: overall

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[17] It was approved under category "Level 1: covers research with participants that is 'non-problematic', i.e. the likelihood of physical or emotional risk to the participants is minimal."

[18] Staff of the four key organisations, which were working to bring innovative practices to schools, and the teachers in the schools, cooperating with those four key organisations.

[19] Between 5 November 2015 - 24 February 2016 in Kazakhstan, and between 22 March - 29 June 2016 in Scotland.

[20] According to Paul Brummell, the former UK Ambassador to Kazakhstan: "On crisp, cold but sunny winter days, Kazakhstan is perhaps at its most beautiful. But, for winter sports enthusiasts apart, winter

numbers and channels of communication, access, sampling of the schools, interviewee characteristics, the process of interviewing.

3.2.1.1. Overall figures and means of communication

The two fieldworks resembled each other. They took about the same time - 112 days in Kazakhstan and 100 days in Scotland. They required making the similar number of contacts[21] - 171 instances in Kazakhstan and 164 instances in Scotland. Both phone and e-mail were the important means of communication in each country. Each fieldwork yielded 11 main interviews[22]: 1 with a staff from the social focus organisation, 2 with staff from the technological focus organisation, and 8 with teachers from the schools that those organisations cooperated with. The fieldworks generated comparable lengths of recorded interviews: overall, 588 minutes in Kazakhstan and 633 minutes in Scotland.

Despite the overall resemblance, there were some interesting tilts that distinguished the two fieldworks (please, view Table 3.1). First, the Scottish fieldwork mostly relied on written communication over e-mail, and the Kazakhstani - on oral communication over the phone or face-to-face. Even with the key organisations, there were far more phone calls in Kazakhstan than in Scotland. Second, because negotiating with the Kazakhstani schools was strictly non-e-mail, I encountered far more persons in the Kazakhstani schools than in the Scottish schools. Third, although in Scotland my access to the schools was generously facilitated by the social focus organisation, the interviews in the Scottish schools appear to have required more negotiating that the interviews in the Kazakhstani schools. This observation must be offset, however, by the fact that, by its asynchronous reciprocal nature, the e-mail communication does necessarily duplicate the number of apparent contacts.

Table 3.1. Fieldwork in Kazakhstan and Scotland: means of communication

Means / Country	E-mails	Phone calls	Text messages	Face-to-face encounters	All
Kazakhstan	**41**	**59**	**15**	**56**	**171**
- organisations	41	29	9	12	91
- schools	-	30	6	44	80
Scotland	**105**	**27**	**-**	**32**	**164**
- organisations	48	4	-	7	59
- schools	57	23	-	25	105

is nonetheless deservedly the low season for tourism. The cold weather inevitably restricts movement, and travel schedules are also subject to disruption; for example flight delays caused by freezing fog or snowstorms" (Brummell 2008, p.23).

[21] By the number of contacts I mean the total number of individual instances of e-mails, phone calls, text messages, and face-to-face encounters.

[22] There was one additional conversation in Scotland – with an Information Technology specialist at one of the schools. And two additional conversations in Kazakhstan - with a Professor from the Pedagogical University and with a senior staff member at a privileged state school.

The two fieldworks also differed in the length of the periods between the initial contact with the organisation or school and the actual interview with the employee or teacher (please, view Table 3.2). This difference seems to be related to the means of communication. In Scotland, most of the negotiating occurred over e-mail, which is a less invasive and less urgency-infusing channel than the phone calls or visits. The Scottish interviewees scheduled me in, when they deemed convenient, not as soon as possible.

Table 3.2. Fieldwork in Kazakhstan and Scotland:
response period and length of interviews

		Days between initial contact and the interview	Length of interview in minutes
Kazakhstan	Organisations	22-87	63-109
	Schools	2-6	22.5-66.5
Scotland	Organisations	53-91	60-61.5
	Schools	9-29	40-84

In terms of the length of interviews (please, view Table 3.2), in Kazakhstan, the staff of key organisations spoke much longer than the teachers; whereas, in Scotland the picture looks more balanced. Here again, I surmise that the e-mail communication provided the Scottish teachers with a room to reflect on the questions before the meeting and made them more ready to converse. Also, because they scheduled me as per their convenience, in the case of the Scottish teachers I felt more entitled to use the entire 60 minutes that I initially requested. Some Scottish teachers and some staff of the Kazakhstani key organisations were willing to spend more time with me than the 60 minutes that I asked for.

3.2.1.2. Gaining access to interviewees
The primary entry points in both fieldworks were through the key organisations. And although I had some contacts with each of them a year earlier, the task of soliciting their cooperation proved surprisingly bumpy. By the time I turned to the four persons[23], whom I spoke to before, they all had changed their employers. Moreover, there were changes in the organisations themselves. For example, the previous heads of the two Kazakhstani organisations had been drafted out into the high ranks of the public service and I had to find out the new relevant names. I tried the "Contact us" feedback facility on the websites of these organisations. And, when that didn't work, the only option left was to make the phone calls. Thanks to those phone

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[23] One from each of the four key organisation: two in Scotland and two in Kazakhstan; one with social and one with technological focus in each country.

calls I clarified to whose names and to what e-mail addresses to send the four initial formal requests. After that point, the communication with the key Scottish organisations shifted into e-mail mode, while the communication with the key Kazakhstani organisations was based on a mix of e-mail and phone exchanges. Fortunately, all four organisations did eventually agree to support this research and extended their own cooperation in allowing me to interview their staff and in helping to identify the relevant schools.

In terms of staff interviews, the access routes varied quite a bit. In Scotland, the two senior persons, to whom I sent the initial requests for cooperation, both opted to sit down for an interview with me. One of them also assigned another staff member to talk to me. In Kazakhstan, the senior managers, with whom I discussed cooperation, provided me with the contacts of the staff, who they thought could be interested in talking to me. I contacted those persons myself. Overall, out of the 6 interviewed staff of the key organisations, 2 volunteered, 3 agreed to my invitation, and 1 agreed to the request of their boss.

In terms of accessing the schools, the situations varied as well. In both countries, the technological focus organisations provided me with the lists of relevant school names with no contact details. The Kazakhstani social focus organisation provided a spreadsheet with the list of relevant schools and their contacts. The Scottish social focus organisation pointed me toward the list of collaborator-schools, instructed me to choose the relevant schools and offered to put me in touch with the contact teachers that they had in those schools.

Because of these different conditions of cooperation with the key organisations, my routes to accessing the teacher interviewees did not match between the countries. In Kazakhstan, I had to contact the management of selected schools by myself and they helped me to identify the teacher that I could talk to - the access route was vertical. In Scotland, I selected the schools and the social focus organisation (having first secured their permission) provided me with the contacts of the teachers, whom they worked with in those schools. Most of my Scottish teacher-interviewees were from among those contact-teachers or their colleagues - the access route was horizontal.

3.2.1.3. Selecting the schools

The efforts to implement the strategy of school selection, developed at the stage of the research proposal, revealed a number of theoretically sound, but practically problematic assumptions about the rigour of comparative design and the essentials of the compared research contexts.

3.2.1.3.1. Initial ideas about sampling

At the stage of proposal, I envisioned a purposive selection of schools based on three aspects. The first aspect was the school's cooperation with one of the key organisations. This condition was supposed to ensure that the issue of educational innovations was saliently present in the

reality of the interviewed teacher. This aspect seemed to be equally meaningful for both the Kazakhstani and the Scottish context.

The second aspect was the type of school's location - urban/rural. Given that rural schools made up 78% of Kazakhstani schools and served 44% of schoolchildren (Kultumanova et al. 2014, pp.91-92), by selecting equal number of urban and rural schools, I'd be representing the broad range of Kazakhstani schools. This aspect appeared to be notable in Scotland, too - 38% of all Scottish schools were located in rural areas (The Scottish Government 2015).

The third aspect was the language of instruction, because 18% of schools in Kazakhstan taught in Russian, 52% taught in Kazakh, 29% had both Russian-medium and Kazakh-medium registry groups, and 1% taught in the other languages (National Centre of Educational Statistics and Assessment 2014, p.32).

3.2.1.3.2. Aspects of sampling revealed "on the ground"

3.2.1.3.2.1. Geography

The lists of schools from Kazakhstani key organisations showed the following. The social focus organisation had worked with 90 state schools in 14 Oblasts and 2 key cities[24]. The technological focus organisation had worked with 661 state schools situated in 6 Oblasts.

The fact that these organisations coincided only in 6 Oblasts drew my attention to the geographic region as an important sampling factor. If not controlled for, the differences in geographic location[25] could induce additional "noise" into my data. I decided to focus on schools from one Oblast only (please, view Figure 3.2). The territory of this Oblast is 223,900 sq.km (AboutKazakhstan.com n.d.), which is roughly comparable to that of the UK - 242,495 sq.km (Barr et al 2018).

Following the same logic, I decided to focus my Scottish fieldwork on schools from two local authorities only (please, view Figure 3.3).

With regard to ensuring the initially planned balance of urban and rural schools, it was only during the second, Scottish part of the fieldwork that I realised something peculiar. Apparently, until then, I was basing my judgement about the type of locality on a superficial signifier - the name of the locality as it appears in the postal address. In Kazakhstan, the postal address begins with the name of the settlement and the indication of its type - Belbulak village, Almaty city, or Shakhtinsk town - followed by the street address and the postcode. In the Scottish postal addresses, the name of locality comes last and there is no way of guessing whether a place like Perth or Penicuik is a village, a town, or a remote settlement. In Scotland, I had to search for the official categorisation of rural and urban areas, which made me realise that I needed to learn about the Kazakhstani official categorisation and compare the two.

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[24] Administratively, Kazakhstan consists of 14 Oblasts (regions), 2 special status cities (Astana and Almaty), and the town of Baikonur, which is leased to Russia till 2050 for the use of the same-name space launching site (Central Intelligence Agency 2013).
[25] In his dissertation, Turganbayev (2013) discusses at length the problems of uneven development of the regions of Kazakhstan.

Figure 3.2. Kazakhstan regions: coinciding area and selected Oblast

	Coloured (green and yellow) - the territory of Kazakhstan that consists of 14 regions, 2 special cities and 1 town transnationally leased Yellow area - 6 regions that were covered by both key organisations
	Orange area - one Oblast, selected for undertaking research Map source: NordNordWest 2009
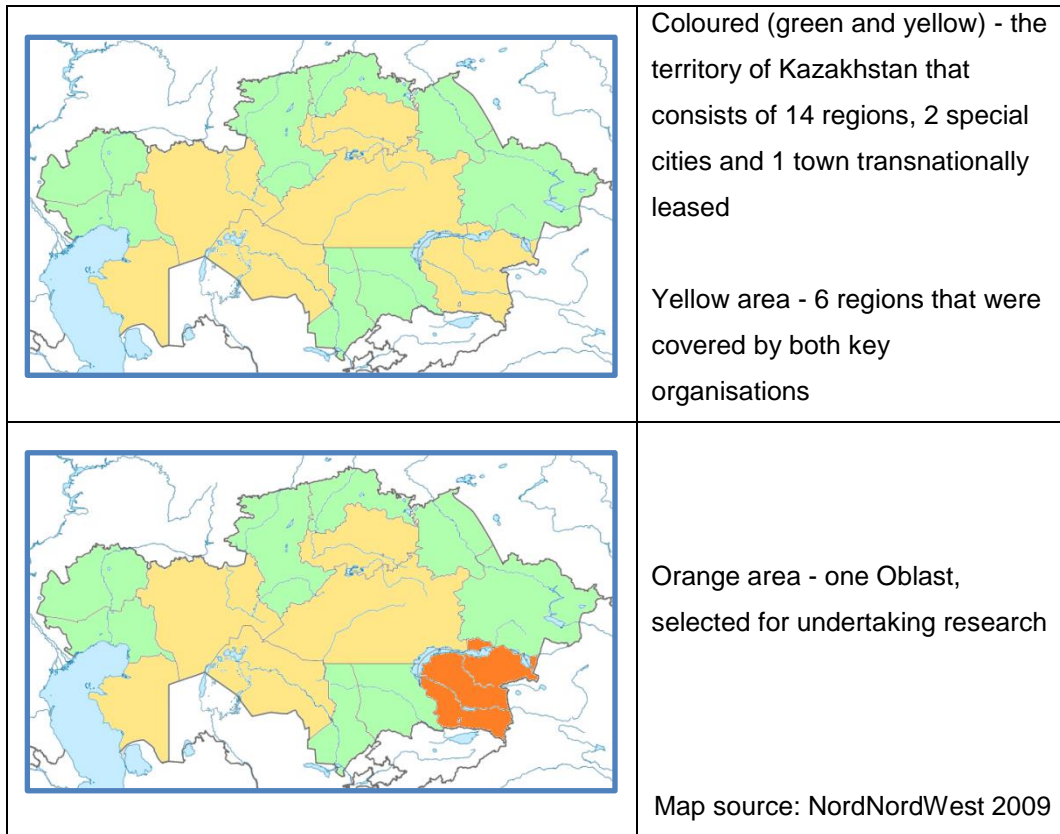
It appeared that the categories of rural and urban areas in Scotland and Kazakhstan were different not simply in some specific numbers, but altogether. In Scotland the classification of rural and urban settlements was primarily based on the number of inhabitants and the time it took to access the settlement on motor transport from the closest larger size-band settlement (The Scottish Government n.d). Crudely, any Scottish school in a settlement with less than 3,000 inhabitants was considered a rural school. In Kazakhstan, the categorisation of a settlement as rural or urban would depend on the number of its inhabitants, on the types of their occupation (for example, agriculture, industry, services, culture) and on its social and economic infrastructure (Ministry for Investment and Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan Technical Regulation and Metrology Committee 2009). As the name of the document suggested - Classification of the Administrative-Territorial Objects, this categorisation was closely tied with the administrative status of the settlements. A place could be populated by as little as 2,000 persons and still be considered an urban area, if it were a health resort. At the same time, a place could be populated by almost 10,000 persons and be considered a rural place, if it had no industrial objects, state housing, shops, educational and cultural institutions.

Figure 3.3. Scotland regions: coinciding area and selected local authorities

	Coloured (green and yellow) - the territory of Scotland that consists of 32 local authorities Yellow area - 8 local authorities that were covered by both key organisations
	Orange area - two local authorities, selected for undertaking research Map source: NordNordWest 2008
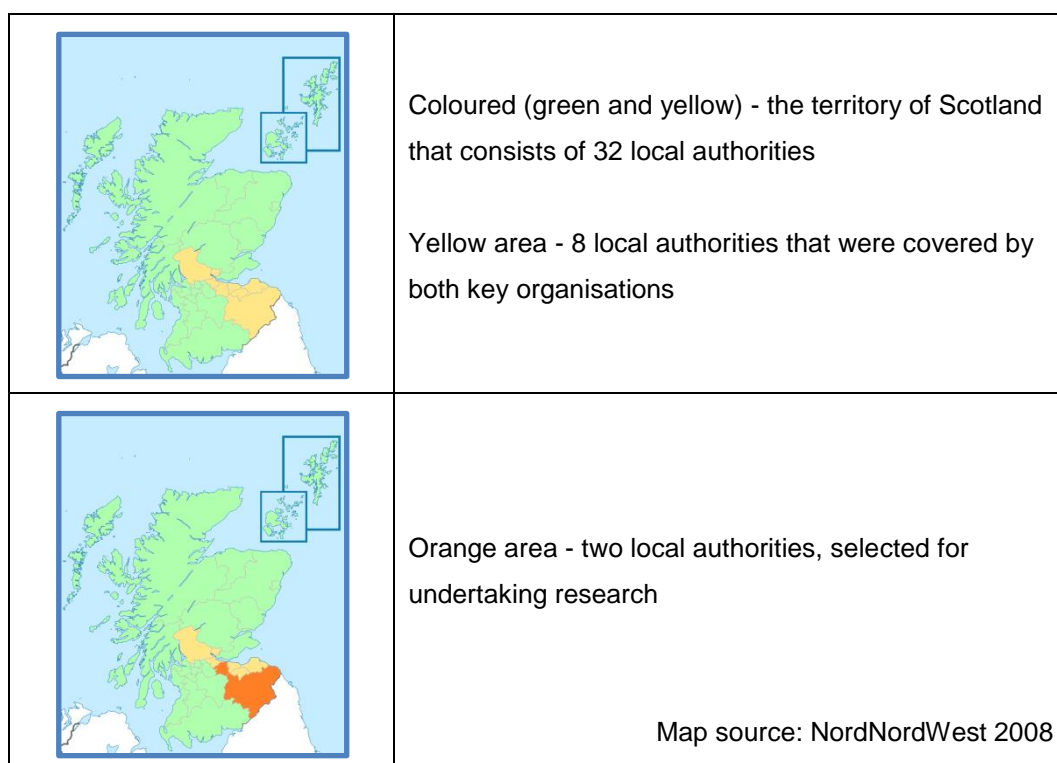
This surprise made me appreciate that, while being under the impression that I was ensuring the "same approach" to schools' selection in the two countries, I was actually ensuring the "same label", which had different meanings in the two contexts. I was forcing a same-name un-same-ness upon the collected interviews.

3.2.1.3.2.2. Cooperation with key organisations

The reality did not allow me to implement the initial clean-cut plan of interviews' composition[26]. The differences between the various sets of interviews were much more subtle than intended. In Scotland, all contacted schools had access to the resources of the technological focus organisation; however, only the schools from one of the two selected local authorities were among the "top users" of those resources. All contacted schools were reached thanks to the social focus organisation; however, some of them belonged to "Group 1" (more support from the social focus organisation) and some to "Group 2" (less support). Some of the interviewed teachers were full-time guidance (pastoral care) specialists, while others combined the guidance work with subject teaching.

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[26] In each country, I intended to collect a set of interviews from the schools cooperating with the social focus organisation and another set of interviews from the schools cooperating with the technological focus organisation.

In Kazakhstan, all but one contacted schools had access to the resources of the technological focus organisation; but only some also took part in the activities of the social focus organisation. The contacted Kazakhstani schools differed by the language of instruction and the size.

In general terms, my wish to ensure that educational innovations were a salient issue in the schools of the interviewed teachers came true. At the same time, several questions surfaced: whether cooperation with key organisations was indeed a sign of the salience of educational innovations; whether an innovative school would discriminate between organisations or would work with as many as possible; whether there were any other incentives for schools to seek various cooperation partners. To probe these issues, I added some additional prompts to the interview schedule.

3.2.1.3.2.3. Publicly available information about schools

Beginning with the search for the schools' contact details during the Kazakhstani part of the fieldwork, I have been on the lookout for detailed information on individual schools that would be publicly available in the two countries.

In Kazakhstan, I first consulted the website of the Ministry of Education and Science, where no school-specific information could be found, and the website of the E-Government, which only had the postal addresses of a handful of schools. The regular search engines returned patchy and outdated information - the parameters of information[27] available from various sources were not consistent. As advised by a former colleague - the now Head of Admissions at KIMEP University - no centralised dataset of school-specific statistics was available publicly or, indeed, purchasable. School-specific information had to be sought from the websites of the regional departments of educational (City or Oblast). Based on these dispersed sources, it was possible to accumulate the following school data: Oblast (region), Rayon (District), Name of locality, Rural/Urban, School number, School Name, School Type, Name of Headteacher, Number of Pupils, Number of Teachers, Language of instruction, Postal address, Telephone, and, sometimes, Website address[28]. There was no information on school e-mail addresses. The possibility of interviews, as mentioned earlier, had to be sought by visiting the school or by placing a telephone call first.

In Scotland, when the social focus organisation offered that I identify schools and they help me contact those schools, I also had to seek for school-specific information. I did an extensive, if hurried, search, the results of which disappointed me. I wrote in my research journal: "For some reason I had imagined that data on Scottish schools would be available on the central website of Education Scotland in the form on easily accessible tables with meticulously collected information and statistics on all schools in Scotland, perhaps, automatically updated

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[27] By parameters of information I mean the types of items and the language used.
[28] This item was available very rarely - for example, only 10 out of 720 Almay Oblast schools had website information mentioned on the local educational authority's web-page.

... However, to my surprise, the publicly available online data on Scottish schools is practically as scattered and fragmented as that on Kazakhstani schools". The best sources that I found covered isolated schools: school websites, school handbooks, 'Find a school' page on the Parentzone section of the Education Scotland website, Inspection and review reports on Schools section of the Education Scotland website, and Education sections of the websites of individual local authorities. I used these to compile a spreadsheet that helped me to choose the most suitable schools.

To be sure, a week later I was awe-struck to come across a Microsoft Excel document with the descriptive and contact information on all 2,622 Scottish schools, which was easily downloadable from the very top of the 'Datasets' page of the 'School Education' section of the Scottish Government's website (The Scottish Government 2015). How could I not see it before? Upon contemplation, I recognised three likely reasons. First, I could "not see" it, because I was sifting through an abundance of imperfect but acceptable alternatives. Second, "I" could not see "it", because I was looking for "educational statistics" like I would in Kazakhstan; and I concentrated on Education Scotland, which I understood as the equal of Kazakhstan's Ministry for Education and Science. In Scotland, however, it is the Government's prerogative to count things and to present the datasets, not Education Scotland's; and to suggest that they prepared "educational statistics" is almost as rude as to suggest that they prepared "leagues tables", which had been abolished in Scotland since 2003 (BBC 2003). In other words, the mental lens through which I was looking was blind to how things were typically displayed in Scotland. Third, I could not see it "before", because then I didn't yet have the experience of being in touch with this type of information from Scotland. Several days into using this information I acclimatized enough to wade into, notice and recognise this Excel document for what it was.

Overall, when selecting the schools, not all of my initial ideas about sampling turned out workable. As noted above, there were a number of issues about sampling that became revealed "on the ground".

3.2.1.4. Interviewee characteristics
With regard to the interviewees from the key organisations, the plan was to talk to two persons in each: one occupying a more externally visible public relations or marketing position, and another dealing more closely with the daily operations and the core activities of the organisation. In each technological focus organisation, I managed to talk to two persons, and in each social focus organisation there was only one person willing to talk.

Nevertheless, people in all organisations seemed puzzled by my request - they didn't see the two sets of obligations that I described as necessarily separate from each other. As a couple of these interviewees commented later, the organisations were built around compact core teams, who took care of various intertwined roles.

With regard to the teacher interviewees, the plan was to hold conversations with the teachers, who, in addition to subject teaching, fulfilled guidance (pastoral care) obligations. On the one hand, such shared roles could create some comparability between their perspectives. It also put them in a position to consider the bigger picture of education and in a position to contemplate the fruits that the school education provided a young person with. On the other hand, I thought that the "hat" of a guidance teacher (i.e. the pastoral care addendum to the subject teaching obligations) could work as a productive randomiser in terms of catching the teachers of various subjects, with varying experience of teaching and so on.

In reality, it turned out that 5 out of 8 teacher interviewees in Scotland and 1 out of 8 teacher interviewees in Kazakhstan were full-time guidance teachers. The others taught different subject: in Scotland - Biology, Mathematics, Religious and Moral Education; in Kazakhstan - Biology, English, History, Mathematics, and Russian Language and Literature. The length of teaching experience also varied: the Kazakhstan teacher interviewees had from 2 to 35 years of teaching experience; the Scottish teacher interviewees had from 8 to 21 years of teaching experience.

3.2.1.5. The interviews

All interviews with the staff of the key organisations - in Kazakhstan and Scotland - were conducted at the time and place that was agreed with them beforehand. The same was true about the Scottish teacher interviewees. In the case of the Kazakhstani teachers, however, the situation differed - mostly, because, due to the non-existent means of e-mail communication, there was a limited scope for prior negotiation about the meeting.

To contact the Kazakhstani schools, I preferred to place an initial phone call, explain my request and discuss the possibility of interviewing one of their teachers. Since the decision would need to be made on behalf of the whole school, I tried to talk to the school's Director. Apart from this logic, in many schools, talking to the Director was logistically unavoidable, because there was only one telephone in the school and it was placed in the Director's office. However, in half of the cases (4 out of 8) I ended up explaining my request two times - first to the Director's Secretary and then to the appropriate Deputy Director identified and summoned by the Secretary. When I called the schools, I said that I was doing the research and was cooperating with certain key organisation. This was true. But the school management often heard it differently. They heard that the key organisation was undertaking research and they told me to contact this particular school. I had to provide clarifications. Despite these over-the-phone misunderstandings and despite the high level of their busyness[29], the Kazakhstani schools were a welcoming environment and, with one exception, did all grant me the chance to interview a teacher.

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[29] In addition to the many inspections, seminars, meetings and open lessons, at the time of my fieldwork, the Kazakhstani schools were also hosting the voters' committees, who were readying the premises for the upcoming Parliamentary elections.

Once the meeting time was agreed, I usually had to travel to the place of conversation. In Scotland I normally took the train. The furthest place I went was around 100km away from Edinburgh. I typically managed to conduct one or two interviews per day in Scotland.

In Kazakhstan I mostly travelled with my brother and the furthest place we went on his car was around 300km away from my home in Almaty. As part of the Kazakhstani fieldwork I also visited the capital city Astana twice - it is 1,215km away from Almaty, so I had to travel by air. In Kazakhstan, to minimise the travel, I typically conducted two or three interviews per day.

To help establish rapport, as a way of courtesy, I typically took a small set of souvenirs to each interview. In Kazakhstan, all my interviews were in the winter, and a month-to-view wall calendar with the pictures of the Scottish hallmarks was an appropriately small gift for the school or organisation that I visited. Also, as a personal souvenir I gave my Kazakhstani interviewees a set of the Scottish Parliament branded plastic pen and keychain. The Scottish interviews were in the middle of the calendar year and the wall calendar would be a strangely-timed gift. I opted to give each Scottish school and organisation the University of Edinburgh bauble for their corporate new year tree. I also gave my Scottish interviewees Kazakh wooden souvenir pens and fridge magnets with the views of Almaty.

Something else that I brought to the interviews were colourful Wordle cards about the purpose of schooling, about the school of the future, and about the educational innovations. I prepared these sets in each of the three languages (English, Kazakh and Russian) along with the interview instruments. One of my 'pilot' interviewees liked them. Nevertheless, I almost never used these Wordles in the field. Although I imagined them as an engaging reference point, in the actual face-to-face conversations they promised to serve as a distraction. The Wordles would likely disrupt my eye contact with the interviewee, taking away the valuable cues about the direction of our conversation. Even without Wordles, the interview situation was a communication challenge - an intensive work for the interviewee and myself to make sure that our trains of thought were neither going to collide, nor miss each other completely. With hindsight, I realise that I imagined Wordles to work, because in the environment of online conversation they used to look as a welcome friendly touch - not so much a distraction, but something-to-think-with collaboratively with the other person. Colourful Wordles could substitute a smiley face and a nod, when online.

Also, as a way of establishing rapport, I made sure that I agreed the language that my interviewee would be the most comfortable using. This basically related to the Kazakhstani interviewees, who could prefer the Kazakh or Russian languages. Also, as an ice-breaker, I prepared a short introductory narrative about my background and research, by sharing which I was inviting the interviewees to reciprocate and kick-start the conversation.

3.2.2. The processing and analysis of research material

3.2.2.1. Transcribing

Transcribing turned out to be akin to writing a script for a 90 minutes screen adaptation of a 600 pages book. It was a time-consuming, painstaking process, where I had to resolve a number of uncertainties to be able to assert the adequacy of the resulting document.

Transcribing was a rich learning experience. First, I learned that I transcribed thrice slower than the textbook rate, where 1 minute of recording was said to take 5 minutes of transcribing (Cohen *et al* 2007, p.539). Second, I learned that textbooks should be read more carefully and one should consider the noise level, the acoustics and the degree of privacy that the interview venue affords: the supposedly relaxed environment of a cafe manifests in an agonisingly poor recording of a hushed voice in a loud place. Third, I learned some new-to-me words and sayings. Fourth, I learned the power of multiple re-checking. Fifth, I learned that the voice typing facilities either cost money (like Dragon NaturallySpeaking), or were incompatible with data protection principles (Google's voice typing copies one's dictation to their servers), or knew no Russian/Kazakh and could not be trained to understand my English (like Windows Speech Recognition).

More importantly, transcribing meant finding the way to work around uncertainties (Ross 2010). One of my uncertainties had to do with the unflattering "look" that the transcription gave to the ideas of most interviewees. As the lively oral exchanges, the interviews rarely resulted in the flows of grammatically spotless finished phrases. The transcriptions of my conversations with the intelligent and highly articulate people often looked distant from an orderly high literature. While I knew that the valuable "stuff" that they shared outweighed any "look", I worried that the text extracts that I may use in the thesis could seem lightweight, especially in the text-reverent academic culture. To counter these doubts, I came up with an approach to transcribing that I systematically applied throughout all interviews. I made sure that my transcriptions were sufficiently complete to allow examining of the interviewees' beliefs about Education and imaginings about the school of the future; and, yet, sufficiently bare of the detail that could not be fruitfully interpreted and analysed.

What I transcribed. The interview content was conveyed verbatim - word for word. I also noted the interjections that conveyed emotion[30] and pauses[31]. I introduced punctuation - commas, colons, semicolons, ellipses, parentheses, exclamation marks, question marks, and full stops - based on the logic of the statements that I believed I caught from the recordings. I also noted the laughter and audible smiles, because I considered them to be the powerful expressive tools that were important to the context of the conversations.

Could I transcribe less? The role that the interviews played in my study was more than just the channel for crude fact finding. By asking the people a contemplative question my purpose was

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[30] Agreement/encouragement (*mhm*), surprise (*oh, huh*), and realisation (*ah*, *mmm*).
[31] The filled pauses (*em*, *um*), the short silent pauses (...) and the pauses of over 3 seconds - a separate note in square brackets.

not simply to see, whether they would go on to mention so and so. Instead, I wanted to see *how* they would approach the answering of this contemplative question. My interviews aimed to invite the people to give off something of the shared social imaginaries that they espoused - not only to catalogue the goals that they see as desirable, but also to demonstrate the thought alleys and the reasoning that they follow, as well as the way they go about establishing the logic of such preferences. That is why, to benefit my analytical base, in my transcribing I aimed for as complete a verbatim relay, as was possible and practicable.

What did I leave out? The transcriptions did not attempt the meticulous notation of non-verbal vocal characteristics: pronunciation, pace, volume, pitch/inflection, power/emphasis or tone. I also did not transcribe the content of extraneous noise: for example, one interviewee had the radio on. I failed to notice how these features affected the content of conversation and, therefore, I would not be able to interpret them as part of the analysis. I did appreciate that such notation could potentially be valuable and, indeed, indispensable for certain types of discourse analyses - for example, conversation analysis (Goodwin, Goodwin 1996; Wodak, Meyer 2001). However, I aimed to carry out a basic thematic analysis of my data. Therefore, I considered the level of transcription detail described above to be sufficient.

Another of my uncertainties had to do with the additional un-flattery that could be posed, if I translated the transcription into English. Not only would I be pretending that the transcription was the only possible way to convey the interviewee's words[32], I would also be pretending that the way I translated it is the only possible way of presenting it in English. After all, the relay of a spoken message into a different language is done by interpreters and there is much interpreting in that act. To work around this uncertainty, I decided to refrain from translating the transcripts and to analyse the interviews in the languages that they occurred in.

Finally, an accident made me aware that despite a consistent application of a uniform approach, each transcription was still a version of how that uniform approach could be applied. In summer 2016 a temporary laptop malfunction left me with two transcriptions of the same first 5 minutes of one interview - both were done by myself, but on different days and on different computers. By comparing them I saw that each had its own typing mistakes. Where one used single quotation marks, the other used double quotation marks. They would sometimes disagree in the letter case for the same words. Each missed a phrase or two that were pronounced quickly in the low volume of voice, and those were different phrases in the two documents. These differences were minor, but their sum amounted to a noticeable discrepancy. This made me appreciate that even the verbatim transcriptions were necessarily a rough written representation of only a portion of communication and exchange that took place during the actual live conversation. Much information - emotions, gestures, symbolic and other items within the interview venue - could not be transcribed, because they stayed behind

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[32] By choosing the level of detail and introducing punctuation the transcribers do necessarily co-create the text (Ross 2010).

the scene of the audio recording. Luckily, I, as an actual participant of the recorded conversation, could recall some of that information based on memorable cues within the audio track. That is why, in addition to the analysis of transcriptions, I decided that I needed to re-listen to the audios during the analysis stage. Also, due to this rough character of the transcription as a research material, I decided to refrain from any attempts to engage in quantitative analysis of transcriptions' content. The transcriptions were to be subjected to a basic thematic analysis of the vocally exchanged and sequentially typed up ideas. While not exactly optimistic, these conclusions allowed me to feel more confident about my approach to the research interviews and their analysis.

3.2.2.2. Analysis

The approach to the analysis of the research materials, described below, felt to me as an intuitive and spontaneous process of sense-making. With hindsight, I appreciate that the gist of it must have been inspired by some impressive literature on qualitative analysis. For example: Jennifer Mason's (2002) "literal", "interpretive" and "reflexive" reading; Brown and Gilligan's "Listening Guide" (Doucet 2008, pp.77-78); Denzin's (2001) "reflexive interview". While I cannot say that I 'followed' some particular approaches of specific authors, I must acknowledge their significant influence in the development of my take on what a satisfyingly attentive analysis may entail.

3.2.2.2.1. Attending to the ecology

The opening stage of my analysis of the research materials had to do with attending carefully to the content of that material in conjunction with the ecology around that content. For example, to explore what an interview conveyed, I first re-listened to its audio recording along with re-reading its transcription. During this process I would pause a number of times to take note of five types of information[33].

One type - the information pertaining to the school (or key organisation) - here I would take note of the factual details shared with me. For example, the nearby kindergarten fed its children in the school's refectory on the regular basis, or the organisation's laboratory is equipped with Apple computers, or the school built an outdoor amphitheatre, or the organisation occupies two floors in the building.

Another type - the details of interview access and rapport. Here I would note things like, the meeting time was pre-agreed, the school receptionist seemed aware of my visit, the interviewee preferred to use this language but would occasionally stop and translate thing for me (or to explain the meaning of the set expression they used), the conversation took place in the conference room specifically booked for that purpose by the interviewee, the pace of

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[33] I came up with these five types spontaneously, when I contemplated the value that the interviewee's unique vantage point was adding to the discussion we had.

conversation was relaxed, the interviewee's confidence built up toward the end of conversation, especially when she mentioned so and so.

Third type - the factual information about the interviewee. For example, the main professional obligations or the subjects taught, the number of years in this position, the specifics of their academic background. Also, some people commented about being a native of the location, or mentioned the challenges of re-settling or commuting.

Fourth type - various environmental details. These could be as general as: on the day, the school was readying for a large end-of-the-year charity concert by the pupils, or the school was expecting a visit of inspection and the leaves of all room flowers were being washed by the school's cleaning personnel. Or these could also be quite specific. For example, three persons (so, so and so) came in at different times during the meeting and discussed so and so with the interviewee - I had to wonder a number of questions (were these issues urgent? or is it a highly responsive collegial environment? why is it okay that I hear that? or even audio record that?). Or, between minutes 16-22 a loud groan can be heard in the corridor - it is a "mainstreamed" special needs pupil - the interviewee apologised about that sound three times. Finally, the fifth type were the salient aspects of what the interviewee told me. For example, that the school of the future could look like so and so, or that it could be expected to materialise within this many years. Here the interviewees could also mention contextual matters, but they were macro-contextual: for example, the change of curriculum, policy decisions, various local or national political agendas, or even the school's plans for improvement and professional development that corresponded to the national strategies. All these I would still keep within this fifth type of information, because all these had to do with the actual content of my questions - they were a reply to what I asked about. These macro-contextual matters were not something that I would have no way of learning, if I did not involve this particular organisation/school, talk to this particular person at this particular time in this particular place.

Of course, most of the time, the information that belonged to one of these five types was immediately prefacing the information that belonged to another type. I took these notes in hard copy, using the sheets of paper that had five ruler-divided sections. When I revisited those notes, the information rarely sat in exactly matching sections of the page. Having this mental grid, however, was useful - it helped me to attend to the ecological factors, when trying to appreciate what the interviewees chose to tell me.

3.2.2.2.2. Interpretive reading and thematic analysis

The next stage of my analysis had to do with interpretive reading. Here I would re-read the entire transcription and repeatedly look through the more packed portions of it. In doing so, I would stay aware of the ecological picture that came from the above procedure. I would be paying attention to the things that the interviewee is referring to, in terms of the bigger picture. How do the society, or the good person, or the good professional, or the public good, or the desirable future come across in what they have to say? I would also be noting how they speak,

what idioms, set expressions they use. What are the important places, situations, populations or temporal locations that they choose to pay attention to? This working would leave me with a set of various threads and topics, based on which a thematic analysis could begin.

Once all the interpretive reading was done, I could identify the themes - the large (or small) conceptual areas that helped to organise the threads and topics, gleaned earlier, into a semblance of story plotlines. Relying on these themes, I could begin narrating what the research materials "told" me. Some of the themes would speak to each other and I would consider how they connected (if they did), which ones contradicted each other and what helped to resolve those contradictions (if anything did).

Since the comparative perspective was a fundamental aspect of my work, one part of the analysis was to see whether the way, in which the themes gathered, did also align with the outwardly apparent divides. For example, the assumed divides between the two nations, between the technological and social focus organisations, between the teachers and the non-teachers, between the full-time guidance teachers and others, between the rural and urban areas, between different local authorities and so on. And, when the thematic gatherings did align with some of such divides, I had to contemplate this coincidence or the lack thereof.

3.3. Researcher's role and reflexivity

The examination of the role of the researcher in the layout, implementation and reporting of the research project is key to reflexivity - the critical self-reflective stance that is believed to help enhance the credibility of research. Reflexivity stands to address the problems arising from the misconceived neutrality of who the researcher is and what their grand assumptions about the world are.

"A defining feature of qualitative research," Finlay argues (2003, p.5), is "reflexivity in all its guises." Grasped as "the process of turning back on oneself and looking at what has been going on" (Cohen et al 2007, p.23), reflexivity has constituted one of the central preoccupations of sociology, anthropology and philosophy for well over forty years (Mauthner and Doucet 2003, p.416). The scholars' accounts of the turn toward reflexivity do somewhat overlap and stress one of the three: the theoretical and empirical boundedness of the process of knowledge construction (Mauthner and Doucet 2003), the role of researcher as the inalienable "research instrument" that shapes the enquiry (Finlay 2003), or the challenges of representing the "research fields" given the opaqueness of the "self vs. other" relationships (Roberts and Sanders 2005). Among the less frequently tackled yet pertinent issues of reflexivity the authors highlight the appreciation for its "chronic" character (Giddens in Blaikie 2009, p.53), its relevance throughout all stages of research (Roberts and Sanders 2005, p.296), the wider range of relationships it encompasses (including the "shadow others" in researcher's past, the "narrated subjectivities" of participants, and the "epistemic communities" that the research relates to – Doucet 2008), as well as its limits (Mauthner and Doucet 2003).

The issues of reflexivity relate directly to the following aspects of this dissertation: the study's assumptions, the parts of my biography that shape my take on the study and my positioning in the data collection and analysis, as well as the constraints of funding.

3.3.1. Theoretical assumptions

Discussing the ontological and epistemological premises conducive to reflexivity, scholars question the potential of the naïve forms of realism to take on board the reflexive sensibilities, since those "assume that knowledge must be based on some absolutely secure foundation" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p.16). At the same time, the more sophisticated forms of realism can be appropriate, as demonstrated by Roberts and Sanders (2005), who subscribed to the pragmatic realism to conduct their ethnographic studies and to reflexively analyse their data.

Similarly, my beliefs about reality resonate with William James's and E.B. Holt's "new realist" ontology and James J. Gibson's "ecological approach to perceiving and acting" that were convincingly put together by Edward Baggs as "ecological realism" in his study of speaking and collaborating (Baggs 2015). This view takes social reality as a populated environment[34], external to the perceiver, directly perceivable through perception-action, structured by relations, and exhibiting mutual feedback between species and their environment through niche construction. The fact that it is the individual, who acts-perceives reality, doesn't preclude individuals from sharing the same reality. Individuals may see different relations in the same settings not only because they stand in different places (looking from different angles) and differ from each other (thus able to perceive differing affordances), but also because their prior experience allows them to attend to different cues.

This ontology is congruent with pragmatic epistemology that Robson (2011) ties to William James's and John Dewey's empiricism. Robson explains this approach as privileging practical aims of research by eclectically matching individual research questions with best-suited methods of enquiry, instead of espousing the entire research endeavour to particular philosophical paradigm; thus, bypassing the risky waters of positivist vs. interpretivist divide – a bifurcation that was persuasively dispelled by Richard Pring as a 'false dualism' (2000).

3.3.2. Role of biography

As studies have suggested, post-graduate studies tend to provide material to elaborate student's initial beliefs into the more sophisticated persuasions about the subject matter rather than encourage significant overhaul of their belief systems (Entwistle et al 2000). Because of that, it is useful to reflect on some aspects of my educational and professional background.

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[34] 'Populated' - not because it focuses on populations (i.e. human demographics), but because it is conceived of by living creatures (including us), who orient themselves in the world through action-perception. 'Environment' - not because it focuses on global environmental causes or inanimate nature, but because it encompasses the surroundings of each individual creature, the environment around them, which they share.

My academic background in International Relations may have contributed to the following beliefs: (1) an endorsement of the state as an important unit of analysis in the study of social relations; (2) view of Education as a 'right' that the states must guarantee to own citizens, as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations Organisation 1948); (3) appreciation for Education as "the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" (Mandela, cited in United Nations Organisation n.d.) – a valuable means to alleviating economic hardship and solving social problems (UNESCO 2010).

Occupationally, my six-year record as a quality assurance officer may have contributed to viewing Education as something *for* students, extrinsically valuable and improvable; while experience as a state-sponsored PhD student increased my trust in the state's commitment to provide the citizens of Kazakhstan with opportunities for good education.

Generationally, I belong to those Kazakhstanis who, having lived through the collapse of the Soviet Union, which exposed the fragility of communitarian and egalitarian values, have witnessed the challenges of economic transition and nation-building that have been overcome, at least in part, with the help of strategic outlook and economic liberalisation. Therefore, I may be susceptible to some scepticism about the narratives that tend to overstate the feasibility and sameness of 'just' and 'equal' societies.

I appreciate that this vantage point may make me vulnerable to "overtly or covertly, be serving the agendas of those in positions of power" (Scheurich in Robson 2011, p.10), but an open acknowledgement of this fundamental subjectivity of my take on situation may be a more honest approach than a vain attempt of eschewing such an in-built bias.

Apart from being likely to shape the researcher's views, the biography may hold clues about the initial inspirations for research studies: Doucet (2008, pp.75-76) writes about a dramatic realisation that it were her childhood impressions, which drove her pioneering research interest. Some scholars also mention the biography as providing an important link between the researcher and the field – establishing trust, common ground and triggering openness with the participants, all of which sometimes require "disclosing personal details" (Roberts and Sanders 2005; McIntosh 2010). This type of considerations does ring the bell in the case of my study, too. For example, the substantial basis for shifting the focus of my research - from the initial to the eventual - was the gradual expansion of my grasp of the relevant field, the auspicious arrival of unexpected opportunities, and the steady elimination of the alternative options (Chapter 1). At the same time, there is no scope for me to dismiss that a fraction of the angular momentum in the bend of my research trajectory must have been due to certain aspects of my biography. Indeed, I trust that. Growing up in a family with three generations of teachers must have planted a sentiment in me to appreciate the value, which a classroom educator adds to the life of a young person. That sentiment must have played a role in persuading me to position the teachers' views as the central piece of my evidence base. Moreover, when collecting the views of educators, I often found that a short introduction about my background invited my conversation partners to slow down, relax and encouraged them to

engage in a session of amicable storytelling, rather than to take part in a pretend performance evaluation interview.

3.3.3. Resources and political influences

As a researcher, who was able to work on this dissertation thanks to the state-funded scholarship, I am aware of the blessings and pressures that a funding entails. The authors, who write about reflexivity, highlight the research funding as bringing both - the benefits and the challenges (Walters in Roberts and Sanders 2005; May in Mauthner and Doucet 2003). Among the benefits they note the chance to devote an undivided attention to the research and the availability of valuable academic resources. As the challenges they list the restrictions that the sponsor's policies, stances and timeframes may pose upon the scope of exploration, reflexivity and criticality.

In relation to this thesis, I believe that the availability of funding emboldened me to consider a "blue sky" research agenda, instead of engaging in a more opportunistic time-efficient project. It also helped to "successfully activate many of the relevant resources" (Roberts and Sanders 2005, p.302). In terms of the restrictions, having received this scholarship to study the influence on the Kazakhstani education of the global diffusion of educational innovations, I felt that I had no room for abandoning this topic. Instead, I widened the topic from 'lessons for Kazakhstan' to 'prospects of international cooperation' and shifted the focus from the 'informal online tertiary' to the 'state secondary' education.

My scholarship was state-funded and most of the Kazakhstani school education is run by the state as well. However, I never felt that this coincidence had to prevent me from reflecting critically on the work done by the state bodies. The guidance from my supervisorial team at the University of Edinburgh, of course, was a helpful safety line against any sponsor-induced gravitations that I could be blind to. Having said that, I do not recall any restrictions to the research that would be sponsor-induced.

One more important external influence that the scholars of reflexivity write about is constituted by political issues and agendas that the research may relate to (Blaikie 2009) or be hijacked into (Doucet 2008). Researchers are advised to stay alive to these, and be clear and assertive in stating the intended purpose of their own research.

3.3.4. Reflexivity in data analysis

To embed reflexivity into research, authors advocate for the use of reflexive methods of data analysis. Considering the use of analytic software, they warn about the "air of scientific objectivity" it induces and insist that qualitative analysis, nevertheless, "remains a fundamentally subjective, interpretative process" (Mauthner and Doucet 1998, p.122).

Although my initial plan was to process texts and transcripts with qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA[35], I ended up not using it for the analysis. It was exciting to look at the attractive multi-screen button-rich many-functions interface, which reminded me ofa busy, state-of-the-art, highly effective factory. My impression was upbeat, but slightly overwhelmed - I felt hurried and required to perform. For a couple of days, there was selecting and sorting, and re-selecting and re-sorting, and assigning the further layers of categorising. Soon, however, came a feeling that I was playing the role of a traffic controller, who showed the directions without being sure where those sentences and phrases came from and where they were heading. After a couple of days of trying, I decided to go back to the audio recording and the Word document. It slowed me down, but allowed to quietly attend to the interviewee, whose voice I was listening to and whose words I was reading.

Perhaps, the software could be used at the later stages, for some more elaborate analysis. While I view the use of this software as a valuable facility, I became aware of the non-neutrality and the constitutive power of the technological functions built into it. Similarly, my own role as the listener and the reader, and the traffic controller was never neutral - it was consequential for what was eventually heard and noted down, and relayed in the thesis.

Persuaded to create "dedicated times, spaces and contexts within which to be reflexive" (Mauthner and Doucet 2003, p.425), I kept a journal, where I tracked various uncertainties, shifts and decisions. Many of these made way into the final text of the thesis and, I hope, allowed the reader to relate, to reflect with me, and to make their own judgement about the aptness of my interpretations.

3.3.5. Auditing reflexivity

Scholars of research methodology also point out the researcher's obligation to expose knowledge production by engaging in "active reflexivity" (Mason 2002, p.7 in Blaikie 2010, p.53) and "laying down of an "audit trail" of our underlying epistemological assumptions and our methodological procedures" (Seale 1999, p.105 in Doucet 2008, p.83). On the other hand, Finlay points out that the aspirations "to promote the integrity of the research" by producing the documented records of reflexive self-monitoring could itself sit within an awkward proximity of "the problematic spectre of having a single, 'true' account" (Finlay 2003, p.17). She further notes that the question about "the best route for reflexivity" is irrelevant and draws attention to the importance of doing reflexivity full-heartedly, employing a clear rationale and a healthy criticality about the process (Finlay 2003, p.17). Other scholars, too, call to "be cautious about how much we can know about what influences us in research" (Doucet 2008, p.84). In fact,

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[35] MAXQDA is a qualitative data analysis software, which had been described as "probably the easiest program to learn"[35] (Hughes, Silver 2011) and the one that "supports the interpretive style better than NVivo" (Kuş Saillard 2011). I chose MAXQDA because it was the only software compatible with the Russian language.

the reflexive analysis has been shown to considerably benefit from hindsight (Mauthner and Doucet 2003; Roberts and Sanders 2005, p.309)

To paraphrase a classic, while in research "there is no knowing where you might be swept off to", equipped with a commitment to critical self-reflection and aiming at attaining possible degrees of reflexivity "not all those who wander are lost" (Tolkien 1954).

Chapter 4. Practitioners' level

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of the primary research material collected for this dissertation - the conversations with practitioners. It first presents the contexts of those conversations - where, with whom and how I spoke. It then comments on the expected and the eventual work done by the interview instrument that helped to structure the conversations. After that, it presents the ranges of opinions, encountered with regard to the main aspects of schools' change that I asked about. In conclusion it briefly sums up the insights that these conversations pointed in the direction of.

4.1. Contexts of conversations

Reflecting on Charles Taylor's construct of "social imaginaries", Richard Haney writes that any specific socio-temporal milieu, like "medieval world" or "modern society", "may be conceived as a patterned picture or a Gestalt composed of many subsidiary strands. Yet because these pieces or elements are subsidiary, they lie in the background and are often unnoticed and ignored" (Haney 2014, p.1). This section focuses on the subsidiary elements around the conversations that I held. This is done in order to provide the context for situating the content of the conversations, which this chapter later discusses.

My conversation partners for this dissertation were two dozen educators in Kazakhstan and Scotland (please, view Table 4.1, Table 4.2, and Table 4.3), whom I mostly met in their professional environment - their work offices. They worked either in the key organisations or in the secondary schools that cooperated with those key organisations. Below I discuss the specific "where", "whom" and "how" I met. Since the key organisations and the schools were dramatically different environments even within the same country, I discuss the contexts of those interviews separately: first - the key organisations; and then - the schools.

Table 4.1. Interviews with educators from the key organisations

Interviewee[36]	Country	Key organisation	Conversation details			Teaching experience
			Length	Language	Intrusions	
Diana	Kazakhstan	Technological	98 min	Russian		School
Konstantin	Kazakhstan	Social	109 min	Russian		University
Islam	Kazakhstan	Technological	63 min	Russian		University
Anne	Scotland	Technological	60 min	English	1 - Colleague	School
Elizabeth	Scotland	Technological	60 min	English	2 - Colleagues	University
Daniel	Scotland	Social	62 min	English	1 - His phone	

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[36] To protect the identity of interviewees, all names appearing here are not their real names.

4.1.1. Interviews with educators from the key organisations

To talk to the staff of the key organisations, I first visited the offices of those organisations. Interestingly, in both countries the head-quarters of the social focus organisations sat in the capital cities, Astana and Edinburgh; while the head-quarters of the technological focus organisations - in the countries' largest cities, Almaty and Glasgow. The premises of both social focus organisations comprised several rooms and occupied one part of the floor in an office building. The offices of the technological focus organisations were noticeably shinier and occupied the entire floors of the corresponding buildings. In addition to these head-quarters, both technological focus organisations had other premises in different cities of the country. Looking around the four head-quarters, the fact of their close cooperation with the state agencies was unmistakably palpable, even if not demonstrably displayed. And not surprisingly so - all the schools that the four organisations worked with were state schools and the permissions to run their projects were within the jurisdiction of the formal educational authorities.

The conversations with the staff of the key organisations (please, view Table 4.1) were all but one held at their work places. In Scotland, they took place in the organisations' head-quarters: in one I spoke with Elizabeth and Anne, and in the other - with Daniel. In Kazakhstan, however, the visits to the organisations' head-quarters were only the beginning of the chase.

The Kazakhstani social focus organisation informed me that, after a year of running, their school-related project was now on suspension. They kindly provided me with the list of visited schools and with the contacts of their ex-employees, who were knowledgeable about the project. When I tracked down one of them, Konstantin, a recognized TV journalist and book author, we met at his current auxiliary workplace - the Journalism Department of a local University. The technological focus organisation gave me the contacts of two employees. I met Islam in the organisation's high-tech teacher training laboratory situated in a different city than the head-quarter. And I met Diana over a lunch in a cafe - she was the only staff-interviewee, with whom we spoke outside the working environment.

My interviewees from the four key organisations had solid credentials. All had postgraduate degrees - five from the UK Universities and one from Moscow State University. This detail meant that all three Kazakhstani interviewees were foreign-educated - a characteristic, which, as I soon would learn, had a special weight in Kazakhstan. The key organisations' interviewees had rich professional experiences, including teaching, working in state agencies, setting up and spearheading idea-inspired ventures. They were outspoken thinkers - blogging, writing books, presenting at TEDx conferences. And they led busy careers, scheduling me in between national and international travel.

The three interviews that I held with the key organisations in Scotland lasted just 60 minutes each and were squeezed within the working hours. In Kazakhstan, the conversations were longer - one of them was held over a protracted lunch break, and two happened on a Saturday.

These Saturday conversations, however, were at the interviewees' workplaces - just after one's lecture and in-between another's technical consultations.

4.1.2. Interviews with educators from the schools
4.1.2.1. The "where"

All conversations with school interviewees - whether in Kazakhstan or in Scotland - took place in schools, which may sound as if the whereabouts of those conversations were largely the same between the two countries. In fact, both of the two ready ways of comparing those whereabouts - by asserting their similarity or stark contrast - would be partially accurate and potentially misleading.

4.1.2.1.1. Schools in Kazakhstan and Scotland. Similarity? Contrast?

In terms of similarities, in both countries there were some newly built spacious bright schools[37] and the teachers in those schools invariably took me around them. In both countries there were some much older schools and no one invited me to explore those. In each country, one of the visited schools had made it into the local headlines with an uninviting story involving a prosecution: one - over a fatal incident among pupils; another - over a gender discrimination at hiring. All schools that I visited were secondary schools and resembled each other in how they nested the rows of classrooms on both sides of the shadowy corridors and offered young people the lessons, where one teacher would address each group of 20-30 pupils for roughly 45 minutes at a time. Yet, there were large differences as well.

Table 4.2. Interviews with educators from the schools: Kazakhstan

Interviewee[38]	Teaching experience, years	Guidance role		Conversation details			Links with key organisations		Location
		FT / PT	Pupil groups	Length, min	Language	Intrusions	Social focus	Tech focus	
Alina		PT	1	39	Russian	1 - Query about elections	Yes	Yes	Rural
Aisha	30	PT	1	34	Russian		Yes	No	Rural
Kausar	30	PT	1	43	Kazakh	2 - Her assistant, My phone	No	Yes	Rural
Anastasia	35	PT	1	51	Russian	1 - Deputy Head	No	Yes	Urban
Darya		PT	1	40	Russian		No	Yes	Urban
Sabina	21	PT	1	23	Kazakh		Yes	Yes	Urban
Olga		PT	1	67	Russian	3 - Pupils, Query about another teacher, Colleague	Yes	Yes	Urban
Madina	2	FT	2	23	Kazakh		No	Yes	Urban

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[37] I saw 2 such schools in Scotland and 1 in Kazakhstan.
[38] These names are not real. The length of teaching experience was not a planned question - most teachers volunteered this information.

Table 4.3. Interviews with educators from the schools: Scotland

| Interviewee[39] | Teaching experience, years | Guidance role | | Conversation details | | | Links with key organisations | | Location |
		FT / PT	Number of pupils	Length, min	Language	Intrusions	Social focus[40]	Tech focus	
Leslie	10	FT	180	62	English	1 - Colleague	Group 1		Urban
Michelle	over 20	FT	250	56	English		Group 2		Urban
Rob		FT	90-100	49	English		Group 2		Rural
Iris	16	FT	120	84	English	3 - Colleague, Headteacher, Deputy Head	Group 1		Urban
Dave	15	PT	130-140	53	English		Group 1	Top-user	Urban
Mary[41]	21	PT		1,129 words	English		Group 2	Top-user	Urban
Annabel[42]	18	FT	300	40	English		Group 2	Top-user	Urban
- Scott	8			57	English	1 - Colleague			
- Ross				52	English	1 - Colleague			

Perhaps, the most basic difference was in the fact that a typical "secondary school" in Scotland teaches young people in six year groups (S1-S6), who are between 11-18 years old. In Kazakhstan, a typical "secondary school" is a single educational institution that occupies one set of premises, but accommodates the "elementary school" (Grades 1-4; 6-10 years-olds), the "basic secondary school" (Grades 5-9; 10-15 years-olds), and the "senior secondary school" (Grades 10-11; 15-17 years-olds) (Yakavets 2014, p.10). That is why the number of pupils in the "secondary schools" that I visited in Scotland were between 390-1,010 pupils, and in Kazakhstan - between 890-2,150 pupils[43]. This number of pupils was among the factors that shaped the operational set up of the schools. The Scottish schools did typically fit 7 class periods between 8:45-15:30 on Monday-Thursday and 5 class periods between 8:45-13:00 on Friday - with the whole school studying simultaneously, in one shift. In Kazakhstan, the schools worked six days a week with two shifts: six class periods between 8:00-13:15 and six more class periods between 13:30-18:50. Each shift served half of the school's pupils - and even then, all classrooms were busy most of the time.

Another sharp difference between the countries concerned a somewhat lowly aspect of the physical context of the schools. None of the 6 Scottish schools that I saw had toilets situated

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[39] These names are not real. The length of teaching experience was not a planned question - most teachers volunteered this information.

[40] Schools in Group 1 are deemed more in need of and receive more input than schools in Group 2.

[41] Mary answered the questions by e-mail. She did not mention the number of pupils in her cohort.

[42] As a senior position teacher, Annabel was able to offer me to talk to the non-guidance specialists in her school. I chose to meet Scott, a Maths teacher, and Ross, the IT specialist.

[43] For one of the Kazakhstani interviews, I also visited an underfilled school, which had 70 pupils.

outside the building. Yet, 5 out of the 8 Kazakhstani schools that I visited had outside toilets[44]: 3 had them within the territory of the school and 2 had them outside the school's fence. The latter type of arrangement came across as especially striking - apart from being inconvenient, it seemed to disregard the safety of the pupils. It appeared that, while not very tasteful, toilets were a vivid contextual detail that my Kazakhstani interviewees employed to critically reflect on the directions of change that it was worthy to aspire toward. For example, reflecting on the strong technological tilt in the state's aspirations for education, Islam said:

> Of course, there is the computer, there is the Internet in schools; but only, regrettably, there is no toilet. Innovative school - it is when the child has a normal toilet, a normal canteen, these must also count as innovations in our country. Because, well, consider this loo outside, this wooden one. Well how, what, which innovation?! What kind of new technologies for this child, for example? Doesn't this affect ... his thinking about the attitude toward the world that surrounds him? Both the teacher goes there, and the pupil goes there. Innovations.[45]

While both of the above differences were important and the candid angst of Islam was very much relatable, there are two important reasons to be cautious about becoming preoccupied with how much the school arrangements and infrastructure differ between Kazakhstan and Scotland. The first reason is that the unenviable conditions that I observed in Kazakhstan are the objective circumstances - the routine living conditions of the entire localities, where those schools are situated. These conditions are not school-specific faults; rather, they are the situational obstacles that complicate the already delicate task of making the schools happen. The second reason[46] is that the discussions of humble infrastructure (outside toilets, absence of central water plumbing, intermittent heating and electricity) may sometimes morph into the rhetoric of poor infrastructure that supposedly marks a dysfunctional and aid-needing education system. Such rhetoric runs the risk of inviting foreign aid dependence into the processes of educational change, much like the rhetoric of the appalling poverty in the developing countries does (Acemoglu, Robinson 2014). The infrastructural problems of Kazakhstani schools can and should be addressed as part of the overall plan for improving

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[44] By outside toilet I mean a self-standing building, which usually consists of two unconnected quarters (for males and females) - each with a separate entrance. Each quarter has several toilet places (holes in the floor) that may or may not be separated from each other by privacy walls. There are no doors. The layout of the entrance conceals the insides from the sight of those standing outside the toilet. The absence of doors means that people can enter, while somebody is already inside.

[45] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Конечно, в школах, там есть компьютер, есть интернет; но вот, к сожалению, только туалета нет. Инновационная школа – это когда у ребенка будет нормальный туалет, нормальная столовая, это тоже под инновацию подпадает в нашей стране. Потому что, ну, эта вот уборная на улице, деревянная вот эта. Ну как, какой, какая инновация?! Какие новые технологии этому ребенку, например? Это же ... мышление вокруг отношения к окружающему миру у него. И учитель ходит туда, и школьник ходит туда. Инновации."

[46] It was my friend Nazira Zholdoshbekova, who drew my attention to this second reason. In her doctoral thesis, Nazira Zholdoshbekova explores the educational policy discourses that accompany international development aid to Kyrgyzstan (The University of Edinburgh n.d.).

the living conditions in corresponding localities, instead of showcasing them as the educational shortcomings, which they are not.

Overall, the factual similarities and differences (sometimes large) between the organisational and physical conditions of the two countries' schools stand as important contextual features. They need to be kept in mind, when one tries to appreciate the spectrum of ideas about school improvement that exist in each country. At the same time, the schools' contextual features must not colour the entire judgement about the education that happens in those schools. One should allow that there are other (no less substantial) aspects of the school education in the two countries.

4.1.2.1.2. The schools' "here" vs. "elsewhere"

Among the other salient aspects of the "where" were the various implications of school's location along with the social and cultural anxieties related to the school's whereabouts.

4.1.2.1.2.1. Implications of school's location

In both countries, the implications of the schools' location[47] were mainly connected to the shifts in the economic specialisation of the regions, where the schools sat. In Kazakhstan, my interviewees highlighted that over the years their schools had gone from serving the prosperous farming communities to serving the large non-farming settlements. In Scotland, I was told that the areas around the schools had lost and were still losing some of the traditional industries, like mining, fishing and textile. These regional changes upset the employment prospects of the school graduates and made the guidance teachers in both countries acutely aware of the potential benefits, if the schools managed to provide pupils with vocational qualifications. But where Rob was telling me which SQA vocational routes he considered the most applicable for his school, Aisha simply wistfully fantasised that one day the vocational qualifications, which used to be part of the Soviet secondary schooling, might come back.

Yet, Rob and Aisha, both sitting in rural schools, had one belief that they totally shared - in their minds, the urban schools had far more chances of doing what would be the best for the pupils. Aisha was sure: "And in the city schools they have that - in the lyceums, in the gymnasiums - they already receive some direction. And I wish that now the rural school stood in the same line, and offered multiple competency profiles."[48] Discussing the difficulty of teaming up with other schools in order to jointly offer some infrequently sought subjects, Rob

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[47] To remind, the actual geography of school interviews concentrated in one Oblast (region) in the South-East of Kazakhstan and two local authorities in the South-East of Scotland (please, view Figure 3.2. and Figure 3.3. in Chapter 3). In choosing the specific localities I aimed to make sure that the places I visited were neither too hard to access, nor too "central". I avoided the largest cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and Astana and Almaty. Instead, I selected two local authorities "around" Edinburgh and one Oblast "around" Almaty.

[48] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "А в городских школах это есть – в лицеях, в гимназиях - у них же есть уже какое-то направление. А мне бы хотелось, чтобы уже сельская школа оказалась в таком ряду, была бы многопрофильная такая."

followed Aisha's suit in claiming that the urban schools were much better placed to address such issues than the rural ones. He said: "Location is important. City schools can do that, because they can travel back and forward quite easily. You know, you'd probably find there is another about three or four miles down the road. Our nearest school's about twenty to twenty-five, which puts a totally different viewpoint on a rural school." According to Rob, the rural location imposed serious limitations on what the school could undertake: "...our pupils are bussed in every day; therefore, to run something after school is difficult. ... You, you can do it, but pupils are limited in how they're able to stay, because there are restrictions in transport." Rob's school had recently moved into a new large building and there were time and space to run 'after school' events, but he didn't see much point in doing that, because most pupils would need to leave right after the classes in order to catch the bus. "Whereas in the city school you can do that," concluded Rob. Aisha shares Rob's wish to run 'after school' activities, but, according to her, their school lacked the crucial feature that some neighbouring schools had - a new building, which would allow all pupils to study in one shift and would free up some time and space in the afternoon. As such, Aisha's dream was Rob's reality, but it looked like the conditions could never be quite right to run the desired 'after school' events - if only they worked in a city!

The challenges of transportation were also very real for Iris, who worked in another rural school. Apparently, all but one teacher in her school had to commute daily to reach the place. Iris herself travelled 135km each day to do her job. Yet, the subjective sense of remoteness was by no means exclusive to rural schools. Discussing the potential timeline for the rollout of educational innovations, Sabina, who worked in one of the older schools in a 50,000-strong town just 20km away from Almaty, was convinced: "Except for, maybe, in the truly central, such prestigious city schools in Almaty, in Astana, a considerable time will pass, before things like that might reach the usual schools."[49]

On the whole, the interviewees pointed out that the schools' location had many implications for how the education should and could be done there. One had to account for the local needs and keep in mind the locality-related obstacles. And also, there were always the imagined other schools, who commanded the more favourable conditions and, therefore, were better placed to do what would be the best for the pupils.

4.1.2.1.2.2. Stories of the school's whereabouts
In both countries, some interviewees chose to describe the school's "here" as uniquely distinct from certain "elsewhere(-s)". There were some culture-related aspects of the schools' whereabouts that seemed to speak to the interviewees in an endearing and/or anxiety-inflicting ways.

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[49] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Ол мүмкін Алматының ішінде, Астанада, нағыз қаланың ортасындағы сондай бір престижный мектептерде болмаса, жай мектептерде ол пока келем дегенше, біраз уақыт өтеді."

In Scotland, there were four main, and sometimes overlapping, ways of describing the specificity of "here": three of them dealt with "here" as a locality (its demographics, its history, and its backwater character), and one of them dealt with "here" as a country. The first strand - locality as demographics - reflected the fact that I accessed these schools through the social focus organisation. The interviewees mentioned the relatively high level of deprivation[50] in the area, where their pupils came from; the key words being "pupils' background", "catchment area", "deprivation", "SIMD" and "postcode".

The second, closely connected, strand - locality as history - had a more poetic tone: some interviewees chose to tell me a special story[51] to help me appreciate the specific adverse odds that this place had to push against. For example, in one place I was told about an epic instance of severe weather, which claimed half the population in the locality over 100 years ago, resulting in the decades of economic hardship and health-jeopardising inbreeding. In another place, the historic villain was not the weather, but the closure of the mines - again breaking the robust way of making a living and entailing the decades of apathy and underachievement. Whether the artefact of a history-cognizant culture, a tourism-led economy, a national taste for storytelling, or the locality's need to rationalise its own injury, these narratives tended to cultivate compassion rather than contempt for the place and its people. This made the interviewees attempts at strict objectivity, when appraising the educational upshots of those circumstances, sound both convincing and considerate.

According to the interviewees, these locality-specific circumstances resulted in stagnant underemployment, reliance on benefits, low interest in pupils' progress, and the lack of positive role models for pupils in their homes. Rob associated this stagnation with the culture of "It's Aye bin!" - a folk philosophy of constancy and continuity. "I think that's probably the biggest restraint we'd have - would be the culture of not wanting to change what was there before. Because it's, as you've seen, it's a lovely area. But it needs to move with the times," he said. To counter this culture, most interviewees believed, it was necessary to build up strong relationships with the pupils' parents. That, however, was at times a difficult task. For example, Dave shared: "We actually went out to the community. We were not expecting them coming here, because we know there's a boundary. ... The parents go: 'I've got other things to do. Football is on that night.'" He expressed the common sentiment by saying: "I think there needs to be a higher level of accountability with parents at some time, that they recognise that education is your responsibility as well as the teaching. You need to help." "But it always goes down to the school - we have to deliver it. Always," he concluded.

In fact, the issue of parental involvement was topical at the time of research for one other reason - Scotland was debating the introduction of the "Named person" policy. This policy stipulated a broader than before scope of the state's responsibility for the young person, one

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[50] One interviewee even invented a word, calling her school "deprivational".
[51] Although some asked not to quote them on this - the request, which I, obviously, honour.

part of which would be channelled through the schools. Four guidance teachers chose to take me through the basics of the new regime in their interviews. According to them, this policy was a logical continuation of the "Getting it right for every child" approach and the comprehensive student support system - both of which were already rolled out in all Scottish schools. Through the system of guidance, the state was already there, taking care of the various needs of the "whole child". The controversy around the "Named person", they told me, did mostly stem from the question of whether the requirement of parental consent was always the absolute must, or there were certain circumstances, when it could be lifted.

The third strand of describing the specificity of "here" - locality as a backwater country - had to do with the views that the pupils needed to "get out" from the locality. These views ranged from the milder opinions that pupils should be given the opportunity to travel and broaden their horizons[52], to the stronger views that there was no point for a young person to stay on in the locality[53]. Those, who thought that going to other places was a good idea, mostly referred to the study trips and excursions around Scotland (for example, to Queensferry Crossing), to travel within the UK (for example, to London), and only Annabel mentioned Spain as a possible destination in the feat to see the world.

The fourth strand in the Scottish discussions of "here" dealt with mentioning Scotland as a country with strong school education. Leslie's opinion sums up what most interviewees told me: "I think Scotland is seen as one of the better kind of education systems, which is, which is good." As for the other countries, 3 interviewees mentioned Finland as one more example of good school education. Interestingly, they were 2 staff from the technological focus organisation and 1 IT specialist from one of the schools. These 3 interviewees were particularly impressed by Finland's supposed high pay for the teachers; liberal, yet high achieving system; and absence of homework. Also, 2 interviewees brought up the USA. Iris, a guidance teacher, wished for her "naive" Scottish pupils to possess a more assertive attitude: "I keep saying to them: 'Just watch the Americans in action! Look at them, when they are talking about how great they are.'" Anne, from the technological focus organisation, studied the USA and the UK curricula and pondered the differences of approaches to knowledge. "Americans focus very much on em how you can put together an argument. So, you know, can you argue a case for this? ... Whereas in UK we're much more focused on what is true and not true? What is a fact? And in America they don't like facts," she said.

In Kazakhstan, the ways, in which the interviewees spoke about the school's "here" differed noticeably from Scotland. The first difference had to do with the absence of the stories of the school's locality. Of course, each locality had its own history and there were locality-specific

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[52] Consider Annabel's opinion: "What I find in this particular area of [place name1] is the pupils just think this is their world. They don't realise there's a big world out there."

[53] For example, Iris said: "For me, I think, the biggest thing for a lot of our kids is getting to College or University - leaving home, leaving [place name2]! Because there is very little here to do - in [place name2] for children. Do you know there is a [landscape piece]? And ... that's it!"

education-related circumstances that some interviewees made the passing comments about, but none of them chose to make a notable aside to introduce these to me. For example, Aisha recalled that, when she was a pupil, her mixed-instruction school used to have only one Kazakh-medium group in every year cohort, with the rest being the Russian-medium groups. And nowadays, this same school had only one Russian-medium group in every year. Having mentioned that, Aisha did not choose to elaborate about the locality's population - did its composition change or did its preferences change, and why. There was no additional aside. As another example, Darya said:

> Or sometimes the mentality – "why should she study, she is marrying off anyway". Such things do also exist, unfortunately. But we can do nothing about that, it is the lifestyle of these parents, of these families. As a result, the girls sit: "What will Dad say, what will Mom say?" All is decided at that level.[54]

Was Darya referring to the locally residing ethnic minority by saying "these parents", "these families"? She never clarified. Both of them - Aisha and Darya - knew that I had come from Almaty and they could not assume that I would be an insider on the history of their localities. Their comments implied that there was a larger ecology that sometimes touched the school, but there was no specific description or "story" about that ecology.

The second difference had to do with a twofold way of invoking the school's "here" that was characteristic of the majority of interviewees from Kazakhstan. The interviewees would typically share with me their respect for the education "abroad" and then would shift into praising the virtues of "our"/"simple" school in Kazakhstan. For example, Sabina said:

> Well now, the schools of the future ... At the moment, well, truth should be told, we mostly compare with those abroad, in our nowadays' school. And, well, the schools like the ones abroad are not nonexistent. At the moment the schools in our Kazakhstan are developing well. There are many. For example, Nazarbayev Schools, as an example, the Intellectual. How many Kazakh-Turkish lyceums are open at the moment in our Kazakhstan. And then these, for example, physical-mathematical schools. These, at the moment, are the schools that meet the actual demands of the new age, I think. Now, however, I do not say that our schools are bad. For example, if I come to this very same school, our comprehensive school is the [town name] town's the most, how should I say it, showcase school, this one named after [writer]. This school, all sorts of talented, gifted, knowledgeable people have been graduating from this school.[55]

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[54] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Либо менталитет – "зачем ей учиться, все равно выйдет замуж". Такое тоже присутствует, к сожалению. Но мы не можем с этим ничего поделать, это образ жизни этих родителей, этих семей. Соответственно, девочки сидят: "Что скажет папа, что скажет мама?" Все решается на этом уровне."

[55] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Енді болашақта мектептер ... Қазір бізде енді шетелдегімен салыстырамыз ғой көбіне, шынын айтатын керек, қазіргі біздің мектепте. Енді шетелдегі сияқты мектептер енді жоқ емес. Қазір біздің Қазақстанда да жақсы дамып келе жатыр мектептер. Көп. Мысалы, Назарбаев мектебі, мысалы, зияткерлік. Қазір біздің Қазақстанда ашылған қанша қазақ-түрік лицейлары. Содан кейін мынау, мысалы, физика-

Notice how Sabina's narration slides from the schools that are permanently "abroad" to the semi-foreign "Kazakh-Turkish lyceums" and then to the long-respected "physical-mathematical schools" from Kazakhstan itself. The placing of her own school at the bottom of the chain is also telling - it is presented as sub-par, even if held dearly. Interesting is the placing of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS), which the interviewed teachers occasionally associated with the "Cambridge courses". Sabina mentions them next to the semi-foreign "Kazakh-Turkish lyceums". She notes the NIS as quite good, although she seems unsure whether they are truly "ours".

Some interviewees made a stronger emphasis on the "abroad" part of this twofold approach. For example, Alina said that she oriented her pupils toward the Kazakhstani historical role models - Y. Altynsarin, Sh. Ualikhanov, al-Farabi - all of whom she specifically commended for their travel abroad in search of the then cutting-edge knowledge. And Kausar said that she supported the roll out of trilingual education, because it would enable the school graduates to travel abroad, harness "various useful know-how", bring it home and introduce it in Kazakhstan. Others made a stronger emphasis on the "our/simple school" part of this twofold approach. Darya, for example, cited the post-World War II schools, which, despite devastation, managed to educate many Kazakhstani scientists. And Diana praised the creative use of electronic resources by the winner of her company's competition - a "simple" but fearlessly imaginative teacher from a regular school from a "small" Kazakhstani town. Despite the differing emphases, however, all but one Kazakhstani interviewees showed allegiance to both parts of this twofold approach to place.

The only person, who clearly advocated the "our" over the "abroad" was Konstantin from the social focus organisation. For him, the "Bolashak" scholarship, which sent Kazakhstani students to the world's top Universities since 1993, was an enormous and questionable investment - why after all these years Kazakhstan was still unable to build its own world's top University, he asked. The important issue, according to Konstantin, was to build up the community's solidarity - first within the rural localities and then throughout the country - and, for that, to strengthen the schools' alumni relations. Through the means of that solidarity, the young people had a better chance of timely receiving the adequate career guidance and avoiding unemployment, he believed. Without finding a productive place in the country's economy, he said, one ran the risk of poor living and might join the socially destabilising group of disgruntled electorate. When the social focus organisation ran visits of celebrity volunteers to the rural schools in their native localities, Konstantin recalled, the sheer example of those self-made persons inspired many young people to go to the city and intently pursue their own

математикалық мектептер. Бұлар енді қазір нағыз жаңа заман талабына сай мектептер солар шығар деп ойлаймын. Бірақ енді біздің мектептер де жаман деп айтпаймын. Мысалы, мен дәл осы мынау мектепке келетін болсам, жанжақты біздің мектеп енді осы [қала аты] қаласындағы ең бір, қандай деп айтсам екен, бетке ұстар мектеп десек болады, осы [жазушы] атындағы. Осы мектептен не бір таланттылар да, дарындылар да, білімділер де шығып жатыр осы мектептен."

ambitions. Without that example, those young people could remain stuck in their unpromising and economically stagnant rural birthplaces, he said.

Overall, the Scottish and Kazakhstani ways of bringing up and discussing the cultural specificity of the schools' localities brought to light several nation-bound idiosyncrasies. In Scotland, there seemed to be more attention to the socio-economic conditions of the locality and a noticeable presence of locality stories. In Kazakhstan, there appeared to be a two-step formula for invoking the whereabouts of education - applaud the "abroad" and honour the "our"/"simple". Two issues stood out in terms of comparison. First, the authority over the young person: in Scotland, the state and the parents were seen as almost equally highly responsible; while in Kazakhstan the parents' authority came up in a more pronounced way. Second, the location of knowledge and know-how. The Scottish interviewees mentioned travel and departure from the school's locality as the ways of broadening one's horizon. They rarely spoke of travel outside the UK. Where the Scottish interviewees brought up the foreign countries, those featured as the sources of inspiration in terms of education management and personal attitude - not as the sources of knowledge and know-how. The Kazakhstani interviewees insisted on the travel abroad as the channel for acquiring cutting edge knowledge and necessary know-how.

Having highlighted the various aspects of "where" the school interviews took place, let me now turn to "who" were the school practitioners that I talked to.

4.1.2.2. The "who"

As intended, in both countries I spoke with the guidance teachers, who were responsible for the graduating class in the schools that cooperated with one or two of the key organisations (please, view Table 4.2. and Table 4.3). To acquaint the reader with these practitioners, I discuss the key details of their professional personas that I mostly learned about during the warm-up part of the interviews, when they shared with me how they came into their profession and what their current roles involved.

4.1.2.2.1. Becoming a teacher

When describing their own paths to becoming a teacher, only 2 persons - one in Kazakhstan and one in Scotland - said that they became teachers by accident. All the others listed some reasons for choosing this role and discussed the various things that prepared them for it.

The Kazakhstani interviewees said that it was at a young age, when they developed a taste for teaching or realised their own wish to work with children. Most reported being inspired by the teachers around them or falling in love with a particular subject, when they were pupils. All Kazakhstani teachers had subject-based University degrees that allowed them to teach at school, with 2 of them completing the master's as well. The fact that 5 of them taught for over

20 years made the relative infrequency of the master's degrees not too surprising for me[56]. Looking back, several teachers wished that the University had better prepared them to deal with pupils' psychology, differing ability levels, and provided them with more practical experience in teaching and classroom management. In fact, 3 Kazakhstani teachers claimed to recall that "back in the day", when "there used to be more respect for the teachers", the young people were humbler and more governable than the "nuclear" generation of the "now". Three others held the opposite view - that the smart, tech-savvy and outspoken young people of the "now" were promising to become a better generation than the docile and insecure "ourselves", who were the product of the discipline-driven school of the "back in the day". These two camps did not align with any surface-level divides, like the school's cooperation with the social or technological focus organisation, the school's location, or the interviewee's age and subject taught. However, the presence of these camps made me alive to the existence of discernible epochs - the "before" and the "now" - in how my Kazakhstani interviewees perceived their experience of school education.

The Scottish interviewees mostly focused on the educational paths that brought them to teaching. Only 3 persons said that they initially "trained as secondary teacher" of a specific subject. The other 5 went through the less direct paths. Two re-qualified in teaching after mastering the family profession and finding it unsatisfying. Two saw re-qualifying as a viable option, having teachers among their friends or family. Their reasons to abandon their previous qualifications differed: one found no jobs in Scotland to match his qualification, while the other hoped that teaching would involve less stress than her earlier job - an expectation, which, by her admission, did not hold up. One more person chose teaching being moved by the example of teachers, whom she met at school, when she went back there as an adult, after having a bumpy start with a rough mix of jobs. She said:

> And, when you look at teachers with adult eyes, you see a very different thing! [Laughs] You know, it's, as a child, you know, teachers were on a different planet to me. You know, the little, I loved the school, loved it, really had a really good time at school, but I didn't really pay attention to how great these teachers were. They just had a job to do and that was it. But, as an adult, going back, and looking at what these teachers did for these young teenagers - it's just like: "My God!", you know, "I finally got it!" That! And I thought: "I'd love to do that! I would love to actually do that!" And so, therefore, going to school and then going to Uni and so forth so it was, it was just watching teachers teach. It got me completely hooked.

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[56] The over-20-years-long teaching experience signalled that these teachers, most probably, held the Soviet-style Diplomas of higher education - the highest specialist degrees that Universities offered at the time, when they entered the higher education. Both of the further sub-levels available in the Soviet Universities - aspirantura and doktorantura - were the research degrees of the Candidate and the Doctor of Sciences, each of which required producing scholarly findings that would make an original contribution to knowledge.

Compared to the Kazakhstani teachers, the teachers interviewed in Scotland seemed to aspire to receive multiple degrees. For example, not only did four persons re-qualify in teaching from other professions, one of them also went on to study toward the Open University's MBA, obtained a number of post-graduate qualifications in guidance and sought the SQA's Headship qualification. Two teachers, who initially trained to work in schools, had qualified to teach several subjects: Biology and Science; and Religious and Moral Education, English, and, later, Philosophy and guidance qualifications. In fact, this solid level of professional preparedness was something that the Scottish teachers themselves were quite aware of and considered to be a valuable factor in the overall quality of the Scottish school education. For example, when invited to add anything that I didn't ask about, Dave, who joined his school just in the wake of McCrone's "The Teaching Profession for the 21 Century", chose to enquire about the teachers' qualifications in Kazakhstan. "What is the, the level of eh entry into kind of teaching in Kazakhstan? ... Do you know is there a teacher training process you have to go through?", he asked me. I replied that one at least needs to receive an undergraduate degree from a Pedagogical University in Kazakhstan, to which he said: "You don't teach how to teach? ... So, anybody with a degree could actually work fine there. ... That is a big difference that!" To close the interview, Dave concluded: "I think, if, and I think as many, Scotland benefits over England as well - we are... the teacher training we have in Scotland, I think, is very-very good in comparison to some other areas."

Overall, reminiscing about their paths to teaching, the Kazakhstani and Scottish interviewees mentioned various things that prepared them for the role. On the surface, their responses had noticeably different emphases: the Kazakhstani teachers brought up initial inspiration, spoke of different "times" and briefly mentioned University degrees; while the Scottish respondents focused intently on their, sometimes winding, education paths. Upon a closer view, it's easy to notice that the teachers from both countries set off from the same premise and mentioned two things. One - something that made them 'knowledgeable about a subject': in both countries it was education. Two - something that gave them 'the insight into how to be a teacher': in Kazakhstan - the memories of inspiring teachers; in Scotland - postgraduate teacher training[57]. Indeed, the elements, which some Kazakhstani teachers felt were missing from their education, were exactly the things that Dave summed up as "teach[ing] how to teach", which he believed to be the core of the Scottish teacher training. In other words, the teachers' answers from the two countries were non-similar, but shared a common premise and, in practical terms, demonstrated a high degree of compatibility.

The fact that the Kazakhstani teachers highlighted separate epochs was convenient for the interview, as it prepared the conversation for a smooth transition into the later discussion of

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[57] As studies have suggested, the UK post-graduate teacher training "did not seem to change firmly held views about teaching, rather it showed how those beliefs could be justified from evidence, and 'operationalised' within teaching practice" (Entwistle *et al* 2000, ¶1).

the desired school of the future. In Scotland, the teachers' narrations about their paths did not feature such epochs and, to begin steering the conversation toward the discussion of the desired school of the future, I added a question that introduced the notion of change through time. "Since you first became a teacher, in what ways would you say the Scottish school education has evolved or stayed the same?" I asked. Responding to this question, the Scottish teachers were unanimous - there had been great strides in the way that the Scottish school education had been improving. Reflecting on those improvements, the Scottish respondents, of course, had to compare the status "before" and "now"; however, in these responses those were never separate epochs - they were various sets of chronological sequences in the continuous story of change. This difference between the two countries in terms of the temporal perception and expression was something that I kept noticing further throughout the research material.

4.1.2.2.2. Guidance (pastoral care) responsibilities

Almost all teachers[58] that I spoke with in both countries were guidance teachers and they supervised young people in their graduating year. In terms of the setup of guidance, there were some similarities and some differences between the countries. In both countries, guidance (pastoral care) was an in-built feature of schooling that aimed to provide the young person with necessary academic and non-academic advice, and to help them orient themselves in their progress. The young person usually stayed under the supervision of the same guidance teacher throughout their years of secondary school.

As for the differences, all but one of my Kazakhstani interviewees were responsible for the guidance of one form (registration group). In other words, they supervised between 20-30 same-age pupils, who attended all classes together. For these teachers, guidance was an addendum task on top of full-time subject teaching and, according to Olga, the monthly additional remuneration for guidance in 2015-2016 was 5,300 tenge (about 11 pounds)[59]. The only Kazakhstani teacher, who supervised two forms, worked in the non-typical and exceptionally resourced school - one of the 20 Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools operating in 2015-2016 (Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools 2016). Responsible for one group in the 9th year and one group in the 12th year[60], Madina was full-time guidance teacher and did not have to teach any regular subjects.

The guidance setups in Scotland were somewhat more diverse. For 5 interviewees, guidance was a full-time responsibility, while the other 2 did it on the part-time basis - on top of teaching some subjects. Four interviewees worked in a local authority that had implemented a uniform approach to guidance, while 3 were from a local authority that left the issue of guidance at the

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[58] Except for Scott, whom I spoke with thanks to the initiative by the same school's guidance teacher Annabel, whom I interviewed earlier.
[59] On 20 November 2015, the exchange rate of 1 British pound belonged to the corridor between 463-476 Kazakh tenge (Qazcom 2017).
[60] Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools work according to the experimental 12-year school curriculum.

schools' discretion. The size of guidance cohorts (groups of supervised pupils) varied greatly from the moderate caseload of 90 persons to the mammoth one of 300 persons. The cohorts could be 'vertical' and consist of some pupils from each year-group (S1 through to S6), or 'horizontal' and consist of the bigger numbers of pupils from fewer year-groups. In case of the 'vertical' organisation, the guidance cohorts often coincided with the "Houses" that the schools maintained in order to encourage community building, competition and achievement. Some schools made an effort to place children from one family into the same guidance cohorts - so that the guidance teachers had a better chance of developing constructive relationships with the pupils' parents.

In terms of the content of the guidance work, there were also some similarities and some differences between the countries. With regard to the commonalities, the guidance teachers in each country aspired to support the young persons in discovering the various sides of their potential and in achieving as best they can. They were responsible for monitoring the overall attendance and the level of pupils' performance. They also aimed to help the young people to orient themselves in terms of the studies and careers after the school, and to develop the necessary resilience for facing the various challenges of adult life. In both countries, one of the channels available to the guidance teachers for undertaking this work were the weekly one-period (class-time, 45 minutes) meetings with all of their supervisees. In Scotland such meeting was called an "assembly", and in Kazakhstan it was "классный час" ("the form's hour")[61]. Some of these meetings would cover the topics from the school's compulsory agenda and some would be more up to the judgement of the guidance teacher and their cohorts.

As for the differences in the content of the guidance work, the major focus of the Kazakhstani guidance teachers was the upcoming Unified National Test (UNT) that their graduating class had to go through - the preparation for it was a year-long endurance task. Most of my interviewees coped with this task by running multiple mock tests and remedying the low scores by arranging the additional subject lessons. Some chose to simply fixate on the performance of their brightest pupils. Alina found it necessary to remind me that the tests were required by the law. A few respondents were outspoken in criticising the testing. For example, Olga, who teaches Russian literature along with the UNT-included subject of the Russian language said:

> Before this I organised an evening of [period in Russian literature]. Why this specific theme? It is complex. [Author 1], [author 2], [author 3] are not read so much, especially by the nowadays' children. It is my generation, they would read. And why I took it, because it is in the 11th grade's curriculum. But right now, the whole attention is on the UNT. And I feel so bitter inside. They are ready, they read, they know! But still we place the emphasis on the Russian language, on the tests, drill them to the tests,

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[61] Although none of my interviewees mentioned it, the Kazakhstani guidance teachers also have to hold regular (at least four times a year) meetings with the pupils' parents - usually in the evening (after the parents' working hours) on the day specifically designated in advance.

drill them. As if we turned into the slaves of these tests. In a way, we all became a bit sick. All. But that is my opinion.[62]

In addition to the pupils' performance, the Kazakhstani guidance teachers spoke of being expected to contribute to the moral and patriotic upbringing of the young people, and of fostering the team spirit among the pupils of their form. In case of Madina, she was supposed to uphold a system of mentorship between her 12th and 9th year pupils, as well as to encourage the community building between the two forms. She was the only guidance teacher, who did not have to worry about the UNT - the pupils of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools are exempt from the tests.

The specifically Scottish content of guidance had to do with contributing to the implementation of a national approach - "Getting it right for every child" (GIRFEC)[63]. Stemming from a review of the services and support available to children, the "GIRFEC regime" aimed to ensure the young persons' wellbeing by coordinating the work of various agencies to timely and adequately address their unique needs (The Scottish Executive 2005). The school, through the guidance teachers, was placed at the heart of that coordination effort. That was the main reason why all my interviewees spoke about the many, and sometimes ad hoc, meetings that they attended on behalf of their supervisees. For example, Leslie said:

> So, I am the person that, when they come up in the first year (we try to get them, to know them quite quickly), I am the person that their parents would contact, if there is any issue or anything that they are worried about. We keep in contact with like the subject teachers as well, especially when they are in the senior school - about how they are getting on in their subjects or any worries, etcetera. We go to meetings, if there are any meetings about the child for any reason with other agencies. We'd be the ones that compile their reports, the ones that go to the meetings, if pupils are getting anything, like mental health issues or any external agencies of any kind. We would be the people that kind of coordinate that and deal with it in the school.

Another specifically Scottish aspect of guidance had to do with the teaching of a non-curricular course - Personal and Social Education (PSE). The mentioned themes of the PSE sessions were diverse and, among others, included the issues of work, post-secondary study, sex, health, relationships, bullying, personal finance, consumer rights, communication skills,

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[62] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Я до этого проводила вечер [период в русской литературе]. Почему именно эта тема? Она сложная. [Автор 1], [автор 2], [автор 3] не так читают, тем более современные дети. Это мое поколение, они будут читать. А почему я взяла, потому что у нас в 11 классе по программе. А сейчас же на ЕНТ всё внимание. И мне вот внутри так вот обидно. Они готовы, они читают, они знают! Но все равно мы больше на русский сейчас, на тесты, на тесты натаскиваем, натаскиваем. Как рабы этих тестов стали. Вот как-то какие-то мы немножко больные стали. Все. Но это мое мнение."

[63] Two of my interviewees even used close-to-identical words to describe the GIRFEC-related nature of the Scottish guidance. For example, Michelle said: "So you will have heard of GIRFEC, no doubt... So it's very much in line with GIRFEC and getting it right for every child". And Iris said: "So, it's, you'll have heard of, or maybe you have not heard of, like the GIRFEC regime? The getting it right for each child? And we, as guidance teachers, fit into that very well".

homelessness, charity, online safety, and crime. The state did not centrally prescribe the list of PSE topics and some teachers saw that as a necessary flexibility, which allowed them to adjust the programme and include the new topical issues as they emerged. At the same time, one of the local authorities that I visited streamlined the content of the PSE and the teachers in that authority took pride in their well-developed programme. For example, Iris said:

> You know, and, and I can't believe in schools that some schools down South they're not covering things like cyber-bullying, or, you know, the drugs and alcohol awareness. We, we do that from S1. So, I think it's, as far as that's concerned, yeah, I think we are as, as a Council, I think we are pretty well ahead of the game.

According to my interviewees, each registration group would sit through one period of PSE per week, which would be delivered by one of the guidance teachers. There was an interesting mismatch in the interviewees' opinions on the role of PSE in S4. Some believed that the transition from broad general education of S1-S3 to the exam-intensive S4-S6 was very stressful and, at that time, the young people did especially benefit from guidance through the PSE course. Others said that their school skipped PSE for the pupils in S4. Instead, those pupils received more preparation for the exams and did more Physical Education, which was another new focus area put in front of the secondary schools by the Scottish government. Subsequently, some interviewees noted the importance of addressing the mental health issues through the PSE programme in S5.

Overall, both the setup and the content of guidance varied a lot between the countries. At the same time, there was a considerable diversity of those things within each country as well. Regardless of the differences, it was obvious to me that the content of guidance in both countries was quite packed - the schools and the societies expected a lot from the guidance teachers. And, despite those taxing expectations, some teachers in each country tended to invest even more in their pupils. This leads me to the next sub-section.

4.1.2.2.3. Being a good (guidance) teacher

The discussions of the responsibilities of a guidance teacher went hand in hand with the discussions of being a teacher overall. The interviewees in both countries shared their views on the role of the teacher, on what it meant and what it took to be a good teacher and on why it was worth it.

Most of the interviewees believed that teachers played an indispensable role in the lives of the young people. Looking to the future, Anastasia from Kazakhstan said: "It should not lead, as in science fiction film, to the robots replacing the teachers, turning on. No, still alive is alive.

The interaction of the teacher and the children - that's what should be. No robot can replace that."[64] Similarly, Anne from the Scottish technological focus organisation argued:

> You know, you don't want to get rid of a parent. You don't want to get rid of a teacher. They have a role in terms of like managing a classroom. Not just in terms of being a policeman, but in terms of pastoral support. Em, you know, they're there - the person a student can go to for advice and help. And um, and help students make sense of the world, as well as understand the subject matter that they are learning. Um. So, yeah. [Laughs]

The interviewees saw the content of this indispensable role in helping the young people to identify the directions for their development and to follow their talents. In the words of Leslie: "I think it is about knowing every pupil's individual and looking at where, where their talents are and what we can do for them." Or, as Madina in Kazakhstan said: "Not that all knew the theory, not that all had 'A's, the main goal here is to recognise and reveal the talent that each particular child possesses. We need to notice that, to help reveal it, and to bring them up as the patriots of Kazakhstan."[65] Some respondents used more elegant language to express the same thought. For example, Diana from the Kazakhstani technological focus organisation and Mary from one of the Scottish schools quoted very similar words to say that the learner's mind "does not require filling like a bottle, but rather, like wood, it only requires kindling". Interestingly, they each attributed the quote to different people: Diana - to Ludmila Peterson, Professor and the author of the Russian textbooks in mathematics; and Mary - to Plutarch.

To fulfil that role well, the teachers had to learn more about their pupils and invested much effort into allowing the young people to open up from various sides. Some teachers devoted extra time to organise trips and events. In Scotland, Scott and his colleagues, for example, took pupils to study excursions to the Alton Towers theme park, to the Queensferry Crossing, and to the Torness nuclear power station. Some of the teacher interviews in Scotland had to be postponed, because the teachers travelled with their pupils to show them more of the UK. In Kazakhstan, Darya, for example, arranged for her supervisees to collectively attend theatre and concerts. Olga and her colleagues built up the pupils' self-esteem by allowing them (and helping/supervising to ensure success) to run extra-curricular events, like poetry evenings and costume balls. Every year, at her home Olga held several receptions for the pupils.

Several teachers in Kazakhstan noted that the task of fulfilling the teacher's role did also involve efforts to earn the pupils' trust. For that, the teachers had to always up their game,

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[64] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Не должно идти к тому, как это фильм фантастический, что учителей роботы заменили, включили это. Нет, все-таки живое есть живое. Общение педагога с детьми - оно должно быть. Никакой робот не заменит."
[65] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Барлығы бірдей теориямен, барлығы бес болу емес, ең басты мақсат бұл жерде жаңағы баланың өзінің бойындағы талантын тану және соны ашу. Соны тани білу керек, ашу керек, және Қазақстанның патриоты етіп тәрбиелеу."

making sure that they themselves posed as the positive role-models - being tactful and dependable, being knowledgeable about more than one subject, and demonstrating strong skills in languages and technology. As Anastasia said, "The teacher, of course, should always keep progressing, should not stay in place. Because if the teacher goes mouldy, naturally, the kids do, too"[66]. Some others said that the teacher was also central to the psychological wellbeing of pupils and, therefore, had to make the effort to stay upbeat and optimistic.

To invest that much into their professional role, most of the interviewed teachers believed that one should have a special calling to be a teacher, or, in Olga's words, be committed to the main function of the teacher - "to carry the light". This special calling, this commitment is summed up well in the following words said by Iris:

> We were talking about this today, that, if you, if you didn't love teaching, and you only did it as a job, because you mean.... you must be miserable. Because kids are challenging! All the time! And, um, you know, you would never stop screaming, if you, if your heart wasn't in it, as a teacher, you would go home every night with a headache! There really has to be something that's in here [gestures to heart], in your heart, because, you know, it's just not just a job that just, which is why so many teachers plod on irrespective of salary.

Surely, not all the teachers were ready or capable of investing that much in their professional roles. In both countries, along with the narratives about the 'good teacher', I also heard about the 'other' teachers. Interestingly, unlike the positive image, which coincided much between Kazakhstan and Scotland, the negative images had noticeably different emphases in the two countries.

In Kazakhstan, the 'other' teachers were often portrayed as the "dictators", who employed the unethical methods of disciplining (shouting at pupils, humiliating them in front of the classmates), or those, who were sloppy toward their teaching obligations. The disapproval of such behaviour in 'other' teachers was often followed by a theory of how those people arrived into the profession and why they stayed in it. The frequent reasoning was that these 'other' teachers must have chosen the Pedagogical University without any "calling", but thanks to the low admission criteria - the artefact of the low demand for the course, due to the minuscule salary of the teachers. And, once within the profession, to earn a bit more, these 'other' teachers picked up excessive teaching loads, which left them no chance of doing their jobs with the due diligence. Further, tired of the huge teaching load, and still not earning any decent money, these 'other' teachers were stressed and faced displeasure at their unsympathetic homes - the disagreeable circumstances that made them intolerant and aggressive toward the pupils. Unfortunately, my visits to the Kazakhstani schools provided a number of confirmations

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[66] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Учитель всегда, конечно, должен вперед идти, не стоять на месте. Потому что если учитель заплесневел, то, естественно, и дети."

of the presence of shouting dictators. For example, one of the school corridors, where I awaited an interviewee, was filled with the Physics teacher's bellowing: "Man-del-stam. Man-del-stam! You! Have you written it down? Mandelstam and Papaleksi. Pa-pa-leksi! Stewart-Tolman! Stewart-Tolman." I was especially surprised that the 10th grade Physics lesson devoted to the electrodynamics in metals did require any dictated writing down. The 'sloppy teaching' part of the 'other' teachers' theory also received some confirmation - and by the interviewees themselves! For example, one teacher said:

> If, say, one made living by taking one full teaching load, one stavka, we receive peanuts. We all have families, we pay kids' fees at University, we all have loans. So, we have to ask for more teaching load, if possible. And then you become physically unable to prepare well for all the lessons.[67]

In Scotland, the 'other' teachers were often characterised as those, who did not quite grasp that the wellbeing of the "whole child" was, in fact, paramount - more important than their academic attainment. Since I mostly spoke with the guidance teachers, the frequent assertion was that the majority of guidance teachers would, probably, be non-typically aware of the need to work with the "whole person", unlike those, who had no pastoral obligations. However, in my conversations with the classroom teachers, the development of the "whole person" was again stressed as important and was now portrayed as, probably, the specific internal view held by those working in schools. Yet, in the interviews with the staff of key organisations - both with the social and technological focuses - I again heard about the importance of seeing the learner as a well-rounded person rather than as a strictly test-sitting student. For example, reflecting on the schools' mission, Elizabeth from the technological focus organisation said:

> There are lots of challenges. It is not easy. Resources, funding, priorities. And also, I think, having space and time to be able to focus on aspects of the development of the child, which aren't strictly about knowing facts and passing exams. But it's a whole, the whole child. Development of the whole child.

In other words, my search for those 'others' in Scotland proved unsuccessful. Not only the guidance teachers, but also the non-guidance teachers, the non-teaching school staff, and even the staff of the organisations working with schools from the outside - all, whom I interviewed, bought in and shared the aspiration of developing the "whole child".

Even when the teachers did their best, the success of their work, of course, could not be guaranteed without the active participation of the young people themselves. Some teachers in both countries chose to point this out. For example, Scott said: "Em, and at some point, I think,

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[67] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Если только на одну нагрузку, на одну ставку жить, допустим, то мизер мы получаем. У нас у всех семьи, дети-студенты, у всех кредиты. И поэтому приходится просить больше часов, если дают. А потом физически ты не сможешь подготовиться."

the teacher can't do everything. It ... the pupil needs to ... to make an effort, too ... to meet you eh halfway, or whatever." Similarly, Anastasia shared that she once had to cut off a pupil's father, who complained that his son found some lessons not interesting. "Please, excuse me, but in the 10th grade[68] interesting - uninteresting, I am not a clown here to entertain, here a serious study is required. By the 10th grade one should develop a serious attitude to the studies,"[69] she told the father. In senior years all subjects begin covering quite complex material, she explained to me, and without a dedication by the pupil no progress is feasible.

Of course, some pupils fail to muster the adequate dedication for their studies. The interviewees from both countries noted the cases, when the "turbulent home" lives prevented the young people from prioritising their education, or when the naturally born level of giftedness lagged behind the one necessary for success. Apart from recognising these as the difficult and to-be-expected cases, the responses to such situations differed noticeably between the two countries.

In Kazakhstan, the interviewees tended to take a somewhat sympathetic, liberal position. They said we should appreciate that this young person "could have gone without lunch today" and, therefore, "we should not scold such pupil" for the unfulfilled homework. They also said that there is no need to push the ungifted pupil to perform in all subjects, instead the school should allow such young person to receive a low mark - after all, "the simple working professions have not been cancelled yet, they are also needed". The most important thing, Aisha said, is to make sure that the pupil grows into a person devoted to the humanist ideals.

In Scotland, the interviewees tended to speak of such cases in a more pro-active tone. For example, consider Michelle's statement, where she cites the "GIRFEC scenario" of concerted efforts to "reduce the barriers to learning":

> So, you could be extremely innovative, however, if that child's own circumstances are such that they can't progress, then we are not getting it right. And that's where the other agencies have to step in to support us to support the young person. Because we want to deal with the whole child.

And with regard to the less able, Rob shared: "But where people, who have maybe got learning difficulties, we use National 3s and National 4s to get qualifications for them, which would allow them into the colleges and, or employment." In similar vein, Michelle said: "So there are lots of opportunities for young people to get involved and to be successful in other ways. So, we celebrate the academic achievement, but we also celebrate widening achievement, which is volunteering."

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[68] Penultimate year of study in the typical 11-years Kazakhstani school.
[69] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Вы меня, конечно, извините, но в десятом классе интересно – неинтересно, я же здесь не клоун, чтобы развлекать, здесь надо серьезную учебу. К десятому классу надо подходить серьезно к учению."

On the whole, the interviewees in both countries said that the professional role of the teacher required a special calling and took hard work and many extra hours. "It's continuous and it's hard-going," as described by Annabel. Daniel from the Scottish social focus organisation said:

> You know, that's what schools are there for - to teach, to teach everything, really, you know, it's a big-big ask, but they help. They are there to help our young people to mature and, um, and understand their position in the society.

In the view of the interviewees, being a teacher was a highly responsible position, which vested a great power in the person holding it. Anne from the Scottish technological focus organisation said that, as a teacher, one had "the power to influence people's thought processes, which basically means that you're, you know, um, yeah, leaving a little bit of you in the planet, you know". And Diana from the Kazakhstani technological focus organisation echoed her by quoting Sir Winston Churchill: "The teacher wields such power that no Prime Minister could dream about."[70]

The interviewed teachers shared that they and most of their colleagues found the job to be very rewarding. Some teachers, like Darya, reported enjoyment of working with the pupils. She said: "First of all, it is always interesting to work with children, you never age, you rejuvenate."[71] Iris explained such attitude of teachers by saying: "Because they love the job! They love helping the kids learn. And they enjoy watching them grow and leave. And become something else." The gratitude of ex-pupils was something that fuelled many teachers, like Annabel, who shared: "And you meet them again and they send you e-mails and you get thank you cards from them. And it's just nice having that kind of connection with them." Olga's phrase sums up well the general attitude of the teachers about 'being a teacher': "It makes me very proud. I don't know, I feel proud, as if I were the First Secretary or something."[72]

Overall, the teachers' discussions of what it meant to be a good teacher came very close to the narrative representation of what Charles Taylor called a social imaginary. Consider a quote from his "A secular age":

> Our social imaginary at any given time is complex. It incorporates a sense of the normal expectations that we have of each other; the kind of common understanding which enables us to carry out the collective practices which make up our social life. This incorporates some sense of how we all fit together in carrying out the common practice. This understanding is both factual and "normative"; that is, we have a sense of how things usually go,

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[70] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Педагог обладает такой властью, которая Премьер-Министру даже и не снилась."
[71] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Во-первых, с детьми всегда интересно работать, с ними не стареешь, с ними молодеешь."
[72] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Я очень горжусь. Я не знаю, я горжусь, как будто бы я там первый секретарь или еще чего-нибудь."

but this is interwoven with an idea of how they ought to go, of what missteps would invalidate the practice.

(Taylor 2007, p.172)

In the responses from both countries, there were salient opinions of how the 'good teacher' ought to be and what behaviour would betray that the teacher is one of the not-so-good 'other' teachers. Interestingly, the positive images of the 'good teacher' coincided between the countries, while the negative images of the 'other' teachers differed considerably. In both countries the 'good teacher' had an attentive caring eye, invested extra effort and loved the job. The 'other' teachers in Kazakhstan were said to have flaws in their conduct and work ethic; while in Scotland they were said to lack the holistic view of the learner as a person.

The ideas of how to deal with regular pupils did also coincide between the countries, while the ideas of how to deal with the underperforming pupils differed again. With a regular pupil, the teacher would work as a partner, who guides and supports their active efforts to discover and develop own talents. With the underperforming pupil, the Kazakhstani respondents advocated for an understanding, lenient approach; while the Scottish interviewees took a pro-active stance and were willing to seek the ways to push the young person to overcome the current barriers.

This coincidence between the positive and the discrepancy between the negative scenarios reminded me the opening line in Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina": "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way" (Tolstoy n.d., p.3). I interpret this as an indication of the default opaqueness of the 'ideal' case, which is customarily conveyed by listing its most explicit features. The also-important tacit features of the 'ideal' escape being mentioned in that conveying. Luckily, these also-important tacit features of the 'ideal' come into the open, when their lack is stated in the description of the 'foul' case. Therefore, the accuracy of my comparative effort depends greatly on the willingness of my interviewees to describe the 'foul' cases of phenomena, events or practices, as well as the 'ideal' ones.

The juxtaposition of the responses from the two countries allows me to speculate about idiosyncratic features of the Kazakhstani take on being a teacher. First, the 'flaws' of the 'other' teachers from Kazakhstan appear to be the direct opposite of the additional features that the 'good teachers' from Kazakhstan needed to earn the pupils' trust: be a good person, stay upbeat, keep developing and up-skilling. Second, the seemingly detached Kazakhstani approach to improving the performance of the underperforming pupil could be seen as the indication that a 'good teacher' should not attempt to override the influence of the pupil's background. Taken together, these two considerations appear to point at the relatively larger authority of the family and home over the young person than the authority of even the 'good teacher', who has made the efforts to earn trust.

In parallel fashion, the juxtaposition allows speculation about the idiosyncratically Scottish take on being a teacher, as well. Both the discussion of the 'other' teachers and the discussion of

the approach toward the underperforming pupil seem to indicate that, in Scotland, the adherence to the national GIRFEC regime is seen as an important tacit feature of the 'ideal' case of 'good teacher'. As such, the 'good teacher' is integral to the state's access to the young person with the aim of ensuring the young person's wellbeing and with the aim of dealing with the barriers to success, posed by the young person's background. The state's authority over the young person, channelled through the 'good teacher', appears to be perceived as relatively larger than that of the young person's family and home.

4.1.2.3. The "how"

The interviews with the Scottish teachers were conducted in the English language. Luckily for me, most of the interviewees were attentive to my being a non-native speaker and would stop to explain or paraphrase, if I asked them to, or if they noticed my confusion. For example, Rob used the local expression "It's Aye bin!" and then explained it to me as a phrase, which people use to assert that "it's always been that way" and "we don't want to change".

Another feature of the Scottish conversations was the frequent use of abbreviations. For example, when explaining the guidance role, one teacher referred to what I heard as 'hegis'. It must have been my puzzled face, mentally choosing between "haggis" and "hedges", that invited a clarification that the teacher meant the newest, fourth volume of "How good is our school" (HGIOS) document. A number of abbreviations were used much more frequently than the others. Among them, some denoted things external to schools: HGIOS, GIRFEC, CfE[73], SQA[74], CPD[75], UCAS[76]. Some were for the people or things directly in schools: S1-S6[77], PTC[78], TLC[79], PE[80], PSE[81], RME[82]. The presence of abbreviations made me aware that there is quite a bit of terminology in the Scottish school education. Some of the terminology I didn't recognise as such during the interviews. For example, one teacher said that her PSE course, among other things, introduced pupils to "share"; another teacher said that in S1-S3 the pupils went through the "broad generals". It was during the transcribing that these looked odd and I sought information to decipher that the first teacher referred to SHARE (Sexual Health and Relationships Education) and the second meant the Broad General Education phase of the Scottish secondary school. And, in the words of my interviewees more terminology is making its way into the everyday practice. For example, Dave shared:

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[73] The Curriculum for Excellence.
[74] The Scottish Qualifications Authority.
[75] Continuing Professional Development.
[76] The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.
[77] Pupils' grades from Secondary one to Secondary six.
[78] Principal Teacher Curriculum - elevated teacher's post within the school's collegial administration.
[79] Teacher learning communities.
[80] Physical Education - school subject.
[81] Personal and Social Education - school subject.
[82] Religious and Moral Education - school subject.

> Eh I do think that, when I first went on a teaching improvement plan, it was quite simple. It's now becoming very, um very-very convoluted and the way things are delivered eh is a much higher level now. In terms of the language we're using in it, it's more reminiscent of a Business Plan, in how things are developing. Eh more accountability, basically, within the school. Which isn't a bad thing, I mean, it's a they're, they're recognising that, but eh you can see the change. You can see that change happening. Eh the language, even to the language you're using. You're using a How Good is Our School language, when doing assessment.

As shared by Dave, the direction of that terminological change reflected not only the refining of educational approaches, but also the introduction of the industry-style business processes. The same was confirmed by Leslie, who came into teaching after a career in computing. She said:

> And then my working, I think, has given me a better background, may be, to knowing that the school is a bit like a business as well. Because you do have your plan, improvement plan that you need to stick to, you have your reviewing and things, and, I suppose, if you like, your pupils are your clients, so you are...

In the interviews with the Kazakhstani teachers, the issue of language did again offer a number of observations. Compared to Scotland, these were less about professional terminology. They had more to do with the general hybridity of language in Kazakhstan. By the hybridity I mean the parallel use of different languages and the fact that sometimes these languages spill into one another. In terms of the parallel use of languages, all teachers could speak some Russian, even though for the actual interview questions 3 of them preferred to use the Kazakh. This preference was based on their higher level of comfort with Kazakh and the belief that in it they would be able to express their ideas more fully. Similarly, 2 teachers, who agreed to be interviewed in Russian, casually spoke Kazakh with other people. The same was true about 2 interviewees from the key organisations - while being interviewed in Russian, they answered phones in Kazakh.

In terms of the linguistic spill-overs, two teachers, who interviewed in Kazakh, casually used some Russian language words in their responses. For example, one of them said: "... **уже** үш **класс выпускной класс** шығардым..." or "... бір **тема** өтсек...". These could read in English as "... I have already led three **registration groups** through to graduation..." and "... if we cover one **theme**...". While the phrases are in Kazakh, the bold font marks the Russian words. The words "класс", "выпускной", "тема" (registration group, graduating, theme) were borrowed from Russian, while there were adequate equivalents available in Kazakh itself - "сынып", "бітіруші", "тақырып". In this use of the Russian words by my Kazakh-language interviewees I saw not their lack of knowledge of the language that they preferred. Rather, to me, this borrowing was the sign of an openness to mixing the languages.

In a similar fashion, some interviewees (teachers and staff of the key organisations) threw in the English language words. Here, I do not only mean the English words like "flipchart" or "ActiveInspire" that entered the Kazakhstani teachers' professional practice alongside with the interactive whiteboards. Neither do I mean words like "KPI" (key performance indicators) that Konstantin used to comment about the outcomes of the project by the social focus key organisation. The latter is understandable because very many business-related terms are borrowed into the Russian language from English without translation. What I mean are the everyday words like "success", "challenge" or "celebrity".

Overall, the way, in which the interviewees expressed themselves, offered some food for thought in both countries. In Scotland, the dense use of terminology and abbreviations made me appreciate that there must be a rich professional vocabulary of school education in Scotland, which, in turn, is probably a sign of high degree of institutionalisation and regulatory activity. In Kazakhstan, the parallel use of languages and the casual inter-borrowing between them drew my attention to the relative openness of the Kazakhstani interviewees to mix languages, which I interpret as a sign of potential hybridity of language.

4.2. Work done by the interview instrument

Having chosen to collect my primary research material through semi-structured interviews, I did anticipate that the conversations would not necessarily follow a particular way of unfolding. I anticipated that the respondent's views on a certain something might be shared as part of their answer to another question, sometimes even before I had a chance to ask about that certain something. I also anticipated that, to be answered, some questions might require paraphrasing or clarifying. What I did not anticipate was that, at times, my line of questioning and the interviewee's line of answering would seem to belong to two mismatching conversations. Indeed, despite some interviewees saying that the questions were interesting and made them think, for a number of interviewees our conversations proved to be confusing. Scott's comment is similar to those of several others: "I feel like I went near there and there, and just dotted about the place. I don't know, if it was a logical order."

Puzzled about this unexpected confusion, I could not stop thinking: "What was it that I thought that my questions solicited? What was it that they actually invited?" The first intimation came, when I considered the interview ecology, presented in the sections above (section 4.1). Much of this ecology-related information came from what was supposed to be a non-consequential ice-breaker. By asking the interviewees about their journeys into the profession and their current roles in return for my story of launching the research, I thought I was engaging them in a warm-up exchange to become acquainted and to ease into the 'actual' conversation. What in fact happened was that these questions triggered the accounts, which immediately pulled at the various fundamental, and sometimes thorny, aspects of the interviewees' experience and practice of school education. And, carrying all this baggage, these accounts did already

expose some country-specific features of the practice-rooted view of the world and education - in other words, the features of educational imaginaries[83]. This first intimation suggested that the basic assumption of the interview instrument - that educational imaginaries would begin showing only after we arrive at particular questions about the school of the future - was rather amiss. It turned out that there were hardly any aspects of one's reality that a person could discuss without giving off some of the fundamental specificities of one's worldview.

To further unpick the reasons of the interviewees' confusion, I followed up on this first intimation by fastidiously examining my interview instrument vis-a-vis the interview transcriptions. The results of that examining are presented in Table 4.4. Comparing the expected outcome of each question with the what that question achieved, I was able to recognise that the way, in which I expected the interviews to unfold, was based on two 'logical' sequences that didn't hold up. First, the questions intended to proceed from the more person-specific (path to the job, views on the purpose of education, imagination about the future schools) to the more industry-wide (school development pathways, innovations, influential literature). Second, they were meant to move from the inconsequential chit-chat to the abstract and theoretical, to the playful and creative, and then to the more practice-grounded and reality-aware.

Table 4.4. The interview instrument: the expected outcome and what happened

Expected outcome	What happened
What schools are generally for?	
An entrance into the discussion about education. Learning the range of abstract theories about education that the interviewee acknowledges and subscribes to.	Most of the answers to this question were far from the theoretical, reality-detached abstractions. The expressed views were firmly rooted in the deeply personal territory of the daily practice. Only a few staff from the key organisations used this question to contemplate the schools' purpose in abstract terms. Most of the teachers used it to explain what schools do or, even, to justify the schools' existence. Some teachers in Kazakhstan took the question as a bit of an affront. For example, Sabina said: "The question of what the schools are for, I generally think, such question should probably not be posed at all. What schools are for? They are required! There is no way to be without schools."[84]

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[83] For example, in Kazakhstan, they readily exposed the idiosyncratic awareness of space and time: the knowledge-rich "abroad" and the cherished "here"; and the "back in the day" vs. the "now". And, similarly, the idiosyncratic appreciation for the character of specific locality or the distinct take on the society's responsibility to collectively develop the whole person - in Scotland.

[84] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Мектептер не үшін керек деген сұрақты вообще, мен ойлаймын, мүлдем қойып та керек емес шығар бұндай сұрақ. Мектеп не үшін керек? Міндетті түрде керек! Мектепсіз болмайды ғой."

Expected outcome	What happened
How would you like to see the school education of the future?	
A light creative phase, where the interviewee would employ their fantasy, engage in the act of uninhibited imagination and try to articulate their aspirations for the desirable schools of the future.	The visions for the school of the future did mostly stem from looking around at the school of today or picturing it in one's mind and deciding what required the most change. Having heard some outlandishly creative ideas in a pilot interview with my colleague Nick Hood, none of the proposals of my interviewees sounded too revolutionary. They comfortably sat within a triangle formed by three vertices - 'experimental solutions tried in some places', 'changes already planned by the government', and 'drawing upon the old philosophical foundations of education'.
What development pathways could there be toward such future school?	
A gradual comeback to the current state of the schools. Connecting the soaring ideas from the previous discussions to the actual realities of educational practices as they are now.	Because of the previous discussion, to many of my interviewees, this sounded as a repeat question. They mostly paraphrased their earlier responses. Some provided more examples or detail with regard to what they had said before.
How would you define educational innovation?	
A question to probe, what constructs of innovation the interviewees hold and how they choose to express those. Is there a definition that they readily sport, which would mean that they have thought about it, or were instructed about it.	Almost all interviewees answered this question in some way. Some formulated a theoretical definition. Others pointed at the previously discussed improvements and called those the innovations. A few persons said that they didn't know and that a nationwide educational philosophy had to be established before a definition of educational innovation could be formulated.
What educational innovations have you noticed in the programmatic documents and official statements about the future development of school education?	
Further grounding of the earlier discussions of the desirable school improvement in the current realities of school education practice and policy.	Because the changes planned by the state were already discussed by the interviewees, when asked about the school of the future or the development pathways toward it, many heard this question as a permutation repeated for the second time. They still provided some answers, rephrasing and repackaging what they shared before.
What kind of literature (documents, programs, studies, speeches, articles, books, etc.) have you found to be influential in education? Should anything have more influence than now?	
A set of questions, aiming to gauge the key texts that may be setting the overall tone in the larger professional environment of school education that the interviewee belongs to.	In Scotland, the interviewees named a watershed of policy documents; while in Kazakhstan, the interviewees mostly mentioned the topics of the state initiatives without identifying any specific documents.

Expected outcome	What happened
Would you like to sum up what we've talked about? Or add anything that I have not asked about?	
A chance for the interviewee to close the conversation and to offer own unique contribution that could enrich my understanding of the discussed field.	Most interviewees said that they didn't have anything to add and wished me luck. Perhaps, having answered several questions that they heard as very similar, they were sure that they had already explained own views exhaustively. A few interviewees in Scotland did specifically use this space to remind me that progress was a continuous endeavour and that, at the end of the day, the education development agenda was up to the government and the schools simply implemented it.

The way, in which the actual interviews unfolded, offered two important findings. First, the interviewees did not appear to perceive their personal journey, views and imagination as detached from the educational practice that the entire industry collectively made-up. Being an inseparable part of the entire school education sector was what gave meaning to their daily activities and supported their professional identities. Second, their views (and even fantasies) were moored to the practice in many complex ways.

As a result of the shift between the expected and the transpired unfolding of the interviews, I had to arrange the description of the interviewees' answers to the questions in a different order than the one, in which the questions followed in the interview instrument. That is why below I organised the presentation of the interviewees' opinions in the following sequence: the purpose of the school education and the literature of influence; the desired directions of development and educational innovation.

4.3. Interviewees' opinions on the aspects of schools' change

4.3.1. What schools are for

Having studied and compared curricula from around the world, Anne from the Scottish technological focus organisation was convinced: "Education is social engineering, ultimately." Having listened to my interviewees' opinions on what the schools were for, I tend to agree. Of course, the generic suggestions in both countries were remarkably similar - the schools were meant to 'educate' the young people and to enable them to navigate the way to some agreeable places in the post-school education, work or other life provinces. At the same time, the descriptions of the 'educated person' - the image of a desirable member of the national community - were quite country-specific.

In Scotland, the interviewees described the 'educated person' along the lines of the 4 capacities from the Curriculum for Excellence (The Scottish Executive 2004, p.12) or the 8 wellbeing indicators from the GIRFEC national approach (The Scottish Executive 2005, p.4).

Dave's phrase was typical: "... we want to develop students, who are confident individuals, successful learners, effective contributors, and... I can never remember the fourth one."

In Kazakhstan, the interviewees did not identify any specific documents, on which their descriptions relied. And, although some parts of the responses did sometimes seem to rhyme between different interviewees, I failed to figure out what documents they could have been derivative of. While each Kazakhstani interviewee provided a variegated individual response, there appeared to be two large bouquets of opinions. One emphasised the various aspects of knowledge and literacy; and the other emphasised the various aspects of morality, culture and communication. The first set of opinions was slightly more typical between the interviewees from the technological focus organisation and from the schools, which cooperated only with it. The second was somewhat more characteristic of the interviewees from the schools, which cooperated with both key organisations or only with the social focus one.

The presence and the absence of the language of identifiable documents in the descriptions of the educated person in the two countries matched well with how acquainted the interviewees generally were with the various national documents in education. Asked to point me toward the various literature that they saw as having an influence in their professional environment, the Scottish interviewees did readily name many policy documents, while their Kazakhstani peers struggled. Some Kazakhstani teachers even said that they did not read any literature other than that related to their subject. For example, one teacher shared: "Neither in the internet, nor otherwise do I read. If I am honest. There is no time for reading. From the morning till the night we are at work. When to read? We come home in the night, and by that time already too tired."[85] These words appear convincing, if we link them with the school circumstances in Kazakhstan - the two-shift scheduling of the school's work and the low wages that force some teachers to ask for greater teaching loads. Instead of indicating some concrete documents, the Kazakhstani interviewees tended to recall various recent initiatives (for example, trilingual education, the use of tablets, the new pedagogies, the emphasis on functional literacy, the introduction of e-learning).

The Scottish interviewees mentioned over 40 unique items pertaining to policies and regulations - in total 88 instances of mentioning[86]. A bulk of these had to do with Qualifications[87] (14 items; 34 instances), which were mostly brought up by the teachers, who

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[85] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "По интернету и так-то не читаю, и так-то. Если честно. Времени нету, чтобы читать. С утра до вечера мы же на работе. Когда читать? Вечером приходим, там уже уставшие."

[86] By the instance of mentioning I mean the number of interviewees, who mention this or that item. For example, if only one interviewee mentions a document, I state that there was only 1 instance of mentioning for that document, irrespective of how many times during our conversation the interviewee brought that document up. When grouping under a common category one item mentioned by 3 interviewees and two more items mentioned by 4 interviewees each, I would describe that category as consisting of 3 unique items mentioned across 11 instances.

[87] The 14 unique Qualification items included: O-level, Standard grade, Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, National framework, National 1 and National 2, National 3, National 4, National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher, HNC (Higher National Certificate), HND (Higher National Diploma), alternative qualifications from the SQA site.

noted their frequent change. Other salient categories dealt with Curriculum[88] (5 items, 12 instances), Skills and opportunities[89] (8 items; 13 instances), Wellbeing[90] (3 items; 9 instances) and School assessment (1 item; 5 instances). The most frequently mentioned individual policy documents were the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE, 7 interviewees), the "How good is our school" (HGIOS, 5 interviewees, Education Scotland 2015), the GIRFEC (4 interviewees), the "Named person" act/service (4 interviewees, The Scottish Government 2017), and the "Developing the young workforce" (DYW, 4 interviewees, The Scottish Government 2014a).

The interviewees portrayed the CfE as the dominant agenda, even if they sometimes held differing temporal perspectives on it. For example, Dave saw it as a done deal and called it the "backbone of Scottish education system", while Michelle was still expecting it to materialise, saying: "Obviously, Curriculum for Excellence is coming." Explaining to me the essence of the CfE, the interviewees highlighted its emphasis on broad general education, active learning, formative assessment, staff collaboration, the alignment of content between subjects, and the greater than before professional self-reflection.

Unlike the CfE, the HGIOS 4 often featured as the recent paper that was quite new at the present moment. Even being the basis for the schools' appraisal procedure, the HGIOS 4 was largely described as carrying a friendly collegial tone. Indeed, some interviewees reported feeling inspired and even reassured by this document. Interestingly, the inclusive-sounding "our" in the title of this document was not always picked up. One interviewee kept calling it "How good is your school", and another referred to it as simply the "Hegis 4". From this I surmised that it was not purely the appealing wording or presentation style that made this document welcome. It must have been something substantial, like the relatable and achievable targets, that made the interviewees click with the HGIOS 4.

The GIRFEC and the "Named person" were almost exclusively mentioned by the full-time guidance teachers, many of whom described themselves as quite devoted to the "whole child" ethos of these documents.

Launched in 2014 the DYW and its actual basis - Wood commission report (The Scottish Government 2014b) - were also quite recent at the time of research. A number of interviewees saw the DYW programme as the timely addressing of an important deficit - the provision of the young people with a range of experiences (academic, vocational, community service) that would adequately prepare them for the "world of work".

Impressed with the Scottish responses, I tried to identify the Kazakhstani documents that would be the closest to the interviewees' ideas about the educated person. I checked a number

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[88] The 5 unique Curriculum items included: '5 to 14' curriculum, Curriculum for Excellence, Broad general education, Curriculum rationale, Building the curriculum 2.

[89] The 8 unique Skills and opportunities items included: Determined to succeed, Girls in engineering, The opportunities for all, Skills for learning, life and work, Wood commission report, Developing the young workforce, Commission on widening access [report-Mar2016], Building the curriculum 3.

[90] The 3 unique Wellbeing items included: GIRFEC "Getting it right for every child", Getting it right for girls, and The Named Person Act/Service

of national strategic documents, the state programmes for the development of education, and the files published under the "Documents" and "Draft documents" sections of the website of the Kazakhstani Ministry of Education and Science[91]. Through this search I examined about 30 individual documents, but did not come across a close match for the interviewees' description of the educated person. Nevertheless, three observations occurred to me. First, the Kazakhstani documents always sported some generic administrative titles, which were not as memorable as the titles of the educational documents in Scotland. Second, when the Scottish documents had to indicate a sequence, they ran a cumulative numbering (like Building the Curriculum 5, or HGIOS 4). The Kazakhstani documents showed a year or years, which did not allow guessing whether there were some documents in the related field prior to the one at hand. For example, the title "The State programme for the development of education 2011-2020" (Akorda 2010a) does not tell the story of how many other programmes were there before it. Neither does it tell the story of this programme being superseded by a new one in 2016 - this time timed for 2016-2019 (Akorda 2016). Third, among the Kazakhstani documents that I saw, all but one mentioned the aim of education as developing some kind of a "person" ("личность"). The only document, which mentioned the aim of education as developing some kind of "children" ("дети"), dealt with the education of the young persons with special learning needs (The Ministry of Education and Science 2013).

Overall, the responses from the two countries revealed the difference of how well the education policy documents were known and how clearly they were traceable in the views about the aims of schooling: very much so in Scotland and very little so in Kazakhstan. The high salience of policy documents in Scotland was also noted by Drew (2013). The school community discussions that she organised about the "desirable features for good secondary education closely aligned to the purposes of Curriculum for Excellence as enshrined in the four capacities" (Drew 2013, p.166). For Drew, that was "an indication that the language of the current policy discourse has seeped into the consciousness of the school community and has already become part of the lexicon of continuous self-regulation in the control society (Deleuze 1995), thus strengthening the policy discourse of control" (Drew 2013, p.167). In a control society, the objects of control do unwittingly serve as the means of it by accepting the logic and language of the control regime and using those to identify and make sense of themselves and their world. As such, this notion of control is reminiscent of some darker notions like hegemony and ideology, which emphasise the domination of elites in a state. At the same time, the mechanism of perpetuation of such control sounds similar to what one might say about the persistence of social imaginaries. Indeed, Sum and Jessop (2013) discussed the interweaving between social imaginary, ideology and hegemony, and Haney (2014) examined various philosophical constructs that rival the "social imaginary" to denote the ethereal space

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[91] My reasoning was that the Ministry may wish to demonstrate what documents served as the basis of the education sector's activities and what was the current focus of the sector's work. Interestingly, the Ministry's website did not feature the text of the State programme for the development of education.

of shared meaning-making within societies. These make me recognise that there are more than one ways of conceptualising of that, which I study through the lens of Taylor's "social imaginary". And I see the work of unravelling the similarities and differences between these various conceptual tools as important; however, such task is beyond the scope of my endeavour in this dissertation. I take the social imaginary as deeper, broader and more prolonged in time than the content of control regime, ideology or hegemony. Some aspects of the social imaginary can be exploited for the purposes of control regime, ideology or hegemony; however, the nature of social imaginary makes it exempt from a dictate by any specific group. As Taylor (2007) explained, the social imaginary does change over time; however, the views of charismatic leaders or the theories of elites are only some of the many contributing influences that may or may not result in its modification.

I see the Scottish awareness about the policy documents and the presence of their traces in the interviewees' language as the sign that in Scotland the state, as a phenomenon, figures more profoundly in the social imaginary than it does in Kazakhstan.

4.3.2. Moving toward the school of the future

Imagining the school of the future, all interviewees mentioned a large number of its desirable features. As with the question about the educated person, the noticeable flavours of the answers' emphases accumulated only when all responses from a country were grouped together. A number of wishes for how the school of the future should be were common across the two countries. And then there were some things that stood out as country-specific.

The common wishes, among others, included the following most vocal points. The state will resolve the financial difficulties that the schools currently face. There will be more new well-equipped schools built. The technology will be much more utilised in the classroom; yet, no technology will replace the teacher - it will simply be there for the people to use. The human interaction between the teachers and pupils will keep being the centrepiece. The lessons will be exciting and engaging for the pupils. The class size will be reduced from 30 to 15 persons, because each pupil deserves individual attention, if we want them to perform as best they can. The teachers will have less paperwork, while still having enough insight into the reasons behind the pupils' performance. The teachers will feel more rewarded - both in money terms and in terms of the community's respect. All teachers will be highly professional and their specialist judgement will be trusted.

The characteristically Scottish ideas for the school of the future, which I heard, revolved around the issues of curriculum, social justice, and teachers. The curriculum ideas included three types of wishes. One was to provide the pupils with the maximum choice of "correct experiences", ranging from the highly academic "obligatory Sciences" to the vocational training and working experience, and to the extracurricular development of transferrable skills. The other was to safeguard the equitably high value across the variegated contents of education resulting from such flexible approach and reconciling this variety with the necessarily uniform

and rigid logic of examinations. Yet another was to ensure that the pupils do successfully and safely navigate through these choices and exam pressures. To that end, the schools will help them to identify their own preferences, to set higher aspirations, to cultivate stronger responsibility for their own learning, and to develop better learning skills and psychological resilience. The social justice ideas envisioned that the schools, where possible, offset the effects of social disadvantage. For example, by making sure that no young people had to miss out on activities due to a price-tag, or by rolling out a uniform arrangement (like staffed school afternoons for homework time) that would far more benefit the young people with "a turbulent home life". As for the teacher-related ideas, the specifically Scottish feature was the expectation that the current levels of teachers' stress, workload and exam pressure were negotiable between the teachers and the SQA, or between the government and the trade unions.

The characteristically Kazakhstani ideas, shared by my interviewees, concentrated around the issues of facilities, technology, languages, and approaches to teaching. In terms of the facilities, the respondents wished to see various workshops, laboratory equipment for the Physics and Chemistry classes, a pets' corner. One teacher laughed off the "all sorts of ideas"[92] that she heard from her pupils - a swimming pool and new sports grounds. In fact, such facilities were routinely present in most Scottish schools and even in a handful of Kazakhstani ones, like the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools. One respondent was hopeful - a new school had been built in the neighbouring village and could now work in one shift. Perhaps, the turn might soon come to the respondent's village as well, she hoped.

As for the technology, this issue was frequently discussed in both countries, however, the specific accents were quite different between Kazakhstan and Scotland (please, view Table 4.5). In Kazakhstan, the interviewees were often curious about or desired the technological objects, despite admitting that they didn't necessarily know how to use them. In Scotland, the technological objects were much more present in the interviewees' daily practice and there was a concern that many teachers didn't quite use them. Indeed 3 interviewees from Scotland criticised the unimaginative ways in which the technology was employed in teaching - simply replacing the paper and pen, or the projector screen. Instead, they believed, the teachers should have harnessed the broader affordances of the technology to engage their pupils in the more creative, interactive and tech-savvy activities. Similar thinking was shared by only 1 interviewee in Kazakhstan. Other Kazakhstani respondents were perfectly content with the use of interactive whiteboards for the plain demonstration of PowerPoint presentations. Overall, it appeared that the technology was a hot topic in both countries and, although the approaches to it did differ, a dialogue between the countries could have benefitted both sides. The Kazakhstani interviewees could have shared their fresh curiosity and enthusiasm, and the Scottish interviewees - their insights about the effective use of technology in the classroom.

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[92] The English text of the quote is my translation of the phrase "небір ойлар".

Table 4.5. Interview answers: school of the future, technology

	Kazakhstan	Scotland
The interactive whiteboard	7 interviewees mentioned it - 3 said they find it useful - 4 said their classrooms didn't have it - 5 were concerned that most teachers didn't know how to use it and/or were afraid of breaking it	3 interviewees mentioned it - 1 said each room in her school had it - 1 said that many teachers in his school never turned it on - 1 noted the hassle of pulling the blinds for using it
Other devices	2 interviewees mentioned them - 1 said he heard that one teacher had utilised mobile phones in lessons - 1 cited the news that the President set plans to equip all schools with tablets	5 interviewees mentioned them - 3 mentioned that their school used netbook cabinets - 1 said her school was to buy iPads - 1 said that some local authorities provide pupils with iPads or tablets
Specified digital educational resources (not just "internet")	4 interviewees mentioned them - 4 noted the resources of the technological focus organisation - 1 noted interactive whiteboard software	8 interviewees mentioned them - 7 mentioned Glow (Scottish Schools National Intranet), which features the resources of the technological focus organisation - 1 mentioned software for the interactive whiteboards

The issue of language, brought up by the majority of Kazakhstani interviewees, mostly related to the government's visions of trilingual school education in Kazakhstan[93]. Only one interviewee from the social focus organisation was openly against these plans, suggesting that, in the case of the already Kazakh-medium schools, he could only support the adding of one additional medium of instruction - English. For him, as for the rest of my Kazakhstani interviewees, the knowledge of English rhymed with a desired access to the world outside the country. Indeed, in all Kazakhstani interviews there was some indication that in the future there will be more communication with abroad as the channel for acquiring the advanced knowledge and cutting-edge know-how, which generally resided abroad. I can only speculate why no other interviewees expressed reservations about adding a second new medium of instruction on top of English. On the one hand, a possible reason could be that the majority of my interviews were conducted in the Russian language. This meant that the second new medium in question would be the Kazakh - and, in Kazakhstan, openly doubting the relevance of the Kazakh language could be seen as against decorum, if not defiant. Among the three interviewees who spoke with me in Kazakh, one didn't mention the plans for trilingual

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[93] It is planned that 3 languages of instruction - English, Kazakh and Russian - will be simultaneously used in every school. They will be applied, depending on the subject and the year of study.

education, one worked in the already trilingual NIS, and one was unlikely to be against the additional Russian medium, because her own children studied in Russia. On the other hand, the ease with which the interviewees accepted the adding of the second new medium (Kazakh or Russian) could be due to certain hybridity of languages in Kazakhstan, which was mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The Kazakhstani views on the approaches to teaching in the school of the future came from three different angles: the large-scale nation-wide professional development training, the collegial coaching, and the effectiveness of the different teaching methods. The role of the formal professional development courses was mentioned by 8 Kazakhstani interviewees. Co-organised by the National Centre for Professional Development "Orleu" and the Centre of Excellence of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS), these were referred to under a variety of names. The most frequent name was "the NIS courses" (5 interviewees), followed by "Orleu courses" (3 interviewees). Interestingly, 3 interviewees also referred to them as "Cambridge courses", probably paying homage to the fact that the content of these courses was jointly developed by the University of Cambridge and the NIS's Centre of Excellence (Turner et al. 2014). Of course, four years into the implementation of this programme, none of these courses were delivered by the University of Cambridge staff; however, the prestigious name-tag persisted, once again denoting the Kazakhstani regard for abroad as the location of knowledge. The teachers, who attended these professional development courses, ran a series of coaching workshops at their schools in order to relay some of the courses' content to their colleagues. In these school-based coaching programmes they introduced other teachers to criteria-based assessment, teaching approaches (like group work, dialogue-based teaching, differentiation based on the pupil's predilections and ability level), and specific classroom techniques. Several interviewees also mentioned that the coaching oriented teachers toward the development of pupils' critical thinking skills and toward engaging the pupils in the research and project activities. There was a range of opinions about the potential effectiveness of these courses, coaching and the teaching methods that they conveyed. In the opinion of Alina, thanks to the courses, which she attended, and the coaching programme, which she ran together with a dozen other course-taker colleagues, their school was about to become a school of the future by the end of 2016-2017. Darya, who also attended the courses and ran the coaching, drew a more reserved picture. She said that the experimental introduction of the new teaching approaches in her school yielded only a modest gain in pupils' performance, but had a noticeable positive effect in terms of the pupils' confidence and mental attitude. Olga, another course-graduate, had an even more ambivalent impression. For example, she agreed that the group work developed the pupils' leadership and communication skills; however, she believed that it took away some depth of learning and was often unhelpful for the individual pupil's command of the studied material. She found that her pupils took in more, when she employed her "old" approaches, like staging drama sketches based on the covered material

or organising a humour and wit competition "KVN"[94]. Also, disappointed with the fault-seeking visits of the methodical officers from the local educational authorities, who criticised every non-standard detail of a lesson, a few teachers generally questioned the feasibility and wisdom of the move to establish any rigidly uniform "good practice".

Having studied these responses, I think that they are highly illustrative of the peculiar way, in which the interviewees' ideas about the school of the future emerged from their intent attention toward the school of now. The responses suggest that the interviewees took a look around themselves and sought to wish away some things, which they didn't like, and to wish in some other things, which they believed to be missing. These responses hardly showcased a fearless feat of fantasy. Rather, they appeared to stem from a basic and implicit understanding of the fundamental relationships between the members of the educational process and of how things should normally go on between them. Indeed, some of the interviewees happened to realise mid-response that their descriptions of the future were not too different from the present. For example, having wished that in the school of the future the pupils would have all the "correct experiences" and greater support in tackling the exam pressures, Leslie paused and wondered: "I don't know whether it's that different from what we are doing just now."

In fact, faced with a question about the likely timing, when the school of the future might materialise, some interviewees conveyed a sense of arrival or of a satisfactory point on a progressing journey (please, consider Table 4.6). The Scottish answers tended to spread across various scenarios - from "right now" to "never"; while the Kazakhstani ones tended to identify a specific time-frame. The specific time frames named in Scotland sat quite densely: in 3-5 years, in 5 years, in 10 years, and in 15 years from now. In Kazakhstan the horizon of the future tended to fluctuate much more: by the end of 2016-2017 academic year, in 4-5 years, in 7-8 years, in 15-20 years from now or, certainly, by 2050[95].

Table 4.6. Interview answers: school of the future, timing

	Kazakhstan	Scotland
now already / with investment, it can be now	1	2
we don't know when /progress is continuous	2	2
specific time-frame	5	4
never - "I don't think that we'll get the money" for the truly desirable school of the future	-	1
no answer	3	3

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[94] "KVN" is a direct transliteration of the Russian language abbreviation "КВН", which stands for "Клуб веселых и находчивых" ("Club of the Funny and Inventive People") - a team competition in comedy, which first appeared on the USSR television in 1960s and has been running ever since.
[95] The mentioning of the year 2050 is most probably an echo of the Strategy of National Development "Kazakhstan - 2050" (Akorda 2012).

The absence of a densely-hit bracket of mentioned time-frames for the expected school of the future in the Kazakhstani responses may be suggestive of the relatively low degree of unison in how various educators feel about ongoing processes of change. In fact, this lack of unison resonated well with the polar opinions on educational innovation that I heard in two private conversations that I had in Kazakhstan. In one of these conversations, I spoke about my research to a Deputy Headteacher in one of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools[96]. Having heard that I wanted to study the spectrum of ways, in which the Kazakhstani educators understood the educational innovations, she was adamant - my research topic was obsolete. It is already very clear what is meant by educational innovations in Kazakhstan, she insisted. In her view, I would be better off and much more helpful, if I studied something one - the interactive teaching, or the inclusion practices, or the criterion-based assessment. In the other conversation, I discussed the same topic with a Professor of one of the oldest Pedagogical Universities of Kazakhstan. He, similarly, was sceptical, but for another reason - he expected that there would be too little consistency among the opinions that I might hear: "We do too much, we jump from one place to another, and there is no continuity."[97] To improve education, he believed, a wide consensus should have been struck first:

> Before doing, we must come up with the Philosophy of education: what do we want, what we need to obtain, and what is the end result. Nobody thinks about it. No ladder is drawn. Everything must be set up with precision. Yet, an idea strikes someone and oh, let us do it. The Minister is against it - he turns everything around. That is not how things are done! Education takes shape over the centuries. But it takes no time to destroy anything you wish. And that is why what they are doing is not right.[98]

In these two separate conversations, one part of the professional community appeared to be willing to pronounce the directions of the education system's development agreed and settled, while another part believed that the discussion had never even properly begun. By contesting the existence of the 'agreed clarity' claimed by the NIS's Deputy Headteacher, the Professor was preventing the NIS's freshly settled 'common sense' of the everyday practice from solidifying into 'the way things normally go on'. A similar sentiment was shared by many of my Kazakhstani interviewees and was noticeable in their responses to my request to formulate a definition of educational innovation.

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[96] This was a different school from the one, where I interviewed Madina.
[97] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Слишком много мы делаем, скачем с одного места на другое, а последовательности нет."
[98] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Прежде чем делать, надо Философию образования сделать: что мы хотим, что мы должны получить и какой конечный результат. Никто об этом не задумывается. Ступенек нет. Должно быть четко все построено. А одному идея стукнет и о, давай это делать. Министру не так - он все перевернет. Такого не делается же! Образование веками складывается. А разрушить в один момент можно все, что угодно. И поэтому вот то, что делают они - это не правильно."

4.3.3. Defining educational innovation

The specifically Kazakhstani type of response to my inquiry about an apt way to define educational innovation had to do with identifying the "newness" as the key feature of innovation and then discussing whether the current-day state's innovations were truly new. In particular, the spotlight of the interviewees' critical attention rested on the teaching methods that teachers were trained to use during the formal professional development courses and the subsequent collegial coaching. Five teachers, including 3, who had themselves attended the formal courses, shared the view that the 'new' methods were not entirely new after all. They maintained that most of the 'new' teaching methods had roots in the traditional Soviet pedagogical school. For example, the 'new' approach of differentiated teaching was dubbed "the method of Karayev", the Kazakhstani scholar educated during the Soviet times, who defended his doctoral dissertation on the same topic in 1994. Similarly, the group work approach was said to have been employed in the classrooms since back in the 1980s, when some of the interviewed teachers were school pupils.

Expressing their own opinions, all these teachers resorted to some permutation of the set expression from the Russian language: "Всё новое - это хорошо забытое старое" ("Every new thing is actually the well-forgotten old thing"). "It is very fashionable now - the innovative methods of teaching. But all the new - it is the well-forgotten old. It is simply rearranged into the slightly different framing,"[99] said the one of them. Another interviewee suggested: "... these are the long-existing methods, but they have now been re-innovated".[100] The intensity of the criticism about the 'oldness' of the 'new' methods varied considerably. Some interviewees were almost dismissive, believing that the 'old' methods were seen as the 'new' ones only by their inexperienced younger colleagues, who went through the latest wave of professional development. These interviewees claimed that their newly-trained colleagues subscribed to the 'new' methods only "on paper" in order to receive the associated salary increases, while nothing changed inside their classrooms. Other interviewees appeared more tolerant toward the 'old'/'new' dissonance that they noticed. For example, Olga was very liberal about it: "I don't know what in here is new. They say it is new - okay, let it be the new."[101]

Interestingly, despite having known those methods for a long time, few of these interviewees said that they themselves had kept employing those methods since back in the time, and none said that they'd be willing to share that knowledge with their younger colleagues. Aisha, for example, stated that a deliberate "forgetting" took place in the schools in late 1980s - early 1990s. "You know, during Perestroyka, I believe, everyone was convinced that everything had

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[99] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Сейчас это очень модно - инновационные методы обучения. Но все новое – это хорошо забытое старое. Просто перекладывается немножко в другие рамки."
[100] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "... бұл бұрыннан да бар әдіс-тәсілдер, бірақ бұл қазір жаңашыланған"
[101] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Я не знаю, что тут нового. Сказали, что это новое – ладно, это новое."

to be dismantled, everything had to go. That all of it was useless, worthless. There was the need to introduce something new, and to show it off,"[102] she said. At the current moment, three interviewees argued, it would be prudent to not repeat that story and to combine the best from all epochs. Olga wistfully said: "I don't know whether it's outdated or not - I'd like to take much from the Soviet school, to retain that core, and, naturally, to introduce something contemporary, as we should. Because we cannot afford to lag behind."[103] I am not ready to claim whether Olga's sentiment was the result of the inherent tendency to see the fabric of time as consisting of separate epochs, of language-based bias[104], of nostalgia, of reform-fatigue, or of the pragmatic rationality of cross-epoch cherry-picking. Whatever its basis might be, this sentiment is often noted as a typical one in the Kazakhstani education (Fimyar 2014; Shamshidinova et al. 2014; Bridges et al. 2014).

Among the responses from Scotland, there were two types of considerations that were never voiced in the Kazakhstani replies to my request to define educational innovation. One of them had to be expected: some of the ideas listed as innovative did strongly resonate with or were directly from the ongoing initiatives led by the entities from the various levels of the Scottish educational authorities. The other was less anticipated - only the Scottish interviewees took interest in discussing which directions would be more innovative in terms of the introduction of innovative initiatives - top down or bottom up.

The resonance with the Scottish educational authorities' initiatives was noticeable in the responses of 6 interviewees. Most of them (5 out of 6) echoed the various aspects of the GIRFEC approach: providing the pupils with the best opportunities to succeed both in and after the school; effectively partnering with agencies for the positive impact, especially upon the pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The policies like "How good is our school", "Developing the young workforce" and the council-wide full-time guidance were hailed as innovations once each. One teacher said that integrating the requirements of all the policies would actually be rather innovative. While another teacher wasn't quite as sure about the current policies: "Are they innovations? Time will tell." I find it difficult to speculate, whether this resonance was due to the ubiquitous diffusion of the policies' message, or thanks to the fact that the Scottish policies did largely reflect the principles and predispositions of the country's educators. In either case, these views of my interviewees seemed to suggest that the state's imagination, represented in the policies' texts, occupied a considerable place in the educational imaginary at work in the Scottish school education.

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[102] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Ну, знаете, в период перестройки, я считаю, все же посчитали, что нужно всё ломать, всё убрать. Это всё бесполезно, не нужно. Нужно было внедрить что-то новое, показать."

[103] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Ну, я не знаю, устарело или нет - взять бы с советской школы многое, костяк этот оставить, и что-то современное, естественно, надо внедрять. Потому что мы же не можем отставать."

[104] Perhaps, evidenced in the almost uniform resorting to the same expressive tool - the specific figurative statement, characteristic for the Russian language speech.

The concern about the direction of innovative initiatives was voiced by 3 Scottish interviewees. One of them was certain - instead of the top-down innovations coming from the government, the school would be better off following the judgement of its Headteacher. Another interviewee added one more layer of the top-down-ness to heed: while it was the Headteacher, who spearheaded the creative change at her school, the key ingredient of success, in her view, was the fact that all her colleagues were innovative and contributed to the common effort. For yet another interviewee, the seed of innovations lay in the fact that some teachers were brave to do things differently, and it was through the collegial exchange of ideas that the crucial cross-fertilisation of approaches took place at her school. I interpreted the presence of these preoccupations in the answers of my interviewees as the sign of the high salience of the ethos of democratic participatory decision-making in the Scottish educational imaginary.

Some interviewees in both countries (3 in Scotland and 5 in Kazakhstan) saw innovations as the constant and naturally continuous chase of excellence. And, while on the surface they appeared to be in agreement about that, the motivations that they cited for this constant change had different overtones. For the 3 Scottish interviewees, the expectation of a perpetual journey had to do with the belief that, in the task of improving the education, the completion was simply not possible. For example, Scott said: "I don't think we'll ever have an end point. People will always try to improve, make it better, eh, include everybody and that kind of things." For the 5 Kazakhstani interviewees, the expectation of a continuous improvement had to do with the urge to keep up with the ever-changing times, life and new generations. Islam, for example, said that the education had to improve "because the new generation of consumer children is arriving, the digital age of digital natives, but the teachers do not correspond to that yet"[105]. Two interviewees from the two technological focus organisations coincided in their opinion that, by saying "innovation", one didn't have to imply a "revolution" or a "massively different" way of doing things. Rather, they thought that the innovations need to be broad-minded, context-specific and should not overshoot.

Overall, the interviewees' answers to the questions about the school of the future and the educational innovations afforded a number of general observations. First, the interviewees' imagination appeared to be firmly planted in the realities of their everyday practice. That is why their responses gave off much detail to draw some inferences about the features of educational imaginary in each country. Second, the state's imagination was saliently present in the Scottish educational imaginary, while the Kazakhstani interviewees appeared to be evading the state's insistence to solidify its imagination into the permanent feature of the Kazakhstani educational imaginary. Third, there transpired to be some common and some different features in the educational imaginaries between the two countries. Nevertheless, as, for example, in the case of the differing attitudes to technology, the non-similar features were

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[105] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Потому что идет поколение новых потребителей детей, цифровой век digital-native, а учителя не соответствуют."

often quite compatible and both countries might benefit, should they establish a closer contact in the related field.

4.4. Conclusion

The material of this chapter has demonstrated that all the responses provided by the interviewees - whether a 'simple' account of events, an opinion, or an act of imagining - had a complex anchoring cast in the realms of their beliefs, experience and practice. As such, every answer, irrespective of the question's purpose, offered some insights and afforded some inferences about the features of educational imaginary at work in each country. These insights and inferences, in line with Taylor's thinking (2007), were discernible not only from the responses that described the desirable state of affairs, but, as importantly, from the responses that reflected on the undesirable cases. In fact, as the discussion of the 'good' vs. 'other' teachers had shown, the sets of assumptions revealed by examining the descriptions of the 'ideal' cases were different from the sets of assumptions revealed by examining the views on the 'foul' cases. The way of explaining this difference could be by borrowing Herzberg's (2003) differentiation between the "motivators" and "hygiene factors"; or by relying on Polanyi's theorising about the "focal pattern" and "tacit particulars" (Haney 2014). In either way, both - the descriptions of the 'ideal' cases and the views on the 'foul' cases - proved valuable for the breadth and robustness of the international juxtaposition and comparison. Perhaps, the future research on educational imaginaries should seek the opinions on both - the desirable ends to pursue and the undesirable things to avoid.

While most of the aspects of educational imaginaries, spotted through the analysis, appeared to group along the country lines, in accord with Bråten's (2009) findings, some aspects of the imaginaries surpassed the national borders, and some others had a sub-national character. For example, at the supranational level, most interviewees held the traditional belief in the future for the school as a social institution, as well as the more recent aspiration that the pupils should not only learn, but also be able to retain and relevantly apply their knowledge. As an example of the sub-national aspect of educational imaginary, the teachers from one Scottish local authority saw their regional policy for guidance (pastoral care) as notably innovative and positively different from many other places. Or, as another example, the Kazakhstani interviewees, tied to the social focus organisation, made different emphases in their descriptions of 'the educated person' than the interviewees, tied to the technological focus organisation in the same country.

Apart from these scale-bound aspects, there were also some aspects of educational imaginary that were characteristic of certain types of interviewees in both countries. For example, teachers from the rural schools in both Kazakhstan and Scotland shared a distinct take on the logistical, economic and cultural restrictions imposed by their schools' geographical location, as well as the confident opinion that the 'city schools' had none of those.

At the main level of country-specific aspects of educational imaginary, there were some readily comparable items. There also were some idiosyncratically Kazakhstani or idiosyncratically Scottish aspects of social imaginary that, on the surface level, didn't appear to have a match in the other country. Among the readily comparable items were things like the takes on the 'good/other teacher' and the 'educated person', the balance of the state's and parents' responsibility for and authority over the young person, the awareness about the policies and the presence of the country-wide educational ethos, the titling of policies, the attitude to technology and equipment, the timing of the future, and the motivation for innovating. The views on most of these items had a degree of similarity between the two countries, suggesting a healthy degree of compatibility. In those instances, where the opinions were dissimilar, like in the case of the attitude toward technology, the configuration of that dissimilarity still made them compatible, should the countries cooperate.

The idiosyncratically Kazakhstani aspects of social imaginary had to do with the high salience and the hybridity of languages, the view of abroad as the location of knowledge, the take on time as consisting of separate epochs, the sceptical attitude toward the new, and the competing views about the clarity of the country's educational goals. The idiosyncratically Scottish aspects of social imaginary had to do with the concern for social justice and democratic decision-making, the professionalisation of teacher's education, the high salience of the state's imagination, the frequent use of abbreviations, playfulness in policy titling, the taste for locality storytelling, and the "It's Aye bin!" folk philosophy of constancy. Given the apparent mismatch of these idiosyncratic aspects of imaginary, it is difficult to speculate how they may affect the chances and the prospects of international collaboration. A better awareness of these idiosyncrasies could be the first step in preventing misunderstanding, to which purpose this current thesis could, perhaps, be of some use.

At the same time, a deeper look at these aspects may help to appreciate that they do not necessarily stand in opposition. For example, with its intent attention to abroad, linguistic openness and the urge to chase the times Kazakhstan may appear as an enthusiastic, but unpredictable partner for the history-cognizant and appreciative of professionalism and constancy in Scotland. Such a view, however, holds two basic flaws. First, it crafts some crude and unhelpful stereotypes that limit opportunities. Second, it essentialises the aspects of social imaginary into a semblance of cultural diagnoses, which they are not. The aspects of social imaginary are not the algorithms that prescribe (let alone predict) behaviour; rather, they are levers resorted to in order to navigate through events and experiences. In other words, an aspect of social imaginary is somewhat like a proverb: what matters is not so much what it 'says', but what it 'does' - how it is used. In that sense, some aspects of the social imaginary in each country encourage stability, while others encourage flexibility. Together, they pose as the necessary tools that eventually serve the adaptability and sustainability of the community. Therefore, some aspects of social imaginary that, at face value, may seem to be in conflict, could actually be very similar to each other. For example, the professionalisation of teacher's

education in Scotland and the scepticism toward 'new' teaching methods in Kazakhstan might seem to be in conflict; while they both support the maintenance of the status quo internally-defined within the nation.

The detected aspects of social imaginary and the discussion of how they compared between the countries - are the main findings of this chapter. Their practical implications are in suggesting that the awareness of the dissimilar or idiosyncratic aspects of country-bound social imaginaries may help to avoid confusion and miscommunication in the frames of international collaborative projects.

In terms of the theoretical implications, the analysis of the interviews has yielded some insights about the aspects of social imaginaries; however, it left open the issue of how these aspects of imaginaries came to be - what is their etymology. In fact, as demonstrated by Drew (2013), Sum and Jessop (2013) and Haney (2014), there are more than one plausible ways of interpreting that, which I noticed and called 'the aspects of social imaginary'. While I acknowledge the work of differentiating between the various constructs and plausible ways of interpreting as an interesting area for future research, I take that work as extraneous to my current endeavour in this thesis. I believe that, for the purposes of commenting on the potential of international cooperation, the findings, which I arrived at by relying on the Taylor's (2007) construct of social imaginary, may still hold, even if no further theoretical unravelling is undertaken.

As for the limitations, two areas of concerns should be highlighted. First, the above analysis has revealed an almost universal aspiration in Scotland for the policy-affinitive approach to educating the "whole person". The frequency and ubiquity, with which I noticed this aspiration, does suggest that it is either indeed a quite stark Scottish ethos, or my take on the Scottish material is not sensitive enough to notice finer details, which would break down the monolithic impression about that aspiration. While I, obviously, tried my best, I am also aware that no "lancet of analysis" (Mattheou 2010, p.6) can help to extricate my foreignness from my take on the Scottish material. To offset this potential limitation, the following chapters look at the broader set of materials, where this aspiration may or may not surface again. Also, as a direction of future research, I believe that it would be beneficial to discuss the plausibility of both my Scottish and Kazakhstani findings with the scholarly communities, who study the Scottish and the Kazakhstani school education.

Second, the aspects of social imaginary, identified in this chapter, are based on the opinions of the teachers and the staffof organisations, which work with the schools. As such, the circle of my interviewees is necessarily selective. I cannot know, whether the Kazakhstani or the Scottish takes on the 'good' teacher, for example, would be the same, if I asked the school pupils. Perhaps, talking to the young persons could be a direction for future research. To somewhat offset the potential effects of this limitation, the further chapters cast a wider net to check, whether the aspects of social imaginaries, detected here, do also show up at the levels of the school education as an industry, and the society as a whole.

Chapter 5. Industry level conversations

In this chapter I seek to contextualise the findings from the interviews with practitioners by examining the word clouds that roam in the wider professional environment around those practitioners. These word clouds help create the particular vocabulary and atmosphere within the industry of school education in each country.

What I mean by 'word cloud' is not "a graphic representation of the frequency with which certain words are used in a speech, statement, document, judgement, or similar" (Harcup 2014), which some educators have recognised as a valuable novel tool to employ in their teaching (Kern 2012).

For the purposes of this chapter, I use the phrase 'word clouds' to highlight an ecological perspective - the idea that professional practice does all three: generates the clouds of words (vocabulary, phraseology, ways of talking, styles and manners of expression) that become part of its atmosphere, consumes the air charged with those word clouds, and comes to make sense of itself through some of the words or styles of expression within those clouds. Defined this way, the word clouds can be seen as a dimension of social imaginary.

It is worth mentioning that by focusing on 'word clouds', I am also consciously avoiding the use of the more far-reaching construct of 'discourse', because I wish to concentrate on the descriptive analysis of the observed ways of expression, rather than on the critical examination of the power dynamics that those ways of expression do reflect or produce. Similarly, by 'word clouds' I do not refer to the professional jargon - the word clouds may include some jargon, but that is not essentially what I use this construct for.

I specifically focus this chapter on the large-scale education conferences as one of the key types of sites of the industry-wide professional conversations, which produce these word clouds. The other types of sites include policy documents, the awareness of which has been discussed in Chapter 4, and scholarly books, the consideration of which in Chapter 2 served as one of the impetuses for this research.

Each of these three types of sites - policies, books and conferences - hosts its own elements of power, which underwrite the authority of the word cloud produced at that site. The policy documents are charged with the state's power that feeds them. The scholarly books project the power of scientific knowledge, achieved through systematic inquiry, and backed by the intellectual prestige of the academia. The large-scale education conferences amplify the voice and expertise of the key stakeholders and that imbues them with a special sort of grass-root power.

The particular character of each type of these sites affords it a unique vantage point and results in the specific format of the word cloud that it generates. The educational policy documents are developed *on behalf of* and *for* the industry in the format of written texts that convey the vision, rehearse the debates, put forward the arguments, and set the guidelines. The education scholarly books are composed *from within* and *about* the industry in the format of the printed

stories that narrate the past, examine the changes, explain the logic of developments and draw the conclusions. The large-scale education conferences are convened and attended *by* the industry in the format of a live exchange that discusses the industry *itself*.

The word clouds generated by the policy documents and scholarly books are condensed into text. They stand in the shape of the still two-dimensional imprints. Being the wrapped-up accounts, they have to state clear premises and suggest explicit implications no matter how definitive the authors may feel about those. At the same time, they cover much ground in the same-style, same-size font and can be read in many imaginative ways. Those readings produce a different set of emphases each, with a hard time for a single reader to determine which of those sets may more faithfully reflect the authors' intended message or, indeed, the industry's atmosphere.

The word clouds generated at the conferences, however, come in the shape of the open-ended many-voiced conversations - the real-time Brownian motion of words and ideas that may or may not gravitate toward the central themes suggested by the conference organisers. As such, the conference word clouds could be the closest to reflecting the live atmosphere within the industry. It is by observing some of these that one can appreciate, which parts of the written word clouds resonate with the stakeholders and are echoed in the ongoing professional dialogue within the industry.

The text-based word clouds of the policies and books present a durable and highly visible research material. The ephemeral word clouds of the conferences appear as more delicate but still retrievable research material preserved in the footprints that the conferences leave behind - event programs and brochures, news reports, presentation slides, proceedings and attendee notes.

This chapter looks closely at the word clouds generated at the more vibrant type of sites of professional conversation - the large-scale education conferences - and compares a Scottish and a Kazakhstani instances of it.

5.1. The events considered

The two events that I chose to consider were large professional conferences specifically devoted to the industry-wide discussion of the ways, in which the respective country should be developing its education sector. Both events took place during the period of my research - I attended each of them in Autumn 2015.

In Scotland, it was the SLF - the "highly successful annual Scottish Learning Festival – originally called the Scottish Education and Teaching with Technology Conference (SETT)" (Boyd 2013, p.209). The two-day Festival has been held annually since 2000 (Dingwall 2016, ¶1) and each year it offers more than 100 talks and seminars and hosts a large exhibition, where over 100 educational suppliers present their newest products. According to Education Scotland, who organises the SLF, over the years, the conference had welcomed more than

55 thousand delegates, endeavouring to cater for all sorts of interests, "whether you work in an early years centre, a school, community learning, health, social work, the voluntary sector or as a training provider" (Education Scotland 2017, pp.2-3). The 2015 iteration of the SLF took place between 23-24 September in the Festival's traditional home - the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow - and ran under the headline of "Raising Achievement and Attainment for All" with three central sub-themes: Local partnerships and collaboration, Self-evaluation, and Work-related learning (Education Scotland 2015, p.2).

In Kazakhstan, I focused on the international scientific and practical conference "Innovations in education: research and solutions", organised by the National Academy of Education (NAE). This conference aims "to provide an international forum for the dialogue between researchers and practitioners in the field of education innovation" (National Academy of Education 2015a, p.9). First held in December 2014, by Autumn 2015 this conference was promising to evolve into a permanent annual event to nest in the business centre *Altyn Orda*[106]: on 20 November 2015 I attended its second iteration and the third iteration took place in May 2016 (National Academy of Education 2014, 2015a, 2016a). Held as one-day event in 2014 and 2015, by 2016 this conference experimented with a two-days layout. According to the organisers, the conference attracted around 200 delegates in 2014 and over 170 delegates in 2015 (National Academy of Education 2014, 2015e), most of whom were "representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, republican subordinate organizations, departments of education of Astana and Almaty regions, heads and teachers of educational institutions, employees of advanced training, representatives of public organizations, domestic and foreign scholars, international experts in the field of education" (National Academy of Education 2015d, ¶2). The 2015 NAE conference explored the overall theme of innovations in education and highlighted three main sub-themes: Innovation processes in education system, Inclusive education problems and prospects, and Pedagogical dimension[107] in terms of structural reforms of education (National Academy of Education 2015b).

5.2. Why to consider conferences?

Conferences matter. This univocal opinion is expressed by various people, familiar with the topic. For example, by Marie Hunter (2013) from the giant professional organization IEEE[108],

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[106] Altyn orda - in Kazakh, "алтын орда" [altın orda] - the Golden horde. This business centre is located in one of the two shiny central flanks of the House of Ministries, which itself is part of a hallmark new architectural composition in Kazakhstan's new capital city Astana.

[107] The phrase 'pedagogical dimension' in the English version of the conference programme stood for the 'педагогические измерения' from the Russian version, which may be closer in the meaning to 'educational measurements'.

[108] IEEE stands for "The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc." - a professional association, whose "roots go back to 1884 when electricity began to become a major influence in society" (IEEE 2017a, ¶7 and ¶2). The IEEE describes itself as "the world's largest technical professional organization dedicated to advancing technology for the benefit of humanity" (IEEE 2017b, ¶1).

by Peter Casserly (2014) from the research publishing software company Ex Ordo[109], and even by a group of devoted environmental scientists, who examined the feedback from the attendees of two consecutive International Marine Conservation Congresses (Oester et al. 2017). All these advocates of large face-to-face professional gatherings highlight the many practical benefits associated with such meetings. As Oester et al. put it, along with broadcasting one's research, the conferences can also "be an important venue for brainstorming, networking and making vital connections that can lead to new initiatives, papers and funding, in a way that virtual, online meetings cannot" (2017, p. 1).

In addition to the above considerations of their practical value, the conferences do matter for the purposes of current research as important type of sites, where the professional word clouds are generated and amplified. It is a similar take on the generative role of professional conferences that invites scholars to engage in "event ethnography" and search for the ways, in which certain terms and perspectives gain potency through the processes of "(re)production" of "'collateral reality'" that goes on during those conferences (Sheail 2016, slide 18).

The role of conferences as the production sites for the word clouds is also similar to the role of forums in massive open online courses (MOOCs). MOOCs usually take place within the virtual learning environment of the corresponding MOOC platforms with all the necessary resources and spaces - the course materials, tasks, online exam facilities, paper submission channels and the discussion forum - nested within the password-accessible online location of the course. In such a setting, the discussion forum usually becomes the only corpus for learning about the experiences of MOOC attendees. And, although the mode of forum communication has been demonstrated to be ephemeral and superficial, with its visual representations resembling short-lived ad hoc crowds as opposed to a burgeoning community (Gillani and Eynon 2014), the forums are still the unique space of automatically generated qualitative data about the experiences of MOOC participants. The phrases and sentences typed by the MOOC learners at a particular time, in a particular situation and for particular reasons stay permanently in the MOOC forums as a set collection of words and expressions that this specific MOOC has triggered. I believe that these set collections, these word clouds represent a rich durable source, if one is to study the idiosyncratic content and the learning atmosphere within the specific MOOC. A look at the issue of MOOC outcomes provides some basis for such a speculation.

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[109] "Ex Ordo is a leading developer of web and mobile applications for the research publishing industry. Our award-winning Abstract Management tool has been used by research conferences all over the world since 2008. We work with universities, research institutes, member associations, professional bodies and event management companies" (Ex Ordo for Academics n.d., ¶2).

From their launch, MOOCs have been known for their low completion rates[110] and the low rates of participation in the MOOC forums[111]. At the same time, the completion rate among those, who contributed to the forums, was disproportionately higher than the overall completion rate. For example, observing a MOOC from the edX platform, Breslow et al. (2013) reported that less than 5% of all learners on that MOOC earned a certificate, while the corresponding proportion among the forum users was over 79%. Gillani and Eynon's research arrived at a similar finding: "there is a statistically and practically significant relationship between a student's participation in the forums and his or her performance in the course, although it cannot be concluded that forum participation *caused* higher final marks"(Gillani and Eynon 2014, p.22, italics in the original). This evidence seems to suggest that the participation in the MOOC forum was an indicator of a learner, who either was attuned or wished to be attuned with the course requirements. The forums, then, could be seen as the site, where learners communicated about their participation in the MOOC and, in doing so, did inadvertently co-produce the sense of what a successful participation in this MOOC may mean, co-produced the imagined aspirational "we" of this MOOC.

Based on this logic, the educational conferences can equally be the valuable sites for catching the sense of what the people in the education sector do collectively imagine their industry-wide "we" as being or becoming.

5.3. The choice of conferences

While the conferences chosen for the current analysis did stand out as the most fitting for the purposes of this research, in each country there was no lack of alternative options. Below I discuss briefly why I did not select the various other educational events that were held around the same time. I also highlight the common features that made the two selected conferences the preferred choice.

5.3.1. Alternative conference choice in Scotland

Among the many educational events held in Scotland in the Autumn of 2015, at least four occasions were quite relevant to this research and, being based in Edinburgh, I was able to attend them. On 21 September an ESRC[112] seminar "Teacher Education for the Changing Demographics of Schooling" gathered at the University of Edinburgh to discuss the tasks in front of the initial teacher education in terms of inspiring and equipping the future profession

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[110] "MOOC completion rates average under 10% (Jordan, 2013), with Coursera courses reporting closer to 5% (Koller et al., 2013)" (Adams et al. 2014, p.204).

[111] "However, we know that, on average, only 3% of all students participated in the discussion forum" (Breslow et al. 2013, p.22).

[112] The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) of the United Kingdom is "the UK's largest organisation for funding research on economic and social issues" that promotes "independent, high quality research which has an impact on business, the public sector and civil society" (ESRC 2017, ¶1).

to constructively address the challenges of diversity in different contexts (The University of Edinburgh 2017a). This one-day seminar welcomed approximately 100 attendees[113] and consisted of three 45-minute presentations by distinguished scholars from the USA, Australia and Scotland, each followed by a half-hour discussion time.

On 29 September a regional engagement event[114] was held in Edinburgh by the Scottish Government and Education Scotland in order to attract stakeholders to the public discussion and exchange of opinions on the draft National Improvement Framework for Scottish education, which aimed to "drive improvement for children, with a clear focus on raising attainment and closing the gap" (The Scottish Government 2015). This half-day session hosted at least 100 delegates[115] (school management, teachers, parents, and various education specialists like myself) and was structured around three roundtable discussions: Assessment of a child's progress and parental information; School leadership and teacher professionalism; Performance information and school improvement.

On 2-3 October the Edinburgh branch of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain held conference "ETHICS, EDUCATION and TEACHING: Perspectives on the Teacher in Contemporary Society" devoted to discussing "the future of teaching and how philosophy can contribute to shared understandings of the teacher's role in contemporary society" (Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain 2017, ¶5). The conference schedule consisted of four 1.5-hour keynotes by scholars from Glasgow, Stanford, London and Edinburgh and a half-hour closing discussion panel that featured a number of professors from the University of Edinburgh. The 240-person capacity conference room (The University of Edinburgh 2017b) was full, especially on the day two, during the keynote by the renowned educational philosopher Professor Nel Noddings.

On 27 October the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Educational Sociology (CES) held a half-day conference "What have we learnt from fifty years of Scottish comprehensive schooling?" (CES 2015). The event consisted of four main parts: a research evidence session, an address by the Scottish Government Minister, a question time panel, and a reflection talk. The conference boasted input from dozens of experts on the Scottish school education - both at the podium and in the audience. The event premises could typically hold a hundred persons (The University of Edinburgh 2017c).

Compared to these four events, the SLF had three main advantages for the purposes of my research. First, unlike some of the events above, the SLF's focus was not restricted solely to the level of school education. The intended breadth of SLF's focus allowed one to appreciate

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[113] This approximate number is based on the typical capacity of the Godfrey Thomson Hall, where the event took place (The University of Edinburgh 2017c).

[114] By 'engagement event' the organisers meant a public consultation with school education stakeholders.

[115] This minimum number is based on the capacity characteristics of the South Hall in the Pollock Halls Campus of the University of Edinburgh, where the event took place (Edinburgh First n.d.). The maximum capacity of the South Hall is 500 persons.

the relative weight of school-related issues within the wider context of professional conversations about the Scottish education. Second, the featuring of 115 individual presentations/seminars devoted to the educational issues of Scotland made the SLF particularly relevant to the Scottish national context. Third, by attracting many more delegates than any of the events above the SLF was likely to emit a much further reaching word cloud.

5.3.2. Alternative conference choice in Kazakhstan

In Kazakhstan, there were at least two other large educational events held in the Autumn of 2015 that could have been relevant to this research.

In August 2015 the Ministry of Education and Science organised the annual Republican August pedagogical meeting of education professionals, which typically discusses the overall developments in the education sector, draws on the lessons from the previous period and puts forth the objectives for the coming academic year (О проведении Республиканского августовского педагогического совещания работников образования 2015). The roots of this event stretch into the era of the USSR. Since back then, this large-scale educational event is conducted in a distributed fashion: the Republican meeting draws around 2,000 delegates from around the nation to the country's capital Astana (SamrukExpo 2015, ¶2; edu.gov.kz 2012, ¶4), while each regional authority also holds a meeting attended by all teachers in the region (Imanbekova and Nasyrova 2016, p.114). The meetings in the larger locations are held over two days (SamrukExpo 2015, ¶3) and consist of the overall plenary session and a number of panel sessions devoted to some specific topics or academic disciplines (Branch of JSC "NCPD "Orleu" Institute for professional development of West-Kazakhstan region 2015). The Republican meeting held in Astana is usually accompanied by a large exhibition that showcases the successful projects and achievements of various educational institutions (SamrukExpo 2015, ¶6; edu.gov.kz 2012, ¶16). Since 1996 a nation-wide theme for the current year's August meeting began being centrally assigned in Kazakhstan (Imanbekova and Nasyrova 2016, p.114). The 2015 August meeting was devoted to the theme "New educational programmes, innovations and competence-based approach - the steps toward a successful school" (*Bilimdi El - Obrazovannaya strana* 2015). The six panel sessions that accompanied the overall plenary in Astana were devoted to the following topics: (1) Introducing the values of "Eternal nation" into the educational process in the context of the National plan "100 steps"; (2) The prospects and new tasks of higher education in the face of the changing global and European trends; (3) Updating the content of technical and vocational education; (4) The moral and spiritual education "Self-cognition - the basis of the social modernisation of schools"; (5) Per capita funding: problems and prospects; (6) The role of approbation in the updating of the content of primary education.

I was also aware of another relevant educational event that was held on 24-25 September by the Kazakh National Pedagogical University in Almaty - International scientific and practical conference "Realization of UNESCO's strategy for teacher training: Problems and ways of

introduction of innovative technologies in the educational space" dedicated to the celebration of the 70th anniversary of UNESCO, under the auspices of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures in 2013-2022 years (Kazakh National Pedagogical University 2015b). This conference intended to work in three languages - Kazakh, Russian and English - and attracted 100 papers that entered the 420-page Proceedings (Kazakh National Pedagogical University 2015a, 2015b). The conference consisted of a plenary session with seven keynote papers and four discussion panels devoted to "Professional education and knowledge management in a modern educational institution", "Methodological problems of introducing the innovative technologies and innovative techniques into educational process", "Culture, art and education in the context of the sustainable development of Kazakhstan", "Modernization of physical culture and sport in modern society" (Kazakh National Pedagogical University 2015c).

There were a number of reasons for me to choose the conference of the National Academy of Education over the two events above. In the case of the Republican August meeting in Astana, its large scale and the accompanying exhibition made it look quite comparable to the SLF. However, the distributed character of the August meeting made it unclear whether the Astana instance could be representative of the entire set of activities undertaken under the same umbrella. In the case of the conference held by the Kazakh National Pedagogical University in Almaty, the lack of information about the size of the event made it more opaque as a research object. Most importantly, despite the many news snippets about the former and the voluminous proceedings of the latter, the actual programmes of either event were not available for the analysis.

5.3.3. Attending and observing

A special factor that made the Scottish Learning Festival (SLF) and the conference of the National Academy of Education (NAE) more suitable for my analysis was the fact that I had a chance to personally attended each of these events. That gave me the advantage of observing first-hand how these events were organised and how they unfolded.

5.3.4. Valuable dimensions of comparability

While each of the two selected conferences - the SLF and NAE - had some idiosyncratic features that I discuss later, they both possessed a number of important common characteristics that made them plausible subjects for comparison. Each of the two events was organised by one of the central bodies responsible for the state education policy. Each planned to discuss all levels of education with a focus on innovation - both technological and social. The intended audiences of these two events were similar - large and oriented toward practicing educators. Each event was an iteration of the annual series and had an air of kick-starting a new cycle of innovations by taking place in the first half of the academic year.

On the basic practical level, I was able to compare what went on within the two events thanks to personally attending each of them. Moreover, a meaningful analysis of these events was possible only thanks to the public availability of their full programmes.

5.4. Analysis

The comparative analysis was based on two types of sources. First - the observations that I made during the process of becoming a delegate and during the experience of attending. Second - the official documents of the two events: the programme brochure of the SLF (Education Scotland 2015) and the call for papers, programme and proceedings of the NAE (National Academy of Education 2015a, b, c).

My analysis of the two conferences occurred in three takes, going from the more straightforward to the more interpretive. I began by looking at how the conferences were organised and what that may have meant for the professional exchange that ensued. Then I looked at the topics that the conference participants brought up in each event. Finally, I considered the expressive styles reflected in the titles that the conference participants chose for their presentations.

Below I present the results of this analysis in two parts. In the first part I describe and compare how the SLF and the NAE were organised and who made presentations. In the second part I compare what topics were brought up and what expressive styles were employed in the titles of presentation. I then close the section with a brief discussion of the observed similarities and contrasts.

5.4.1. Organisation and the content of the compared conferences
5.4.1.1. Becoming a delegate
At the first glance, my experiences as the delegate of each of the two events looked similar: my participation in each conference was free of charge and I was able to select and attend some interesting sessions. Each of the conferences did also surprise me in one way or the other.

To attend the SLF one had to register online, browse the event's programme on the SLF website and book their places: on each of the two days of the conference the delegate could book only one keynote and three other sessions (Education Scotland 2015). Given the popularity of some sessions, the prospective delegates were encouraged to book in advance, which resulted in 38 out of the total 115 scheduled sessions (including the keynotes) being fully booked as early as on the 19 August[116], when I registered for the conference. The advice to pre-book looks unsurprising, considering that roughly 3,200 attendees visit the SLF

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[116] This was more than one month in advance of the actual event - the SLF was held on 23-24 September.

annually[117] and that the maximum one-time capacity of all SLF session premises[118] in the SEC equals some 1,756 delegates (Scottish Event Campus 2017).

Once at the SLF, in lieu of registering for the day, the delegates queued to show and digitally activate the personal badges that were sent to them beforehand via the post. With that badge the delegate was free to attend all the sessions that they had booked. For me the badge activation felt as an unusual and a slightly bizarre procedure, but I was even more surprised to notice how smoothly the SLF attendees figured out where and for what they needed to queue. For the convenience of those attendees, who missed the chance to book onto the keynotes held in the principal Lomond auditorium, those keynotes were broadcast in real time on the large TV screens in the adjacent hallway.

To attend the NAE the potential delegates were similarly invited to register online (National Academy of Education 2015a). Upon the registration, the prospective attendee received the login, password and the link for submitting a 5-page conference paper. Publishing this paper required a modest fee: 3,000 tenge[119] for publishing and presenting; or 1,500 tenge for publishing only (National Academy of Education 2015a, p.10). The option of attending for free without publishing a paper was not mentioned in the conference documents, although it was confirmed over the phone, when I called to clarify. This detail could be behind the fact that the NAE boasted receiving 482 prospective conference papers (National Academy of Education 2015e), 394 of which were later brought out as a 930-pages-long two-volume electronic proceedings (National Academy of Education 2015c).

Once at the NAE conference, the attendees were welcome to choose any of the three morning roundtables. Overall, some 170 delegates took part in the conference (National Academy of Education 2015e). I decided to stay in the Roundtable 1, which had the most generic-sounding title "Innovation processes in education system". It was held in the conference's main and largest venue on the ground floor and had attracted the most delegates. My motive was to observe what aspects of the ongoing educational changes the organisers and the speakers would identify as innovative. A surprising advice came at the doors of the room - a conference organiser tried to re-direct me to Roundtable 3 "Pedagogical dimension" held in one of the smaller rooms few floors above. I had a much better chance of hearing about the "real innovations" there he assured me. A quick look at the conference programme suggested that he saw the more focused regulatory problems listed in Roundtable 3 as having more to do with the "real innovations" than the rather variegated issues planned for the Roundtable 1[120].

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[117] This approximate number is based on the 55,000 delegates, who, according to the SLF 2017 brochure (Education Scotland 2017, p.2), attended the SLF over the years (i.e. prior to 2017), which I divided by the 17 iterations of the SLF between 2016 and 2000, when this event was held first (Dingwall 2016, ¶1).
[118] By "all SLF session premises" I mean the 13 rooms that seated all the keynotes and other sessions during the SLF 2015: Lomond auditorium, Alsh 1, Alsh 2, Boisdale 1, Boisdale 2, Carron 1, Carron 2, Dochart 1, Dochart 2, Katrine, Leven, Morar, Ness (Education Scotland 2015).
[119] On 20 November 2015, the exchange rate of 1 British pound belonged to the corridor between 463-476 Kazakh tenge (Qazcom 2017).
[120] The "problem field" of the Roundtable 1 included:"The continuity of innovation between the levels of education starting from pre-school to postgraduate education levels (in the context of continuing

The observations described above led me to a few tentative hunches about the similarities between the conferences and their specificities. In terms of the common features, both events appeared as the conscious efforts by the state to engage the stakeholders in an industry-wide dialogue. With the small or absent fee, they invited many professionals to join the conversation: the SLF gathered thousands in the face-to-face exchange, and the NAE published 394 papers written by 549 authors (National Academy of Education 2015c). These conscious efforts could be seen as the attempts to democratise the process of policy gestation and increase the stakeholders' sense of ownership toward the future developments in the education sector. At the same time, the organisers of both events possessed certain means for pre-shaping the expected industry-wide dialogue. For example, the SLF's booking system allowed the delegates to attend a number of sessions and prompted them to explore the vast exhibition of educational suppliers in the breaks between the booked time-slots. Also, registering to attend the SLF did not imply a chance to make a presentation; although, the delegates could of course ask questions and take part in the discussions. Similarly, out of 482 papers by prospective delegates the NAE considered only 394 publishable, and out of those only 100 were selected for the actual programme of the event (National Academy of Education 2015b). Also, the token fees for publication and for appearing on the programme as one of the speakers may have deterred some potential applicants, who would have needed to travel to a larger settlement in order to pay by e bank transfer. Of course, the possession of these means for pre-shaping the dialogue did not necessarily entail any deliberate course of action. By highlighting them, I am only pointing out the inescapable non-neutrality of the seemingly simple and inconsequential administrative decisions.

In terms of the contrasting features, the two events differed in how they spent money. The organisers of the SLF seemed to willingly invest sizeable resources into the conference. Not only was the SLF free to take part in, it occupied a high-end venue, ran an exhibition, sent out the information packages and badges ahead of the event, and also hired a crew, who oversaw the smooth and safe sailing of the mammoth event. The organisers of the NAE demonstrated considerable frugality. Not only did they collect the fees for bringing out the electronic proceedings, they also conducted the conference within the regular premises of the National Academy of Education.

Apart from the comparable ones, the two events enjoyed some idiosyncratic features. In the case of the SLF I noticed the highly organised mode of the online and in-person registrations,

education, multilingual education, inclusive education). Problems of professional training of teachers in terms of reforming the education system. The essence of the innovation activity of teachers and managers in education" (National Academy of Education 2015b, p.20).

The "problem field" of the Roundtable 3 consisted of: "Pedagogical monitoring as a method and means of management of educational process. Standards and procedures for quality assurance. Evaluation of innovative processes, evaluation of the results of innovation. The measurement systems of learning outcomes in secondary, vocational and higher / postgraduate education: the best foreign and Kazakhstani experience. Evaluation of educational achievements of students in the conditions of updating the content of education: methodology, toolkit, and procedures" (National Academy of Education 2015b, p.25).

and the deft fluency of the professional community in following the intricate logics of them both. As a way of speculation, the state-of-the-art registrations may have to do with the strong ed-tech roots of the SLF's organiser Education Scotland - the Scottish Council for Educational Technology (Boyd 2013, p.209). And the event-intelligence of the professional community may have to do with the strong emphasis on the issue of professionalism in the Scottish education. As the idiosyncratic feature of the NAE I would tentatively note the pragmatic outlook: the emphasis on the applied, practical issues of the "real innovations", and the preference for establishing a collective clarity about the implementation of the 'innovative' procedures rather than about the essence of the multifaceted processes of 'innovating'. A similar discussion of the rivalry between the 'what and how to do' and the 'what for and why to do' was also noticeable in some of my interview materials from Kazakhstan.

5.4.1.2. Set up and organisation

The programmes of the two events showed the comparable numbers of conference presentations: 115 in the SLF and 100 in the NAE (Education Scotland 2015, National Academy of Education 2015b). These presentations were to be delivered in several rooms and were allotted certain time-slots. Apart from these basic similarities, the set up and the organisation of the SLF and the NAE were quite different.

In the SLF, each presentation was allotted a separate session with the individual room and the time period of 1-1.5 hours devoted only to that presentation and its discussion. In this way, the 115 sessions were scattered over the span of two days with up to 13 different sessions in progress at the same time. Judging by the SLF programme, all 115 sessions of the conference used the English language (Education Scotland 2015). However, I cannot attest to whether the actual sessions devoted to the discussion of the teaching of Scots, Gaelic and other modern languages were indeed conducted in English only. In-between the booked session, the SLF delegates roamed the large exhibition that featured various educational suppliers, ed-tech companies, charities, local educational authorities, school clusters, educational organisations (like the British Council), government initiatives (like the Developing the Young Workforce) or trade unions (Springboard Events Ltd 2017).

The programme of the NAE conference listed 100 presentations than were to be delivered within one day (National Academy of Education 2015b). With the three simultaneous 180-minutes morning roundtables and the one 195-minutes afternoon plenary session, the only way to fit 100 presentations was by distributing them evenly across all the four sessions with 7 minutes and 21 seconds per paper. In reality, the Roundtables 1, 2 and 3 listed 57, 14 and 22 papers respectively, and the plenary session listed 7 speakers only. Unsurprisingly, the resulting time deficit slashed many of the planned presentations. For example, in the Roundtable 1 I managed to count only 8 actual presentations instead of the 57 planned. Perhaps, in response to this collision, the next year's conference of the NAE ran for two days (National Academy of Education 2016a).

The conference papers presented at the NAE used one of the three official working languages of the event - English, Kazakh, or Russian. Out of the 394 papers published in the proceedings, 5 were in English, 195 in Kazakh, and 194 in Russian (National Academy of Education 2015c). From the 100 presentations stated in the event's programme, the proceedings published 53 in Russian, 39 in Kazakh, 1 in English and did not publish 7.

The opening of the NAE's afternoon plenary session featured an organisational highlight of sorts. In a departure from the programme, the delegates were treated to a musical performance by a group of five a cappella vocalists. Their opening act was met with amusement, while the following few prompted some worried looks. The organisers' actions conveyed a realisation that their organisational improvisation had backfired. The Academy's President Dr. Zhilbayev, whose colleagues were gently ushering the singers away from the room, jokingly cited a Kazakh proverb: "Having invited them with one tenge, we struggled to see them off by paying a thousand".

Overall, the organisational features of the two conferences strengthened my impression that the organisers of the SLF were painstakingly following a tried and tested template for the running of their annual event. Their NAE peers, in contrast, were still experimenting and trying to discover their own mould. My personal experience of attending the SLF felt smoother than the NAE, even though the SLF was a much larger and, potentially, unwieldy conference.

5.4.1.3. The presenters

In order to better understand the words clouds, produced at the two conferences, I began by identifying the members of the choruses that the words of those clouds did emanate from. The programme brochures allowed me to clarify the names of the 115 presenters of the SLF (Education Scotland 2015) and the 100 planned presenters of the NAE (National Academy of Education 2015b). The SLF brochure did also readily inform me about the organisations that the sessions' presenters were from. And, in the case of the NAE, it was possible to find out the organisation that the presenter was from by checking the author's details in the corresponding item in the conference proceedings (National Academy of Education 2015b). As a result, I was able to appreciate the views of what types of organisations the two conferences were providing the podium for. In those cases, when there was more than one presenter, I went with the name that the programme mentioned first. I also paid attention to whether the presentations were delivered by an individual or collective authors. Below, I briefly describe the data from each conference and, after that, discuss the similarities and discrepancies between the two events.

5.4.1.3.1. The presenters at the SLF

Almost all presentations in the SLF (110 out of total 115) were made by the delegates, who worked in Scotland - including organisations like Institut Français d'Écosse, which is affiliated with the Embassy of the French Republic in Scotland (Education Scotland 2015, p.11). Other

than these, one of the keynotes was by Professor Mel Ainscow from the University of Manchester and four sessions were by the UK-wide organisations, such as: the Code Club, Save the Children, the Outward Bound Trust, and the Duke of Edinburgh Inclusion Project. None of the presenters worked in countries outside the UK.

The SLF presentations were delivered by the representatives of a wide circle of organisations: state bodies, educational institutions, charities, various independent organisations, business organisations, embassies (please, view Figure 5.1). The delegates from the state bodies made more than half of all presentations (69 out of 115) with the most delivered by the speakers from Education Scotland (41), the Scottish Government (4), Digital Learning and Teaching (4), and Fife Council (3). Unsurprisingly, educational institutions also delivered a notable share of presentations (24 out of 115) with schools and Universities being the more frequent workplaces of the presenters. Civil society collectively contributed 20 presentations. The predominance of state bodies among the presenters and the relatively modest role of the educational institutions complicated somewhat the image of the SLF as the platform for industry-wide conversation.

Figure 5.1. SLF conference. Presentations by types of organisations
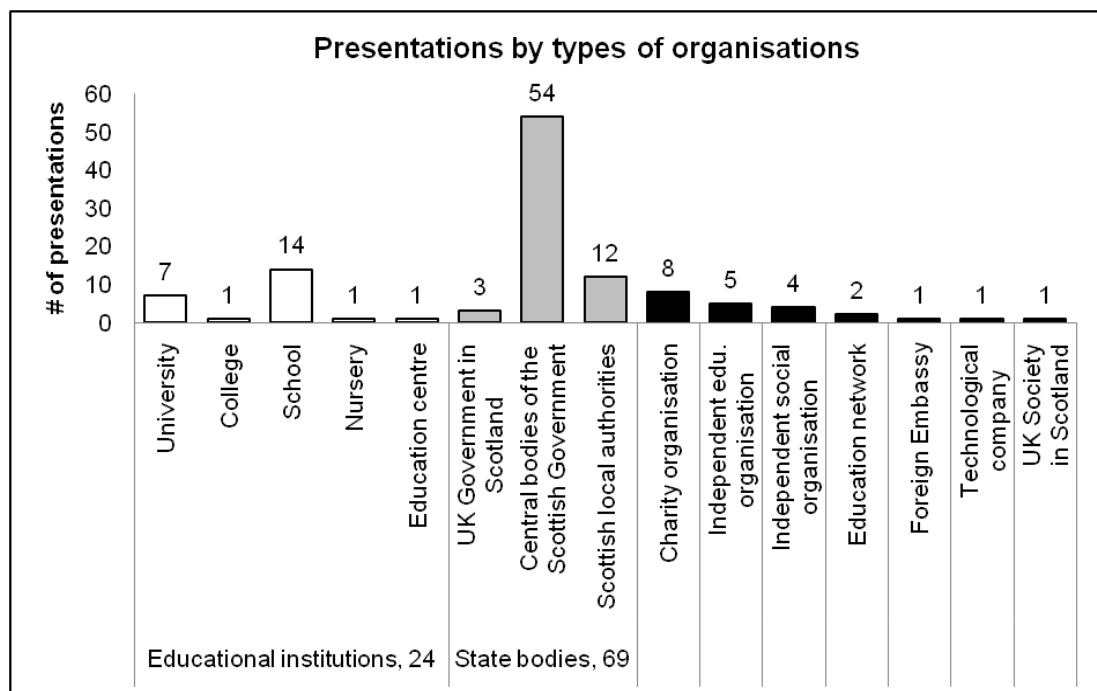
Figure 5.2. SLF conference. Presentations by types of organisations, collective authorship
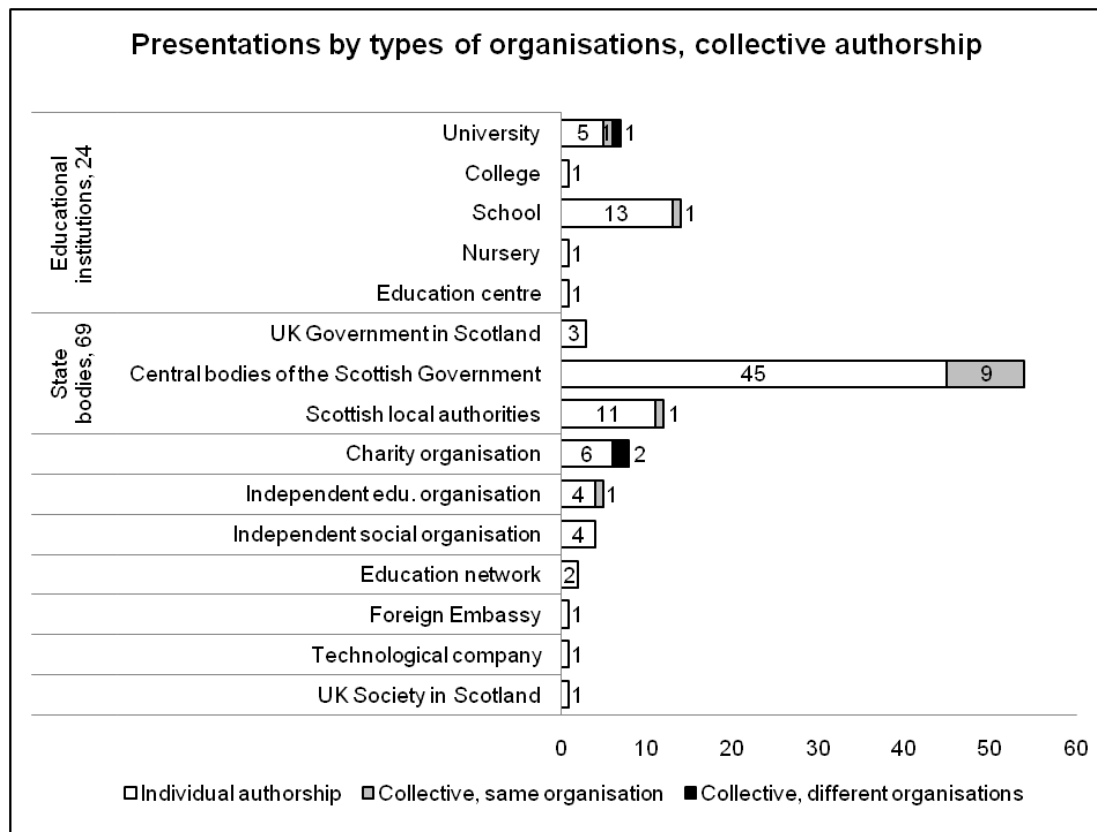
In terms of teamwork, 16 presentations out of 115 were co-authored (please, view Figure 5.2). Nine of these presentations were the results of internal collaboration within the individual state bodies: Education Scotland (4), Digital Learning and Teaching (4), Developing the Young Workforce (1). The three instances, where the presentations were the results of collaboration between different organisations included: (1) University of Glasgow and Scottish College for Educational Leadership; (2) Sustrans Scotland and Harestanes Primary School; and (3) The National Deaf Children's Society and Education Scotland.

5.4.1.3.2. The presenters at the NAE

The overwhelming majority of the 100 papers in the NAE programme were authored by persons, who worked in Kazakhstan (93). There were also three papers from Russia, one from Ukraine, one from Uzbekistan, one co-authored between Kazakhstan and the USA, and one by a Karagandy-based visiting scholar from Germany.

The 100 presentations came from a narrow spectrum of education specialists: the speakers worked in the educational institutions (schools, Universities or colleges), in the state bodies

that oversee the education sector (the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Academy of Education, the National Testing Centre, or the state professional development agency "Orleu"), or in one independent organisation (Centre of Independent Evaluation of the Quality of Education) (please, view Figure 5.3). Among the individual organisations, the conference organiser NAE made the single largest contribution of 30 presentations, followed by the other state bodies - "Orleu" (5 papers) and the National Testing Centre (4 papers). In terms of the broader categories, however, the share of the presentations from educational institutions was the largest (58 papers) with the presenters working in the schools contributing 36 and those working in Universities contributing 18 papers.

At the first glance, the above numbers suggested that the viewpoints presented by the state bodies were well counterbalanced by the viewpoints from the actual classroom educators: state bodies - 40 papers, and educational institutions - 58 papers. Moreover, among the 36 papers presented from the schools only 16 were from privileged schools (6 gymnasiums, 4 Nazarbayev Intellectual schools, 2 special schools, and 4 resource centre schools). This fact added to the impression that the NAE conference did actually widen access to and democratise the industry-wide dialogue.

Figure 5.3. NAE conference. Presentations by types of organisations, overall
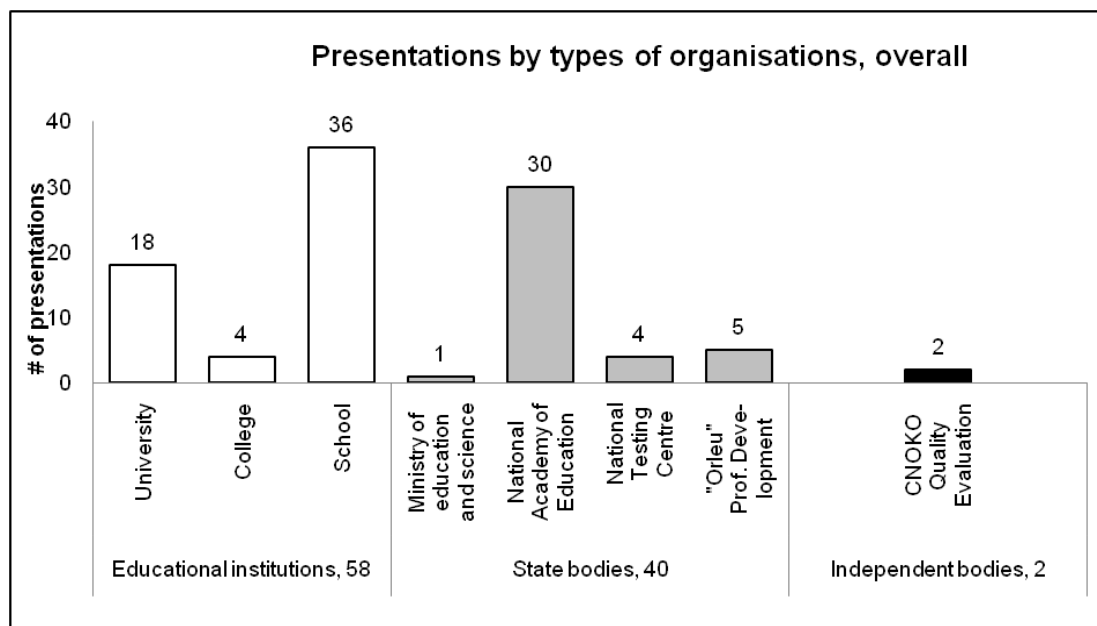
Taking into account the uneven scheduling, which I discussed in the previous section, I also took a look at how the 100 presentations were distributed among the four sessions of the conference - the 180-minutes Roundtables 1, 2 and 3, and the 195-minutes Plenary session (please, view Figure 5.4). The programme of the Plenary session - the most generous one in terms of time - made space for one presentation from each of the four state bodies, two

presentations by the invited speakers from two Russian Universities and one presentation by a visiting lecturer from Germany, who currently worked at Karagandy State University (Kazakhstan). In contrast, the programme of the most overcrowded Roundtable 1 (with total 57 papers planned) was dominated by the speakers from the educational institutions: 26 papers from schools, 8 papers from Universities and 4 papers from colleges. My previous impression of the balanced representation was further challenged, when I realised that the Roundtable 3 - the only case with the majority of papers from the state bodies - was actually the one that the organisers pointed me to as the session that had most to do with the "real innovations".

Figure 5.4. NAE conference. Presentations by types of organisations, by sessions

Presentations by types of organisations, by sessions

	Roundtable 1 Innovation processes 180 min, 57 papers	Roundtable 2 Inclusive education 180 min, 14 papers	Roundtable 3 Pedagogical dimension 180 min, 22 papers	Plenary 195 min, 7 papers
□ Educational institutions	38	8	9	3
▨ State bodies	19	6	11	4
■ Independent bodies			2	
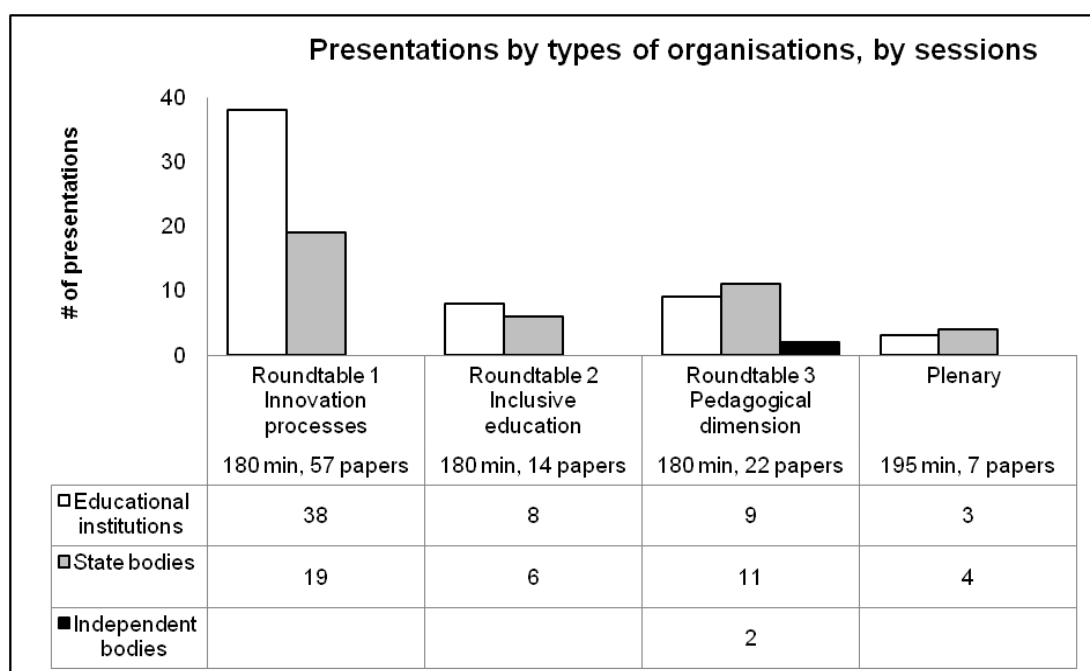
In terms of teamwork, some 30 papers out of 100 were co-authored, and 13 of these papers came from the National Academy of Education itself (please, view Figure 5.5). By broader categories, the share of co-authored papers was much higher in the state bodies (18 out of 40) than in the educational institutions (12 out of 58). When writing collectively, the authors from Universities and schools were more likely to co-author with people from another organisation, while the majority of co-authored pieces from the state bodies were collectively written within the same organisation. These data look counter-intuitive for two reasons. First, given the neoliberal pressure to demonstrate academic output, one might presume that the delegates from the Universities would be more likely to co-author than the people working in the state bodies. Second, the relatively small number of co-authorship in the papers from schools is also in conflict with the observation that I made during the interviews - that teachers

were highly invested in various ad hoc rush tasks that were almost always undertaken collectively. At the same time, the high share of co-authoring within the same state bodies can be seen as indicative of the state bodies' tendency toward the collectively tackled ad hoc rush tasks. On the other hand, it is also possible that the presentations of the state bodies reported on large projects carried out by teams of colleagues and, therefore, warranted recognition of several persons in the form of co-authorship.

Figure 5.5. NAE conference. Presentations by types of organisations, collective authorship
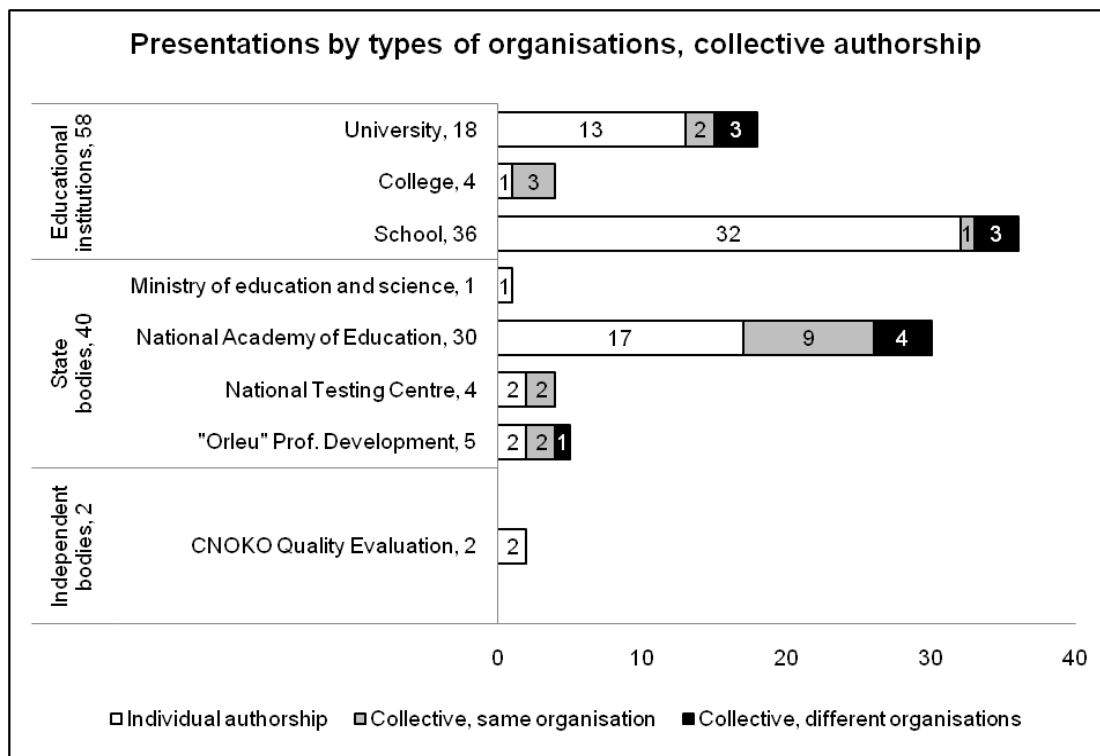
5.4.1.3.3. Summing up

The majority of presentations in both conferences - the SLF and the NAE - were by delegates, who represented local organisations. The word "international" in the title of the NAE conference was justified by a handful of presentations (7 out of 93) authored by or co-authored with the scholars from other countries - Germany, Russia, the USA, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. As a strong similarity between the two countries, the powerful organisers contributed the lion's share to the event's programme and the resulting word clouds. Education Scotland authored 41 out of the 115 SLF presentations. And the National Academy of Education authored 30 out of the 100 NAE presentations. This, of course, is hardly surprising. After all, both of these organisations carry much responsibility for the developments in the education sector and may have initiated the conferences with the primary motivation of sharing an important message.

The spectrum of the speakers in the two events differed, suggesting that the definition of what type of organisations make up the education sector may vary considerably between the two countries. The fact that the SLF hosted a broad circle of organisations is an illustration that these organisations are seen as both - the necessary partners for and the integral members of the sector, who do have a say. Similarly, the circle of the organisations presenting at the NAE may also be indicative of the exclusively defined notion of education sector as the group of organisations that either teach or oversee the teaching organisations.

On the positive side, the diversity of speakers at the SLF and the strong shares of the presenters from schools and Universities at the NAE can be viewed as the proof of the commitment by the central educational authorities to an open industry-wide conversation that would engage the important stakeholders in discussing the policy. At the same time, the relatively modest share of the SLF presentations by educational institutions and the NAE's crowding of the 65% of the presentations by educational institutions into the already overbooked Roundtable 1 may imply a partially tokenistic approach in the stakeholder engagement (Arnstein 1969) by the two event organisers.

In terms of collaborative spirit, 30 out of the 100 scheduled NAE presentations were co-authored. The corresponding share in the SLF was 16 out of 115. In both countries, the state bodies had produced more than half of all co-authored presentations and those were mostly the results of internal teamwork within the individual state bodies. The co-authored presentations by the other types of organisations tended to be the result of collaboration between different organisations - sometimes, the result of the cooperation of the author-organisation with a state body.

5.4.2. Conference presentations

To gauge the content of the conversations facilitated by the two conferences, I compared the programme brochures in terms of the presentations listed. The comparison consisted of two consecutive stages. The first stage was a thematic analysis, where I sorted the conference presentations judging by the themes surmised from the wording of their titles. My initial sorting of the NAE titles was rather straightforward - the themes of the papers (whether in Russian or Kazakh) tended to stand out quite transparently in their titles. The work with the SLF presentations, however, proved harder for me - in a considerable number of cases, I had hard time gleaning a theme from the presentation's title. To sort, I had to delve into the short descriptions available in the SLF brochure. My first reaction to this stumbling was by blaming my non-native speaking proficiency of English. At the same time, I felt that the SLF titles were inherently more figurative and playful-sounding, unlike the titles at the NAE that tended to "cut the chase". That was when the next stage of the analysis emerged.

The second part of the analysis had to do with considering the different styles of the presentation titling. For that I relied on the recent, but quickly growing streak of literature that

has turned to the examination of the various mannerisms in the titling of scholarly work[121]. This streak in the literature stems from two origins: the literature advising on academic writing (Crosby 1976, Hartley 2008), and statistical studies on the "superficial" factors that influence the frequency of articles' download and citation (Hartley 2007, Jamali and Nikzad 2011, Milojević 2017). From the rich exploration toolbox of these studies, I used only a few features: sorting by the stylistic categories suggested by Hartley (2007, 2008) and the use of abbreviations. Some other tools, although feasible, appeared impractical in my situation. For example, the analysis of the title's length in words carried little meaning as the events' titles were written in three different languages - English, Kazakh, and Russian - that do grammatically require different number of words to express the same idea.

The results of the two stages of the analysis are presented below.

5.4.2.1. Thematic analysis

Each of the two conferences had its own set of three themes that it planned to address. The SLF ran under the headline of "Raising Achievement and Attainment for All" with three central sub-topics: Local partnerships and collaboration, Self-evaluation, and Work-related learning (Education Scotland 2015, p.2).

The NAE conference, devoted to the theme of innovations in education, highlighted three main themes: Innovation processes in education system, Inclusive education problems and prospects, and Pedagogical dimension[122] in terms of structural reforms of education (National Academy of Education 2015b). The actual ranges of the covered themes were much more variegated and I wondered whether the pre-set 3-theme agendas could faithfully represent the scopes of what was brought up.

5.4.2.1.1. Thematic analysis - the SLF

Reading through the SLF brochure, 15 distinct themes stood out (please, view Figure 5.6). The theme of Raising attainment dominated the programme (25 out of 115 presentations), which was in unison with the stated key theme of the conference. The other prevalent themes were Partnerships (16), Developing the Young Workforce (12), Progression (10), and Teachers (8). The first two of these corresponded to the stated sub-topics of Local partnerships and collaboration and Work-related learning. The stated sub-topic of Self-evaluation manifested in a separate theme of School improvement (4 presentations) and was also often alluded to in the many presentations categorised under the largest theme of Raising attainment.

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[121] I learned about this literature by exploring some fascinating blogposts: for example, Hefler (2009) provided a good explanation about the distinction between a 'title' and a 'headline', while Vasilev (2012) pointed directly toward the relevant journals and authors.
[122] The phrase 'pedagogical dimension' in the English version of the conference programme stood for the 'педагогические измерения' from the Russian version, which may be closer in the meaning to 'educational measurements'.

The least populated theme - Education system overall (1 presentation) - was formed by the opening address by Angela Constance MSP, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Figure 5.6. SLF conference. Presentation themes
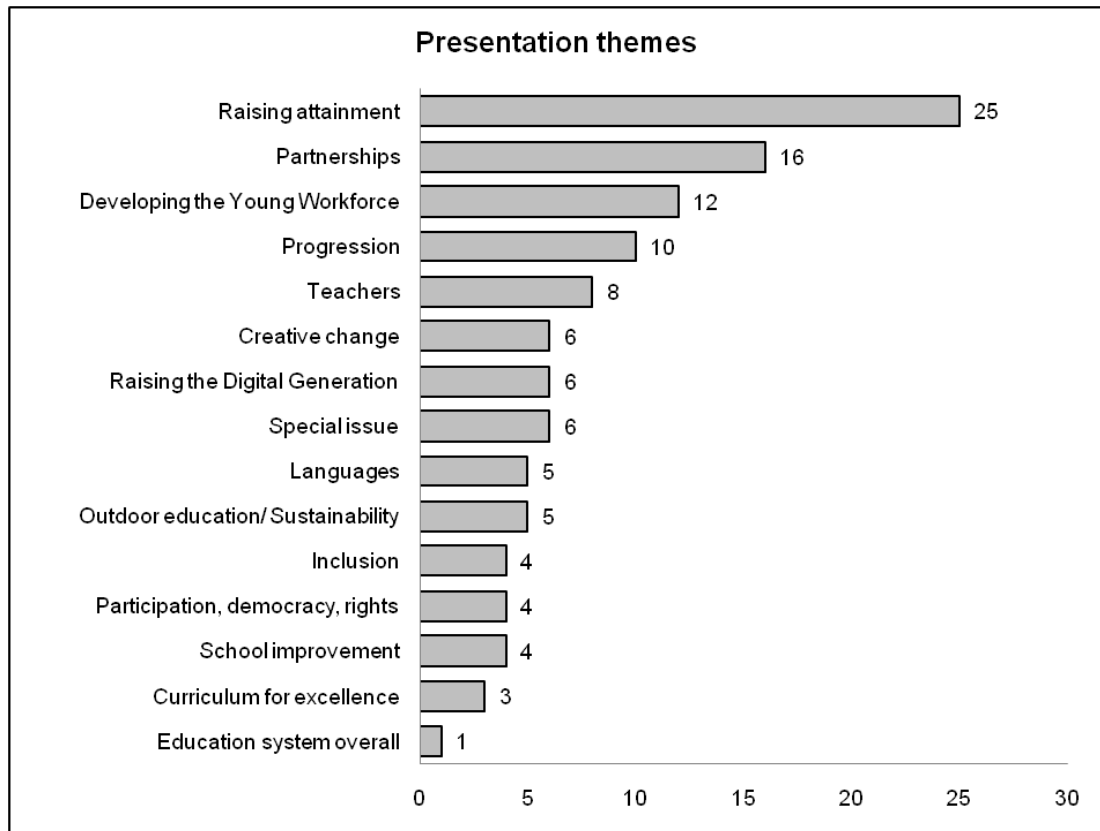
While the frequency with which certain themes appeared on the programme was interesting information in itself, the SLF materials afforded one more valuable data point. On 19 August 2015, when I registered online and was booking the SLF sessions to attend, I was able to check the availability status of all 115 planned sessions. It turned out that 38 sessions had already been fully booked by then. A look at what sessions were completely sold out over a month prior to the event provided a picture of what themes mattered the most to the prospective SLF delegates. As seen in Figure 5.7, the theme of Raising attainment was not only the most talked-about, but also the most listened-to one. Yet, some of the prevalent themes like Developing the Young Workforce were not as much sought after. And some infrequent themes like Creative change or Raising the digital generation, which, judging by their low recurrence in the programme, could have seemed less relevant for the sector, were in fact among the highly desired jewels of the conference.

A look at the authorship of the presentations was also telling (please, view Table 5.1. in Appendix 2). The state bodies strongly dominated the theme categories related to holding the schools accountable for the learners' performance: Raising attainment (16 out of 25), Developing the Young Workforce (9 out of 12), Creative change (6 out of 6), School improvement (4 out of 4). The more socially minded themes - Partnerships, Outdoor education and sustainability, Inclusion - were addressed by the wider circles of organisations, including the state bodies.

Figure 5.7. SLF conference. Presentation themes, booking status as of 19 August
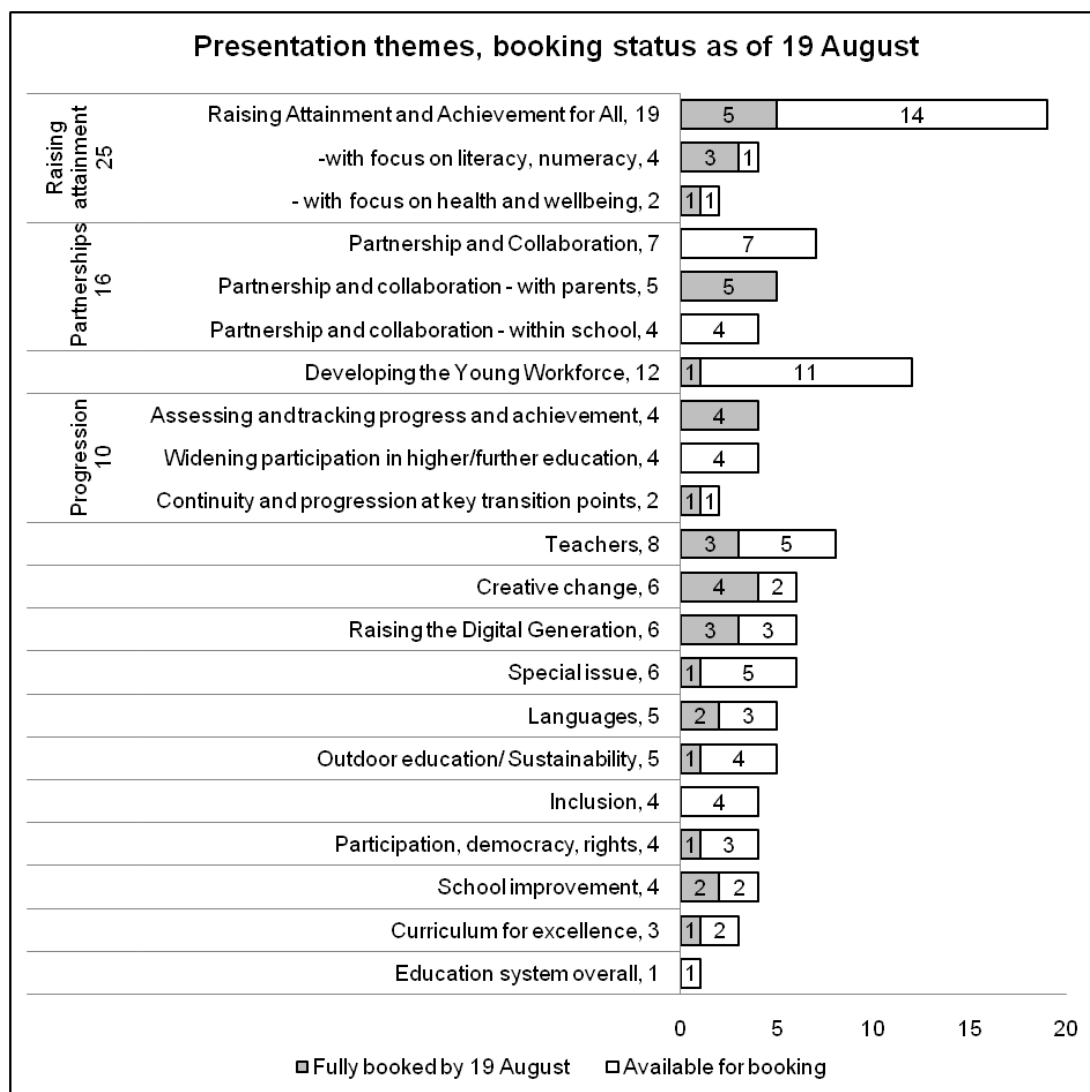
By combining the data on the early booking with the themes and the authorship of presentations (please, view Table 5.2. in Appendix 2) I obtained a further in-depth vantage point. From that vantage point it was possible to see/analysewhose expertise on what types of issues was the most sought after. For example, although Developing the Young Workforce

is a state programme, the only fully booked presentation in this category (1 out of 12) was neither by the state bodies nor by the educational institutions - it was the only presentation by an independent educational network. At the same time, the state bodies' sessions devoted to the practicalities of securing high academic performance - Raising attainment with the focus on literacy and numeracy (3) and Assessing and tracking progress and achievement (3) - were all fully booked. Similarly, the single session by a foreign embassy devoted to language learning and the single session by an ed-tech company devoted to Raising the digital generation were both sold out. Also, there were some hot topics that were a must-go irrespective of who covered them. For example, all of the 5 sessions that discussed building partnerships with the learners' parents were fully booked, whether they were conducted by the state body (1), the charity organisations (2), or the independent educational organisations (2).

5.4.2.1.2. Thematic analysis - the NAE

Among the listed NAE presentations, some 17 themes stood out for me (please, view Figure 5.8). The New pedagogy dominated the set (20 out of 100 presentations), followed by Educational measurements (12), Education system reform (11), and Inclusive education (11). Overall, these can be said to generally correspond with the 3 stated themes of the conference - Innovation processes in education system, Inclusive education, and Pedagogical dimension[123].

Matching the 17 identified themes with the author-organisations, it is visible that the only independent body contributed both of its presentations within the same theme - Educational measurements. The state bodies addressed 14 of the 17 themes and educational institutions - 15 of the 17 themes. Three themes - Environmental education (2 presentations), Lifelong learning (1) and Trilingualism (1) - were only addressed by the educational institutions. Similarly, it was only the state bodies, who provided the greeting address (1) and talked about Home education (1). Among the themes addressed by both the state bodies and the educational institutions, Underfilled ungraded schools and Functional literacy were mostly the concern of the state bodies, while Learners and Critical thinking were mostly the concern of the educational institutions. The mismatch of the interests suggests their differing priorities: the state bodies find it important to talk about various forms of schooling and literacy, while the educational institutions prioritise the learners, their skills, environmental education and lifelong learning.

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[123] As mentioned earlier, the original Russian version of this phrase is closer in the meaning to 'educational measurements'.

Figure 5.8. NAE conference. Presentation themes by types of organisations

Presentation themes by types of organisations
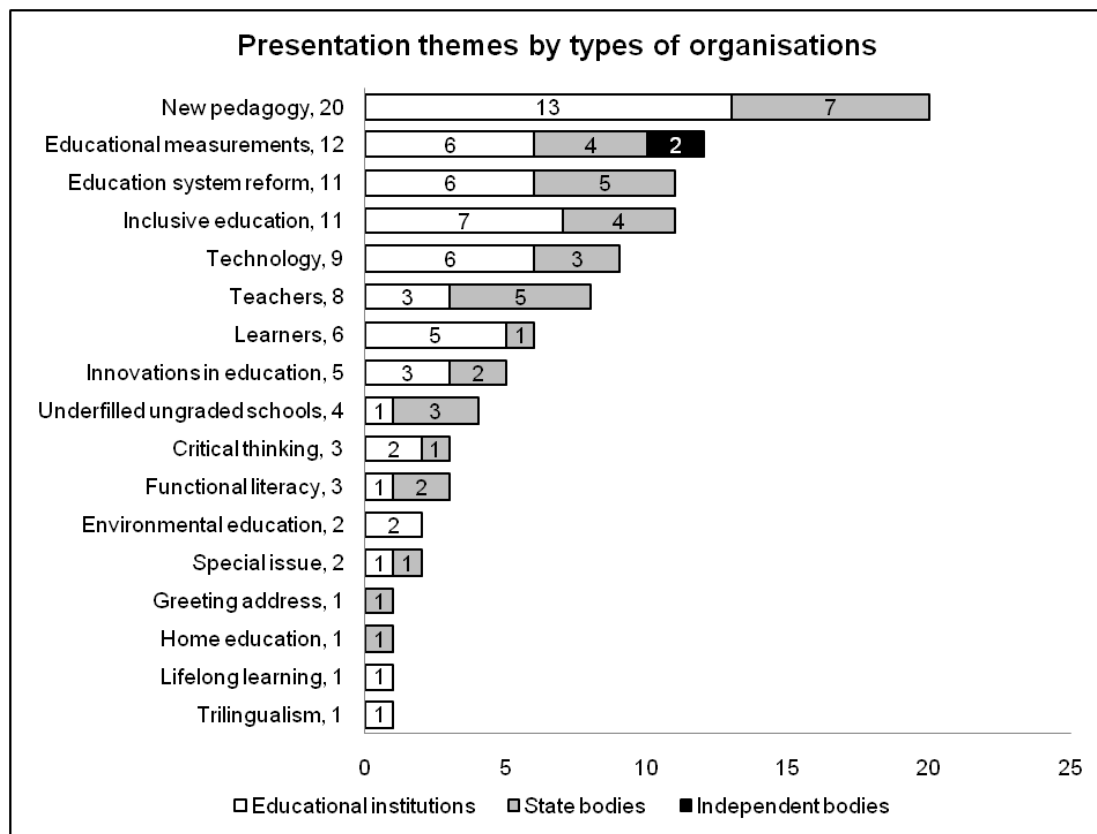
A closer look at the themes that were relatively evenly addressed by the state bodies and the educational institutions revealed further discrepancies (please, view Table 5.3. in Appendix 2). Even within these themes the educational institutions and the state bodies often paid attention to the different aspects. For example, despite the commonly high attention to New pedagogy, the educational institutions tended to focus on classroom methods and the ways of organising learning, whereas these aspects were much less addressed by the state bodies. Similarly, despite contributing a comparable number of articles to the theme of Educational system reform, the state bodies and the educational institutions focused on different aspects: the state bodies spoke exclusively about the Updated content of education, while the educational institutions concentrated on the issues of Management and organisation in the education system. The appreciation of these discrepancies highlighted the processes of intra-national translation of education policy that scholars note about Kazakhstan (Bridges, Kurakbayev, Kambatyrova 2014). The results of my analysis of the themes of conference presentations tend to confirm their observations.

5.4.2.1.3. Thematic analysis - comparing the Who, Where and When

The above analysis has produced useful rundowns of the declared topics of the SLF and NAE conference presentations. By looking at these rundowns one can appreciate what themes within the policy agenda the delegates considered to be the most fitting and opportune umbrellas, under which to bring up the issues that they believed it was important to discuss. The fact that these rundowns included the wider varieties of themes than the 3-theme sets expected by the event organisers, as well as the demonstrated mismatch of the issues brought up by the educational institutions and the state bodies within the seemingly same themes - both - point to the co-created, negotiated nature of stakeholder solidarity around the apparently popular policy headlines.

In addition to these rundowns I decided to explore some key features of the two professional worlds that emerged from the word clouds generated by the titles of the SLF and the NAE presentations. First, I examined the titles for the indications of who - what characters, what persons - inhabited the professional landscapes that the speakers described and addressed. I wondered how many kinds of people were noted as relevant to the issues in the education sector and which of them were mentioned the most. Second, I took note of the various markers of the pedagogical location, where the title's story unfolded. The question was - which aspects of the teaching and learning space that the speakers discussed they saw as necessary to notify their audiences about. These aspects included the type of education, the level of education, the age of the learners, and the academic subject/discipline. Third, I paid attention to the time-related items in the titles. It was the different ways in which the temporal locations figured in my Kazakhstani and Scottish interviews with educators (please, view Chapter IV) that warranted this query. I noted the cases, when the titles mentioned some specific temporal locations, as well as the cases, when they attributed a time-related quality to the subject of the presentation. Together, these three stages of sifting allowed me to peek beyond the veil of the declared presentation themes and gain some appreciation for the key features of the educators' realities in the two national contexts. The results of this 3-tier sifting are presented in the Table 5.4. (please, view Appendix 2).

5.4.2.1.3.1. Comparing the Who

The story characters featured in some 45% of the presentation titles: 45 out of 100 in the NAE and 52 out of 115 in the SLF. The sets of characters mentioned in the two events differed in their diversity and the amount of the spotlight cast on them. The presentations of the NAE conference brought up 13 types of characters, 5 of which were directly related to the school environment: schoolchildren, teachers, future teachers, hard of hearing primary pupil, and school leavers. The rest of the characters were the young people in need of educational provision (children with special needs, students, pre-schoolers), the people supporting the process of learning and teaching (management, parents), some historic personalities, and aspirational images (the 'creative person' and the 'patriot citizen'). The heaviest focus was on

the schoolchildren (15 mentions) and the teaching cadre (13 mentions). Both the state bodies (7) and the educational institutions (6) mentioned the teachers. However, the attention paid to the schoolchildren was quite skewed: the educational institutions mentioned them in 9 titles, while the state bodies mentioned them in 5 titles.

The presentations of the SLF conference brought up 20 types of characters. Half of them were either directly related to the learning and teaching processes (learners, 'learning superheroes', early years' workforce, Modern language assistants, teacher, and young applicants), or were the supporters of those processes (parents/family, Attainment advisers, leadership, and staff). Interestingly, unlike in the NAE, the SLF's characters in and around the teaching and learning were not necessarily school-bound. The rest of the SLF characters included the following: the representatives of the general population (all; me, we, you; people), the youth (children and young people; digital generation), the employment-related people (young workforce, employers), and various others (specific personalities, Service cadets, and the participants of a particular project). The spotlight of attention was much more evenly distributed over the SLF characters than over the NAE characters with the heaviest SLF emphasis on the learners, who were mentioned in 7 titles.

By comparing the assortments of characters in the NAE and the SLF presentation titles, it is easy to notice that their levels of diversity do resonate well with the diversity in the circles of organisations presenting at the two events. This is not to say that the civil society presenters at the SLF were the only speakers to bring up the characters from outside of teaching and learning. For example, the majority (8 out of 11) of the mentions of the representatives of the general population (all; me, we, you) were from the presentations by the state bodies. Rather, I interpret this resonance as an indication of the inherently broader view on who and what are relevant to the education sector in Scotland than in Kazakhstan.

The striking difference of the frequency with which the teachers are mentioned in the presentation titles of the two conferences (13 in the NAE; 1 in the SLF) also calls for a brave speculation. I surmise that the high stakeholder enthusiasm for the pedagogy-centred reform of Kazakhstani school could be based on the nationally prevalent belief that education is the responsibility of educators, who simply need some rules and resources, and not on the motivation to empower teachers, whose professional judgement is constantly examined and second-guessed by the pro-active state and civil society, which may be more relevant in Scotland.

5.4.2.1.3.2. Comparing the Where

The titles of 72 NAE presentations included some indications of the pedagogical location, and the corresponding number in the SLF was 56. These indications covered, sometimes overlapping, several aspects of the situational whereabouts: the kind of education, its level, the relevant cohort of learners, and the academic subject/discipline. I will touch upon each aspect in turn.

The indications of 8 different kinds of education featured in the titles of 24 NAE presentations. Out of them Inclusive education was the most frequently cited (in 13 titles), followed by the Underfilled ungraded schools (4) and the International baccalaureate (2). Five more kinds were mention 1 time each: Comprehensive school, Home education, Lifelong learning, Non-Kazakh medium education, and Technical and vocational education. In the SLF, 4 kinds of education were mentioned in the titles of 7 presentations. Here again, the Inclusive education was mentioned the most (in 4 titles) and the 3 other kinds were noted once each: Forest kindergartens, Gaelic medium education, and International education. Interestingly, in the NAE both the educational institutions (13) and the state bodies (11) chose to mention the kind of education in their titles. In the SLF, however, it was mostly the state bodies (5 titles) who brought up the kind of education - none of the educational institutions mentioned that in their SLF titles. There are a number of ways to think about this difference. On the one hand, it suggests that there is a relatively higher openness to considering various kinds of provision among the educational institutions in Kazakhstan - whether due to the current peak of reforms, the flexibility induced by the decades of transformation since the collapse of the Soviet system, or the perceived lack of the must-preserve strengths within the system that exists today. On the other hand, the presence of Inclusive education among the 3 themes stated in the NAE's initial call for papers casts a different light on the dominance of Inclusive education among the kinds of education that the speakers chose to include in their titles. However, the wider variety of the kinds of education mentioned in the NAE than in the SLF might be tipping the scales toward the first of the two interpretations above.

The level of education featured in the titles of 47 NAE presentations and 28 SLF presentations. The mentioned levels of education broke down into the sets of 6 categories in the NAE and 5 categories in the SLF. Four of these categories coincided: the School was noted in 39 NAE titles and 23 SLF titles, while the Higher education, the College and the Pre-school were mentioned in 2 NAE titles and 1 SLF title each. The other NAE categories were the Technical and vocational education (1) and Secondary education (1). The other SLF category was the Transition from the school to the higher education, mentioned in 2 titles. Despite the coincidence of 4 categories, the frequency with which the level of education invited itself into the NAE titles (47%) was noticeably higher than that in the SLF (24%). This may be seen as suggesting that the perceived distance between the different levels of education varies in its prominence between the two national contexts, with the Kazakhstani environment likely to assign more meaning to that difference.

The relevant cohort of learners was given notice in 13 NAE titles and 24 SLF titles. The 13 cohorts mentioned in the NAE titles broke down into 4 categories: Secondary school (5), Primary school (5), Pre-school (2) and Main school (up to Grade 9) (1). The 24 cohorts mentioned in the SLF titles broke down into 9 much more specific categories. The most frequently the SLF titles noted Early years learning (8 titles), followed by Primary school (4), Secondary school (3), Children and young people (3-18) (3), and the Senior phase of the

secondary school (S4-6) (2). The other categories - the Secondary school at S1-S3, the S3, and Younger learner - were mentioned once each. The relatively lower frequency with which the different cohorts were mentioned in the NAE titles could be explained by the material difference in the two national contexts. In Kazakhstan, a secondary school is usually a single institution in a single building that incorporates the primary phase (grades 1-4) and the secondary phase (grades 5-11) with the continuous sequence of grade numbers. In Scotland, however, the Primary schools are separate institutions from the Secondary schools, which makes the shift from the primary phase to the secondary phase a serious life event, which necessarily heightens the sensitivity toward and the visibility of the differences between those phases for the people in Scotland. The larger variety of cohorts mentioned in the SLF titles, similarly, could be explained by the higher sensitivity of and the resulting closer attention to the processes of transition between the various phases in education.

In terms of the specific academic subjects, the comparable number of the SLF and the NAE titles mentioned the same number of individual categories of subjects[124]: 22 SLF titles mentioned 17 different subject categories; and 26 NAE titles also mentioned 17 subject categories. Interestingly, after taking a brief look at the two datasets, my initial hunch about this aspect of the pedagogical location was extremely off the mark. I felt that the NAE titles brought up the disciplines much more frequently than the SLF titles did. In reality, however, it was my lack of familiarity with the names of the Scottish school subjects that played the trick. It was only after consulting the voluminous anthology by Bryce et al. (2013) that the presence of the subject names emerged for me in some 22 SLF titles. Having said that, there were still some difference in how the subject names figured in the NAE and SLF titles. In the NAE, the educational institutions were much more prone to mentioning the subject than the state bodies (in 18 titles as opposed to 8, respectively). In the SLF, however, the educational institutions mentioned the subject in only 4 titles, whereas the state bodies - in 17 titles. Also, the NAE titles usually contained one subject name (like Mathematics), or one tag for a group of subjects (like Languages). The SLF titles could include several subject names (like STEM and engineering) or entire curriculum areas (like Numeracy or Social Studies). These differences seem to strongly relate to the spirit of ongoing reforms in the two national contexts. In Scotland, the Curriculum for Excellence gives teachers considerable autonomy within their individual subjects and the schools are expected to orchestrate the content of various subjects into a holistic learning experience with the intention of providing the learners with a broad general education. In this situation it becomes the role of the state bodies to identify and prescribe acceptable levels of proficiency in various subjects, sets of subjects, or entire curricular areas. In Kazakhstan, the ongoing reform involves the centrally led update of the national curriculum and the promotion of the pedagogic mastery of individual teachers and their continuing

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[124] Some titles from both events included the non-disciplinary types of work that regularly go on in schools, like 'Pupil's upbringing' in the NAE data or like 'Literacy, Maths and Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing' in the SLF data. I counted these in as separate subject titles as well.

professional development. This situation is likely to be encouraging teachers to partake in high profile events like the NAE conference and bolstering their professional identities as subject teachers.

5.4.2.1.3.3. Comparing the When

The time-related information featured in 31 NAE titles and in 11 titles from the SLF. Eight titles from each event chose to mention a specific temporal location. In the SLF, these 8 mentions broke down into 6 categories: Life (2 titles), Now (2), 10 years on (1), Bedtime (1), Future (1) and the World War One (1). In the NAE the 8 mentions also fell into 6 categories: Future (2), Prospects (2), 2012-2016 (1), 2015-2020 (1), the historic period of Alash Orda (1), and Nowadays (1). A quick look at these categories allows suggesting that the temporal locations mentioned in the SLF tended to be of somewhat more continuous character ('Life', '10 years on' and the recurring 'Bedtime') than the future-focused and stricter timed temporal locations brought up in the NAE ('Future', 'Prospects', and '2012-2016', '2015-2020').

Twenty-five titles from the NAE included the words that highlighted the time-related quality of the things mentioned in the title. These 25 titles used 6 time-related words: Updated (8 titles), Contemporary (7), New (5), Continuous (lifelong) (2), Modernisation (2), and Future (as an adjective for teachers) (1). The corresponding number of titles in the SLF was 3, with the word 'New' used twice and the word 'Revised' used once. None of the Scottish speakers felt compelled to claim that their presentation was about something Contemporary - it was obviously contemporary by the very fact of being undertaken and discussed at the current moment. The striking difference between the NAE and the SLF in the prevalence of the words indicating a time-related quality demonstrates well the relatively much stronger sense in Kazakhstan of its perceived need to quickly catch up with the modern world of the developed countries and to establish the Republic as an equal member of the world's Now.

Interestingly, in the NAE the tendency to use the time-related words was equally characteristic of the state bodies and the educational institutions. At the same time, in the SLF, it was the state bodies that used these words. This observation reminded me how surprised I was that the internalised sense of times-chase which permeated my technocratic first year research proposal was not readily relatable for my Scottish colleagues, who saw it as my unconscious complicity with the oppressive neoliberal policies put forth by the state.

5.4.2.1.3.4. Miscellaneous wording

The above examination of the results of the 3-tier sifting for the Who, Where and When made me curious about the prevalence of the more technocratic or the more socially-minded words in the presentation titles from the two events. Having re-examined the material, I chose some 10 wording themes that looked relevant: Technology, Innovation, Quality, International, National, Aspiration, Creative, Nurture, Standard, and Disadvantage. The speculation was that the more 'pragmatic' wording themes (technology, innovation, quality, international and

standard) would turn out more typical for the NAE, and the more 'socially-minded' wording themes (national, aspiration, creative, nurture and disadvantage) would turn out more relevant for the SLF. For each theme I searched the titles of the two conferences with the matching sets of related words and counted the number of titles featuring them (please, view Table 5.5. in Appendix 2). Here is what I found.

As expected, the prevalence of the 'pragmatic' wording themes Technology, Innovation, and Quality was higher in the NAE titles than in the SLF titles: 16 vs. 8, 9 vs. 3, and 6 vs. 4, correspondingly. Similarly, the prevalence of the 'socially-minded' wording theme Disadvantage was higher in the SLF than in the NAE: 5 vs. 0, respectively.

Contrary to the expectations, the 'pragmatic' wording theme of Standard was more frequently present in the SLF titles than in the NAE titles: 3 vs. 1, respectively.

And there was no notable difference between the SLF and the NAE titles in the frequency of the rest of the selected wording themes: International (3 vs. 5 correspondingly), National (5 vs. 3), Aspiration (4 vs. 3), Creative (4 vs. 3), and Nurture (2 vs. 3).

On the whole, this brief search for the selected wording themes returned some mixed results. In some respects, the NAE titles tended to use more technocratic wording and the SLF titles - the more socially-minded wording. At the same time, these tendencies were neither without challenge, nor consistently observed.

5.4.2.1.3.5. Summing up

Overall, the analysis of the word clouds created by the titles of the two conferences allowed noticing some idiosyncratic ways in which the speakers of the Kazakhstani and the Scottish events perceived and portrayed the professional environments of their country's education sectors. The variety and the frequency of the mentioned story characters, of the highlighted aspects of the pedagogical location, and of the time-related items in the presentation titles revealed not only the similarities and the contrasts between the countries, but, perhaps more importantly, revealed some ways of expression that authors employed to claim topicality and relevance in the contexts of the two national systems of education.

5.4.2.2. The analysis of expressive styles

The analysis of the expressive styles used in the titles of the two conferences' presentations was based on a typology that adapted and combined the two lists of categories developed by James Hartley (2007, 2008). It included the following types:

- the titles that stated the general subject
- the titles consisting of the general heading and a specific theme
- the titles that featured a controlling question
- the titles that report the findings
- the titles that hint that an answer to a question will be provided
- the titles that contain the thesis – indicate the direction of the author's argument

- the titles with an emphasis on the employed methodology
- the titles that put forward guidelines/comparisons
- the titles that aim to attract attention by:
  - posing a startling/effective opening
  - alliteration
  - literary/biblical allusions
  - the use of puns
  - mystifying.

The results of the analysis showed that, while there were vast commonalities in the styles of titling employed by the authors of the SLF and the NAE presentations, there also were some considerable differences (please, view Table 5.6. in Appendix 2). The examples of titles categorised under each type are presented in the Appendix 2: Table 5.7. shows NAE titles, and Table 5.8. shows SLF titles.

On the matching side, the most widespread title formats in both datasets were either the titles stating the general subject (34 in the SLF and 33 in the NAE), or the titles consisting of a general heading and a specific theme (31 in the SLF and 26 in the NAE). To illustrate, the General subject titles looked something like these: "Improving outcomes for deaf learners" (SLF) and "Білім беру жүйесіндегі жаңашыл бағыттар" - "The innovative trends in education" (NAE)[125]. The General heading and specific theme titles were akin to these: "Bedtime Reading – Improving parental engagement in a child's early learning" (SLF) and "Обновление содержания образования: опыт и перспективы" - "Updating the content of education: experience and prospects" (NAE). In both events, the educational institutions wrote more general subject titles (10 in the SLF and 23 in the NAE) than the general heading with a specific theme titles (7 in the SLF and 15 in the NAE), while the state bodies wrote more titles of the latter type (21 in the SLF and 11 in the NAE) than the former type (17 in the SLF and 10 in the NAE). According to Crosby (1976) and Hartley (2007), the use of the general subject titles tends to be the indication of either the grand work by eminent author or of the lack of awareness on the part of a novice writer about the need to produce an "informative and provocative" title in order to be read. As Crosby put it: "When such titles were used by unknown writers, it was most often in obscure publications" (1976, p.387).

The titling style used by a slightly smaller numbers of presenters in each conference was the titles that hinted that the presentation would provide an answer to an implied question: 16 in the SLF and 23 in the NAE. For example: "Developing the Young Workforce – Where does it all begin?" (SLF) or "Интернет-блог как средство обучения английскому языку" - "Internet forums as a means of learning English" (NAE).

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[125] The English language versions of the NAE titles provided here and below were translated by the conference organisers and published in the in the event's brochure, which came out in 3 languages - Kazakh, Russian and English (National Academy of Education 2015b).

On the mismatching side, a sizeable part of the NAE titles (17) belonged to 4 types that were hardly ever used in the SLF: titles with a controlling question (2 in the NAE and none in the SLF), titles reporting the findings (6 in the NAE and 2 in the SLF), titles emphasising the methodology (4 in the NAE and 2 in the SLF), and titles containing the guidelines or comparisons (5 in the NAE and none in the SLF). Most of these NAE titles (11) were produced by the educational institutions. The examples of such titles include:

- titles with a controlling question - "Семейное (домашнее) образование: возможно ли в Казахстане?" - "Domestic (family) education: is it possible in Kazakhstan?"
- titles reporting the findings - "Орта мектептегі сапалы білім кепілі - инновациялық үдеріс" - "Innovation processes - a guarantee of quality education"
- titles emphasising the methodology - "Качество оказания образовательных услуг детям с особыми потребностями (по итогам социологического опроса)" - "The quality of the provision of educational services for children with special needs (according to the poll)"
- titles containing guidelines/comparisons - "Жаңа педагогикалық идеялар және дәстүрлі педагогикалық жүйе" - "New pedagogical ideas and traditional educational system".

Conversely, a notable portion of the SLF titles (29) belonged to 5 sub-types that none of the NAE titles belonged to - they aimed to grab the readers' attention with various expressive means. These SLF titles included the following:

- 15 titles with startling/effective opening, for example: "Think about it! Philosophy with children and young people"
- 8 titles with alliteration, for example: "Mentoring Matters"
- 2 titles with literary/biblical allusions, for example: "If You Go Down to the Woods – Developing Forest Kindergartens"
- 3 titles with puns, for example: "Working in tandem – using bicycles in the curriculum"
- 1 mystifying title - "'Joined up Thinking'. Using the John Muir Award".

The state bodies were the most frequent authors of such SLF titles (15), followed by the educational institutions (5) and charity organisations (5). Among the 15 such titles from the state bodies, Education Scotland had authored 9.

The above analysis revealed that, while the majority of the titles in the two datasets followed some similar expressive styles, the dissimilar styles demonstrated by the sizeable portions from those datasets were heading in the tellingly different directions.

The idiosyncratic NAE titles tended to follow the more business-like styles - they were more sombre in mood and more transparent about the content of the corresponding presentations. This idiosyncrasy can be interpreted as the sign of an inherent pragmatism of Kazakhstani

educators or as the sign of the authors' desire to be clearly understood and to be taken seriously. Given the fact that most of these titles were produced by the representatives of the educational institutions, both of these interpretations seem plausible.

The idiosyncratic SLF titles tended to follow the more entertaining and attractive styles - they were more playful in mood and seemed less concerned about the transparency of the presentations' content. The ways to interpret this idiosyncrasy include seeing it as the sign of an innate predisposition in Scotland toward playful exchange and storytelling or seeing it as the sign of the high level of authors' confidence. Again, given that most of the authors producing these types of titles came from the state bodies, both of these interpretations have the right to exist.

Another set of comparative data that directly pointed toward the relatively high levels of confidence of the Scottish presenters was the number of cases, when the SLF presentation titles used strong expressive marks at the end of the sentences (please, view Table 5.9. in Appendix 2). For example, 10 SLF titles used the question mark, whereas only 2 NAE titles did so. Also, 3 SLF titles did not shy away from using the exclamation mark as opposed to zero such titles in the NAE. Seven out of the 10 SLF titles with the question marks and 2 out of the 3 SLF titles with the exclamation marks were authored by the conference organiser Education Scotland.

Similarly, the number of non-disambiguated abbreviations used in the titles was higher in the SLF (in 17 titles) than in the NAE (in 9 titles). In both countries, the state bodies were contributing the larger share of the titles with the non-disambiguated abbreviations - 9 in the SLF and 5 in the NAE.

5.5. Discussion of the comparison of conferences

Overall, the analysis of the two large-scale professional conferences organised by the central state bodies responsible for the education sector in Scotland and Kazakhstan yielded the following observations.

First, the purpose of both events appeared to be quite multifaceted. On the one hand, the organisers invested time, effort and resources to engage the stakeholders in an industry-wide dialogue, amplify what those stakeholders had to say and, by doing so, democratise the processes of policy development. On the other hand, each event ensured sizeable podium time for the state bodies themselves and arranged the programme in a way that would help forge the sense of stakeholder solidarity around the significant items of the policy agenda. The specific issues that various types of organisations would address under those popular umbrella items tended to vary and, sometimes, created an impression of groups speaking past each other, while discussing the seemingly same theme. The data from the pre-booking facility of the SLF demonstrated that the conference audiences were not the passive receivers of pre-

arranged events, they had the power to co-shape the industry-wide dialogue - not least, by voting with their feet.

Second, the definitions of who constitutes the education sector appeared to differ between the two events. Judging by the circle of speakers and the types of story characters inhabiting the titles of their presentations[126], the audience of the Kazakhstani conference was sharing a rather narrow definition of the sector - one centred around the classroom educator and the learner. The audience of the Scottish conference, however, was sharing a broader definition that included various people related to the processes of teaching and learning, and the many others outside those processes. This mismatch could be among the reasons why the hard-fought UK ideas of an empowering teacher-centred reform of school education were quite peacefully accepted and relatively smoothly rolled out in Kazakhstan.

Third, the way, in which the conference presenters made sense of the specific pedagogical location, the professional whereabouts of the story that they shared appeared related to the structure of the school system dominant in each national context. The NAE presenters, who are used to unitary provision where the same school teaches the learner through the primary and the secondary phases, contextualised own stories by mentioning the level of education (for example, school, college, University). The SLF presenters, however, being used to the separate, self-standing Primary and Secondary schools, prioritised the mentioning of the specific age cohort of the story's learners (for example, children and young people (3-18), S3, or senior phase). Also, the context of nationally implemented reforms appeared to affect the prevalence of academic subject names in the conference titles.

Fourth, the expressive styles and the time-related features of the titles appeared to highlight quite idiosyncratic ways, in which the conference presenters preferred to introduce themselves and their stories. In the case of the SLF, the various details appeared to point toward a cultural predisposition in Scotland toward playful exchange and storytelling. These details included the presence of entertaining titles, the citing of more continuous temporal locations, the confident use of abbreviations, question and exclamation marks, and the lesser concern about the title's transparency or the story's 'contemporariness'.

In the case of the NAE, a number of items pointed toward a cultural predisposition in Kazakhstan toward a times-chasing worldview and a pragmatic outlook. These items were the predominance of the sombre and clear titling styles, the focus on the future-oriented and strictly-drawn temporal locations, the stronger insistence on the story's 'contemporariness'/'newness', the tendency to use some technocratic wording, and the belief that "real innovations" had more to do with regulatory issues.

Finally, on the more mundane level of everyday activities, the two conferences did also betray something about their national contexts. The fluency with which the SLF audience grasped

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[126] For example, the teachers made up 12% of presenters in the SLF and 36% - in the NAE; they were mentioned in 1 SLF title and in 13 NAE titles.

the order and the logics of sophisticated registration (both online and in person) was impressive and brought to mind the emphasis on the issue of professionalism in the Scottish education. The breadth of the kinds of education mentioned in the NAE titles and the braveness and composure with which the NAE team engaged in risky organisational improvisations was equally impressive and reminded the attitude of an ambitious, improvising and hard-to-embarrass novice that Kazakhstan maintains in the international arena.

Chapter 6. Societal level

The previous chapters highlighted a number of aspects of social imaginary that were detected through the analysis of materials at the practitioners' and the industry levels. If they indeed were the salient characteristics of the mind frames of the people in the two countries, some of those aspects of social imaginary should also show up at the level of society as a whole. In this chapter I compared two sets of society level materials to see whether the aspects of social imaginary, noticed in the previous discussion, would demonstrate themselves here.

The material I compared were two folk tales and two high-profile speeches by the heads of the government. I chose to concentrate on folk tales, because they represented the long-term established cultural artefacts that every generation came in contact with. I chose to consider the statesmen's speeches, because, in order to resonate with the population, those high-profile nation-wide communications had to carry the traces of the social imaginary of the given society.

6.1. Folk tales

The two folk tales that I selected for this comparison were two hero stories - "Assipattle and the Stoorworm" (Ferguson 2014) and "Er Tostik" (Kaskabasov 2011b). In the section below, I discussed the reasons for picking these stories, explained my approach to the tales' analysis, separately analysed each of them and engaged in a comparison in a common discussion segment.

6.1.1. Reasons to select the two tales
The reasons for picking these stories ranged from the ways in which I encountered each of them, the factors that made them an interesting material for comparison, and the availability of concrete texts to rely on.

6.1.1.1. Encounters with the tales
I first heard the story of Assipattle in April 2015 during a "Living in a Better Nation" performance held by "The Story Collective" company[127] at the Scottish Storytelling Centre. This event encouraged me to explore the links between folk lore and the social imaginary. Its telling synopsis invited: "As Scotland enters a new chapter in her history join us for an evening of traditional stories, of Stoorworms and Selkies, which resonate deeply in our own time. Fact and fiction intertwine to spark Imagine-Nation, vision and debate about the future of this land and its people". The artists believed, and the audience agreed with them during the discussion

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[127] "The Story Collective" was a group of Scottish storytellers that consisted of David Campbell, Wendy Woolfson, Douglas Mackay, Beverly Bryant, Janis Mackay and David Francis.

after the show, that the tale of "Assipattle" relayed something substantial about who the 'we' were in Scotland.

My encounters with the story of "Er Tostik", often the opening tale in a collection of Kazakh folk tales, were numerous. As a small girl I listened to my grandfather read it to me, I read it myself as a teenager and, like many in my country, I was excited when the state studio "Kazakhfilm" adapted this popular folk tale for the big screen in 2013. By admission of the leading Kazakh folklorist Kaskabasov (2011a), "Er Tostik" belongs to the ancient genre of archaic heroic tales, where the boundaries between the heroic tale and the enchanted fairy tale are not yet formed. As such, this tale has accompanied the emergence of the Kazakh national identity for a very long time.

6.1.1.2. Comparability

Apart from the two stories being long-established hero tales woven into the respective fabrics of national identity, they also made promising materials for comparison since they both were parts of digital resources suggested for the use in schools and publically accessible online.

The story of "Assipattle" was one of the items in the collection of Scottish traditional arts, created in the frames of "Gifting Every Child" project, conducted by the organisation "Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland" (TRACS) (TRACS n.d., West n.d.). This collection consisted of text, video and audio recordings of traditional Scottish stories, seasonal customs, songs and dance steps that parents, teachers and youth organisations were encouraged to draw on in their work with young people in order to "Make Scotland a society where every primary child feels welcome and at home, growing in confidence and an outward looking zest for life" (TRACS n.d., ¶4).

The story of "Er Tostik" was an item in the "Audio anthology of Kazakh literature" collected by Bilim Media Group - "an innovative company building eLearing market in Kazakhstan" (Bilim Media Group n.d.a, ¶4). The story was presented in the form of a 59-minutes-long audio recording, it belonged with the typical programme of the 5th grade "Kazakh literature" course in the schools with the Kazakh language as the medium of instruction (Bilim Media Group n.d.b).

As such, both stories were made into electronic open educational resources, usable at schools and curated by organisations outside the schools' systems. On the one hand, they both belonged to a project that married technology and education. On the other hand, they both were produced for schools by expert outsiders. Each of these 'hands', of course, represented a contemporary trend of seeing the school systems as slightly out of touch with the latest know-how and as needing a friendly support to do their jobs well. Thus, the two stories were interesting to compare not only because they were made available in this way, but also because those, who chose them to be among those available, did, presumably, share a specific common idea about the contemporary schools.

6.1.1.3. The texts

6.1.1.3.1. "Er Tostik"

The audio recording that Bilim Media Group made available through its web-portal was meant as a teaching aid for schools with the Kazakh language as the medium of instruction. Therefore, it was in Kazakh. In keeping with the earlier methodological decision, I analysed the material in its original language. To simplify the process of analysis I sought the written text, on which the recording was based. This search surfaced two Kazakh-language texts: one on a teaching aids website "Асыл-Білім" ("Noble-Education") (Asyl-Bilim 2012) and one in volume 75 of a 100-volume book series of Kazakh cultural heritage "Бабалар Сөзі" ("The Word of Ancestors") (Kaskabasov 2011b).

The comparison of the audio recording with the two texts showed that the three items were almost identical. Out of the total 6,709-word content of the recording, the text from volume 75 of "Бабалар Сөзі" (Kaskabasov 2011b) was 4 words off, and the text from the "Асыл-Білім" website (Asyl-Bilim 2012) was 21 words and 3 sentences off. Between the two available texts, therefore, I chose to rely on that from the volume 75 of "Бабалар Сөзі" (Kaskabasov 2011b). The high similarity between the texts could be explained by the overall scarcity of written down samples of Kazakh folk tales, the industrial collection of which only began in the Soviet era (Kaskabasov 1972, p.29). Moreover, as stated by Kaskabasov: "Judging by the works of latter years, the tale has actually ceased developing; no new phenomena in this realm have come into being. Only talented performers at times improve the language, introduce a new ideological content. So the tale has, indeed, become monumental and undoubtedly is of exceptional aesthetic and educational value" (Kaskabasov 1972, p. 227).

6.1.1.3.2. "Assipattle"

The text of the story of "Assipattle" was readily available in English from the TRACS resources. It consisted of 1,238 words (Ferguson 2014).

There were, however, three more texts of this tale freely available in English online. One of them was published by a Scottish artist named Fee at her website "Wee White Hoose", it was 3,011 words long (Fee 2015). Another text was published by web-resource "Electric Scotland" that described itself as "The largest and most comprehensive site on the history and culture of Scotland and the Scots at home and abroad" (Electric Scotland n.d.b, ¶1). Their text was 4,610 words long (Electric Scotland n.d.a). The third text was published at a web-portal "Full Online Books", which presented the text as a short story by Elizabeth W. Grierson (Grierson 2011), consisting of 5,765 words.

Not surprisingly, the contents of the four texts differed. And the TRACS version by Ferguson (the shortest one) lacked some of the scenes, twists and turns presented in the three other versions. Nevertheless, I chose to base the analysis on the text by Ferguson, because that was the actual text put forth by TRACS. For the purposes of this dissertation, it was the fact of TRACS's and Bilim Media Group's role in promoting these tales that made the comparison

pertinent. The awareness of the other variants, however, helped me to moderate the conclusions about the social imaginary that I was about to draw from analysing Ferguson's text of the tale.

The contrast between the number and diversity of available texts of the chosen tales in Kazakhstan and Scotland was interesting in terms of appreciating the living character of the Scottish folklore and the "monumental" (Kaskabasov 1972) stasis of the Kazakh one.

6.1.2. Approach to the analysis of tales

Two sets of relevant literature helped to contextualise the comparison of the two selected tales. One of those sets included studies of political scientists devoted generally to the theme of nationhood and specifically to the discussions of national identity in Kazakhstan and Scotland. The other set encompassed the general approaches to the study of folk tales and some country-specific works of folklorists.

6.1.2.1. Nationhood and the building of national identity

Being parts of the specially collected and formally curated archives of long-established folklore items recommended to schools, the two folk tales that I selected for comparison appeared to be pieces of "well-defined educationally sanctioned and unified cultures"[128] (Gellner 2006, p.54) that political scientists broadly associated with either top-down fabrication (Gellner 2006) or bottom-up co-construction (Anderson 1991) of national identity. This consideration highlighted to me the relevance of the literature on nationhood to the planned comparison.

6.1.2.1.1. National identity in Scotland

The scholars, who studied the issues of Scottish national identity, tended to highlight the constructed nature of social phenomena and to oppose the essentialist approaches to their study (McCrone 1992; Nairn 2003; Symon 1997; Zumkhawala-Cook 2008). They all criticised the dominant yet fabricated (Trevor-Roper 1983) images of Scotland and Scottishness, reflected in the in the system of clan-specific designs of textile known as "tartanry" and the literary style of "Kailyardism", both of which emerged in the 19th century (McCrone 1992; Nairn 2003; Zumkhawala-Cook 2008). Richard Zumkhawala-Cook (2008) thoroughly browsed and critiqued the discourses of culture - literature, film, popular culture - through which those images continued to proliferate throughout the 20th century. And Peter Symon (1997) examined what went on within the discourses of culture by talking to the artists, contributors to the 1970s revival of the Scottish folk music, and learning about their experiences, intent and

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[128] Please consider the full quote: "It is not the case that the 'age of nationalism' is a mere summation of the awakening and political self-assertion of this, that, or the other nation. Rather, when general social conditions make for standardised, homogeneous, centrally sustained high cultures, pervading entire populations and not just elite minorities, a situation arises in which well-defined educationally sanctioned and unified cultures constitute very nearly the only kind of unit with which men willingly and often ardently identify. The cultures now seem to be the natural repositories of political legitimacy" (Gellner 2006, p.54).

motivations. The invention of tartan-clad Kailyard Scotland originated from the same interest in the Scottish culture as the early collection of folk tales and there were pieces of dubiously collected myths and epics that apparently contributed to its invention (Trevor-Roper 1983). Nevertheless, I failed to locate the literature that would directly consider the place of specific folk tales in the construction of Scottish national identity.

Richard Haesly (2005) conducted a quantitative study to identify the elements of the imagined communities that underlay the national identities of individuals in Scotland and Wales. According to the study, the opinions of all Scottish respondents converged on 6 out of 43 statements: they disliked being called English and took great pride in the culture and history of Scotland; they neither saw the speakers of Gaelic and Scots as more 'Scottish', nor believed the language divide (between English, Gaelic and Scots) to be deep; they also didn't see Scottish identity as precluding them from forming a European identity as well (Haesly 2005, p.254).

6.1.2.1.2. The national identity in Kazakhstan

Among the authors, who studied national identity in Kazakhstan, the central debate was on whether the Republic was building a civic or ethnic nation (Burkhanov 2017; Dave 2007; Issacs 2015; Melich and Adibayeva 2013; Ó Beacháin and Kevlihan 2011)[129].

Nurbolat Masanov (1995), on the contrary, addressed the history of the nation's emergence. He maintained that the Kazakhs, who adapted their entire lifestyle to the harsh imperatives of their natural environment, had thus constructed a distinct people/nation[130], which existed throughout 16th - early 20th centuries[131].

Considering the factors that contributed to the construction of national identity in our days, some authors drew on Anderson (1991), Billig (1995) and Hobsbawm (1983) to highlight and investigate the role of the elements of culture. As Isaacs (2015, p.401) put it: "... the nation is

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[129] In lieu of the debate about the civic or ethnic character of the currently constructed national identity in Kazakhstan, the scholars highlighted the inherently conflicting civic-ethnic premises of the USSR-era "internationalism" (Burkhanov 2017; Dave 2007; Issacs 2015), the continuities between and the hybridity of the Soviet-era and post-Soviet identities (Dave 2007; Issacs 2015), as well as the ambiguity of the direction of the contemporary identity construction in Kazakhstan (Ó Beacháin and Kevlihan 2011). Unwilling to consider the civic-ethnic dichotomy as meaningfully irresolvable, some authors (Burkhanov 2017; Dave 2007) turned to Roger Brubaker's (1996) construct of "nationalising state" and applied it to Kazakhstan. As per Brubaker (1996) the "nationalising state" stood for a state conceived of as an ethno-culturally homogenous "nation-state" and apparently heading toward that end, yet not quite able to become that due to its inherent heterogeneity.

[130] Masanov (1995) argued that the socio-cultural community of Kazakhs was constructed on the basis of the spatially and temporally regimented lifestyle of nomadic herders of central Eurasia, in which the successful engagement in the strictly systematised seasonal migration was the only means of survival within the specific ecology of the vast landlocked steppe with its sharp continental climate.

[131] Quoting Vasiliy Radlov, the prominent Russian turkologist, member of the Imperial Saint Petersburg Academy of Sciences, Masanov (1995) showed that in the late 19th century the Kazakhs were clearly seen by outsiders as a distinct people/nation - a solidly homogenous community (both linguistically and socio-politically) with a sense of national unity and strong mutual commitment. To translate part of the Radlov's quote into English: "Everywhere one notices the uniformity of their customs, habits, living styles, character and in every location they sharply differ from the other Turkic people with their conscious sense of belonging to the nation of Qazaqs, which is common to them all". (Masanov 1995, p.261).

constructed by modern elites and intellectuals as they deliberately select and rework old traditions, symbols, memories, myths and narratives for a population which has to be prepared and willing to accept them as shared commonalities, and/or be based on pre-existing social and cultural networks". Thus, Dave (2007) and Melich and Adibayeva (2013) discussed the complex politics of the use and promotion of the Kazakh and Russian languages in contemporary Kazakhstan. Melich and Adibayeva (2013) also discussed the ethno-cultural images woven into the state symbols - the flag, the national emblem and the national anthem. Burkhanov (2017) studied what kinds of a nation were imagined and put forth by Kazakhstani newspapers published in Russian or in the Kazakh languages. Issacs (2015) focused on the kinds of nationhood presented within the cinematic works produced in Kazakhstan between 2005-2013. Based on his analysis, Isaacs usefully pointed out: "we can observe that there is no essential meaning given to Kazakh national identity; rather it is contested and constructed through various competing and complementary discursive tropes" (Isaacs 2015, p.403). None of the authors considered the role of the folk tales in the process of national identity construction in Kazakhstan.

6.1.2.2. Studies of folk tales

Overall, the studies of folk tales presented a wide range. Some scholars identified and categorised the types of plots (A. Aarne, S. Thompson, H. Uther). Others examined the types of main characters and their functional roles within the story (V. Propp). Further some used tales for anthropological (F. Boas, R. Benedict, B. Malinowski, D. Hymes, J. Taggart) and linguistic (L.E. and W. Grimms, M. Müller) research. Still others searched for the origins of stories by investigating their 'migration' across geographies and peoples (K. Krohn, A. Aarne, W. Anderson). And scholars like J. Campbell analysed the structure of tales and myths to draw the chain of most common elements employed in the stories that humans told. (Haase 2008).

6.1.2.2.1. The Scottish folk tales

According to the scholars of the Scottish folklore, the process of collecting Scottish oral tales set out in the early 19th century thanks to the efforts of the eminent Scottish folklorists, such as Sir Walter Scott, Robert Chambers, John Francis Campbell of Islay and Reverend John Gregorson Campbell (Westwood and Kingshill 2009, p.xi).

In terms of culturally specific features, the folklorists noted that Scottish folk tales were often "full of terror", with humans facing various "evil beings" in the "hostile though beautiful environment" of "harsh land and hungry sea" (Westwood and Kingshill 2009, p.ix). The people and objects in the Scottish tales often had a dual and contradictory nature: for example, a body of water could equally stand as a "supernatural threat and defense" (Harris 2009, p.6), a mermaid could equally swallow the fisherman or issue him a benign blessing of big fish strikes. The ability to maintain "a respectful decorum" and win over the foes with cleverness and wit was also a pervasive characteristic of the heroes of the Scottish tales (Harris 2009, p.22).

6.1.2.2.2. The Kazakh folk tales

According to the scholars of the Kazakh folklore, folk tales reflected the "life philosophy of the community" (Tursunova et al. 2016, p.5706). The earliest work to collect and systematise the Kazakh oral tales began toward the end of the 19th century by "such turkologists as Sh. Ualikhanov, Y. Altynsarin, A. Divayev, V. Radlov, G. Potanin, I. Berezin, A. Alektorov, P. Melioranskiy" (Tursunova et al. 2016, p.5699) and by 2016 the body of the Kazakh folklore included "more than four thousand" (p.5705) individual tales.

Having considered the Kazakh tales through the lens of V. Propp's categories of characters and their functions, Mingisheva (2015) identified a number of culture-specific features of the Kazakh tales, including the following ones: the "hero-seeker" would usually leave home and win over his enemies using both the strength and cunning; he often would meet and befriend benevolent assistants and "sometimes you can think that only they overcome all difficulties and troubles, instead of the hero who behaves passively relying on them"; finally, at certain point within the tale "It is possible to tell, that the fairytale begins anew" (Mingisheva 2015, pp.32-34). Most tales would mention "many social institutes of the Kazakh society" (Mingisheva 2015, p.36).

Overall, the two sets of literature showed that the folk tale, as an element of culture, was a conventionally acceptable object for the analysis of social imaginary of each nation. Nevertheless, the content of individual folk tales had escaped the attention of national identity researchers both in Scotland and in Kazakhstan.

Luckily, the content of folk tales was richly addressed by the folklorists of each country[132]. Despite the high likelihood of storyline similarities dictated by the genre (Campbell 2004, Propp 1928), the folklorists were still able to discern some nation-specific aesthetics and worldviews reflected in the content of the Scottish and Kazakh tales.

My plan for the analysis of each tale included first providing a brief summary of the plot, offering some overall comments about the tale and then interpreting their specific salient features.

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[132] Regrettably, I had to refrain from relying on a study by Seitova (2013), which promised to be very relevant to my comparison of the two selected tales. Seitova o compared the concepts of good and evil in English and Kazakh folk tales. It turned out, however, that the texts of the three 'English' tales that she used were actually not from Britain - "The Snow White" by Grimm brothers and Perrault's "Cinderella" and "Sleeping Beauty". Unsure about the adequacy of those texts to the 'authentically' English versions of these international tales, I had to refrain.

6.1.3. Analysis of the tales

6.1.3.1. Assipattle and the Stoorworm

6.1.3.1.1. The plot

Once upon a time, a dreadful and evil sea monster - Stoorworm - came near the shores of an ancient Kingdom. At first, the King's spae-man was advised to feed the Stoorworm weekly with seven girls, but soon, after seeing the people's anger, he suggested that the King should sacrifice his only daughter instead. The King honoured his own duty, but asked for a delay of 3 weeks to find a champion, who would slay the beast, marry the princess and inherit half kingdom and the Sikkersnapper sword that belonged to Odin himself. None of the 36 volunteers managed to engage with the monster, leaving the King no choice, but to fight the beast himself.

However, an unlikely hero arrived - Assipattle, a dreamy storyteller, the youngest son and a laughing stock of his big family of hardworking farmers. Having heard the King's promise, Assipattle escaped on his father's horse with a knife and an iron pot full of peat. On a boat he approached the sleepily yawning monster and sneaked deep inside the creature's body. There he disembarked and ran even deeper to reach the beast's liver. Having the liver cut open, stuffed with peat and set on fire, Assipattle ran back to the boat just in time to be spewed safely on it to the shore by the retching beast.

From the shore Assipattle saw how the forked tongue of the agonising monster fell, split the ground and created the Baltic Sea, how his teeth dropped and formed the Orkneys, Shetlands and Faroe Islands, how his body coiled into a mass of land, burning under the surface, which became Iceland.

Once everything cleared, the King hugged Assipattle and called him his son. Rewarded with Sikkersnapper and half kingdom, Assipattle fell mutually in love with the princess and the King married them. They lived happily and they might be still living.

6.1.3.1.2. Overview

The unpretentious hero Assipattle found a simple, yet powerfully imaginative way to destroy an extraordinary beast by using some very ordinary everyday objects. This unusual story took place in an anonymous Kingdom, however, to the audience of the story the story's world could appear quite familiar and inviting to relate. This fact reflected the power of a folk tale - the power long harnessed by anthropologists - to exhibit in a number of ways the lifestyle and the socio-cultural features that distinguished its people, its folk. In the story of Assipattle four types of detail help the audience to recognise the hero's world as their own. First, the described whereabouts. Possessing a fair share of the dry land and the sea, the story's Kingdom sat somewhere in the region of Iceland, Orkneys, Shetlands, Faroe Islands and the Baltic Sea. Second, the mention of familiar "social institutes of society" (Mingisheva 2015). Assipattle lived in the realm of a King, where his obedient subjects went about their lives as spae-men, knights, and hardworking farmers, who warmed their homes by burning peat and could be in

possession of a horse. Third, the presence of a distinctive cultural artefact. As one of the three highest rewards for the champion, the King promised the Sikkersnapper sword that he had inherited from Odin. This reference to a valuable object from and a personal relation to a mythical deity underscored something distinct about the "life philosophy of the community" (Tursunova et al. 2016). Fourth, the reflection of the political order of the society. It was the open expression of the people's discontent that forced the King to seek an alternative solution and to eventually agree to sacrifice his own child. This episode illustrated the working of a democratic monarchy, where the subjects were confident that their opinions were welcome and would be heeded. It also showed that even the King had to obey the principles of mutual rights and responsibilities - in the matters of collective survival, his child, like everyone else's, was not out of bounds.

Apart from the general comments of this overview, below I discussed some specific features of the tale. My interpretation of those features touched upon the aspects of social imaginary discussed in the previous chapters of this thesis.

6.1.3.1.3. Desirable one of us; We

As with all hero tales, this story closely portrayed the 'desirable one of us', a unit of 'we'. The main protagonist Assipattle was presented as an unconventional, but genuine hero. By being resourceful, Assipattle found a clever way to achieve a lot with few simple resources.

6.1.3.1.4. The role of and the attitude toward the technology

Formidable weaponry, like the Sikkersnapper sword, although available and a treasured possession of the most powerful character, had no role to play in achieving the main sought goal - defeat of the monster[133]. Portrayed by Ferguson as a sign of status, rather than a means to an end, the ability of the Sikkersnapper sword to be of a valuable consequence was unclear. This attitude toward the technology reminded me of the way in which my Scottish interviewees talked about the use of tablets in the classroom. They thought that the tablets were a technologically advanced and convenient tool, but they didn't expect the tablets to necessarily contribute to a better learning.

6.1.3.1.5. Innovation

The 'innovation' which mattered in the tale was not about special equipment. It was about the ability to combine the banal everyday objects - knife, pot and peat - in an elegantly simple, yet original way to achieve great things. In somewhat similar terms, my Scottish interviewees wished that the school leavers would be competent in skilfully applying the acquired

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[133] Other variants of the tale had the Sikkersnapper playing a crucial role in defeating the spae-man (sorcerer), whose ill intentions were discovered toward the end of those variants of the story. The power of Sikkersnapper's origin from Odin himself proved significant, when it turned out to be the only sword able to break the magical protection of the evil sorcerer.

knowledge, rather than simply accumulating much of it. That ability, they said, was at the core of the functional literacy that the famous PISA exams were after.

6.1.3.1.6. Role of the school and the teacher

Although the tale did not mention a school, it seemed to convey a questioning attitude toward a uniform education. The way Assipattle grew was abnormal by the standards of his family, where all other boys were helping in the fields, learning farming skills from their father. Daydreamer and storyteller, Assipattle spent whole days at home and was regularly punished for that by his siblings. The results of such alternative upbringing, according to the tale, didn't have to be sad. Rather, given a chance to develop his key skill - imagination - Assipattle found a way to thrive by applying it well at an opportune moment.

Tangentially, the same detail could be suggesting that any place/circumstance could be a "school" - outdoors/indoors, purpose-built or not. Useful learning didn't have to happen in a specific place/premise.

6.1.3.1.7. The location of knowledge and know-how

The tale showed that the acknowledged expert, the King's spae-man, "who had the reputation for being very wise" (Ferguson 2014, ¶2), had come up with the most trite and costly solution. The truly valuable know-how was invented by the creative youngster - Assipattle, in whom even his family had little confidence.

In any event, both of these expertises were very local, from within the Kingdom itself. The know-how that prevailed hailed from a local knowledge, local skill - ability to ignite and maintain fire, using the peat. The actual application of that skill, again depended on some very local stuff - horse, knife, pot, peat. This high value ascribed to the things local seemed to resonate very well with the calls of the Curriculum for Excellence to increase the diversity of the Scottish school education by infusing more of the locally meaningful content and by developing closer ties between the schools and the local community.

The non-locals in the tale included the dangerous visitor-beast and the good-for-nothing 36 volunteers.

6.1.3.1.8. The authority responsible for the child

While the tale did not directly speak of the authority responsible for the child, it made it clear - in the name of the country's overall wellbeing, it was the state, who could decide whether some children would be given to the monster. This decision was not the King's personal idea, it came through discussion and expert advice, and there seemed to be no alternative to it. The parents' outcry and the consequent change of decision demonstrated that the second authority responsible for the child was, in fact, the parents. However, the parent's right came second to the state's. Even the King himself, as a parent, could not withhold his daughter from something that the state deemed completely necessary. A similar way of seeing could be traced in the

Named Person policy, the development and the initial roll out of which was underway in Scotland at the time of my research.

6.1.3.1.9. The perception of the flow of time

The tale placed the story in the ancient times, before parts of our world even existed. Nevertheless, it found ways to craftily connect the Past with the Present. The assertion that that the Stoorworm's burning body formed Iceland and that "The fire that still dances to this day from the mountains is the liver of the Stoorworm still burning" (Ferguson 2014, ¶13) clearly linked the Then with the Now. Also, the happy couple of Assipattle and the princess were said to have "lived in happiness and joy, and if they are not dead they are living still" (Ferguson 2014, ¶15). In this way, the change of time was shown as secondary to the constancy of the place and the people. This view of temporality rhymed with the attitude criticised by some of my Scottish interviewees, when they talked about the melancholic worldview of "It's Aye bin!".

6.1.3.1.10. The attitude toward the Past

The tangible traces of the Past were conveyed as monumental and enduring in the Present. Having passed, the Past was still present in the landscape and the mention of the King's old heirloom inherited from Odin himself did still sound meaningful now.

6.1.3.1.11. The attitude toward and timing of the Future

The Future was not directly spoken of in the story. As a pure speculation, the Future could be expected to take much from the Present, just like the Present was shown as taking from the Past. In any case, Assipattle's Future was the Now of the tale's audience, and the things created back in Assipattle's time were shown as evidently living on.

6.1.3.1.12. The attitude toward the new

The tale treated the New in varying ways. The arrival of the Stoorworm was a negative New. The King's promise of rewards was a positive New. Assipattle's idea was a breakthrough New. What he did was unconventional and very dangerous for him, yet it promised and delivered a huge pay off.

6.1.3.2. Er Tostik

6.1.3.2.1. The plot

Bay[134] Ernazar's eight sons went missing, having decamped during *Zhut*[135]. Wonderfully born Er Tostik accidentally discovers he had brothers and goes to find them. With a clever trick Tostik helps the found brothers to drove unruly herds back home.

Having celebrated their return, Ernazar marries his nine sons to nine daughters of another man. Tostik's bride, youngest Kenzhekey demands Shalquiryq (head stallion), Quba (mother camel) and Aqsyrmal (treasure armour) for her dowry. Angry at first, her father eventually gives those, but advises not to camp by Sorqudyq well.

Meanwhile, a demon's daughter Bektory, smitten with Tostik, plans evil.

Despite Kenzhekey's advice, Ernazar camps at Sorqudyq. There a cannibal woman captures him and forces to promise to give her Er Tostik. Kenzhekey witnesses that and informs Tostik. After several days Ernazar advises Tostik to go back to Sorqudyq. Kenzhekey asks him to wear Aqsyrmal and to saddle Shalquiryq. She professes that Tostik's fate would be known, when Quba brings a colt.

Shalquiryq speaks to Tostik. They trick the cannibal and flee, but fall under the ground. Shalquiryq tells Tostik to stay poised and dignified in underground kingdom of Bapy Khan. This way Tostik earns the respect and friendship of underground dwellers.

Tostik is asked to bring Temir Khan's daughter as a bride for Bapy Khan. On the way he meets six underground heroes, who wish to accompany him. Putting together their unusual talents, they arrive at Temir Khan's hiding place. It turns out that the girl is already promised to Keshe Khan. The companies of Keshe Khan and Tostik engage in numerous contests to win the bride. Twice Tostik and his new friends survive death. Shalquiryq, too, survives death twice. Eventually, Temir Khan and Keshe Khan surrender and the bride leaves with Tostik and his company.

The new friends part ways. Tostik returns to Bapy Khan, who richly rewards him, gives own daughter and shows the path to the surface of the earth. The perilous way leaves only Tostik, Shalquiryq and a servant girl Kunkey alive. Camping under *Bayterek*[136] tree, Tostik kills a dragon, who wants to swallow the chicks of a *Samuryq*[137] bird. In reward, the bird takes the three of them to the surface and gives Tostik her only magical feather.

On the surface the tired company is captured by Shoinqulaq, the son of the cannibal sent by Bektory. Tostik is imprisoned. Kunkey is made Shoinqulaq's wife and has a child. Shalquiryq

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[134] Bay - in Kazakh, "бай" [bay] - wealthy stock-breeder. Ernazar had flocks of sheep and herds of camels and horses.

[135] Zhut - in Kazakh, "жұт" [jut] - a natural calamity, when a severely cold winter ice-shields the ground so that the stock perishes unable to scrape sustenance from under the snow. Zhut usually led to famine among nomadic herders. (Peisker 1936; Masanov 1995).

[136] Bayterek - in Kazakh, "Бәйтерек" [bayterek] - a Bolle's Poplar tree. A mythically large Bayterek was often the pivotal tree in Kazakh folklore. One of the key monuments built in 2002 in Kazakhstan's new capital city Astana was shaped after it and named Bayterek.

[137] Samuryq - in Kazakh, "Самұрық" [samuryq] - a mythical giant bird of black colour, who was described as having two heads - one bird's and one human. Her human head spoke human language.

is kept tied up. One day Shalquiryq breaks free and helps Tostik to summon Samuryq, who frees him and tells that Shoinqulaq will be undefeatable, unless one kills his soul which is hidden elsewhere. With Kunkey's help Tostik manages to defeat Shoinqulaq and his son. After that, Tostik and Shalquiryq go home.

The professed signs scare Kenzhekey, she thinks that the old man on a limping thin horse has come to tell her about Tostik's death. But she recognises Shalquiryq's neighing. Kenzhekey, Tostik, Shalquiryq and Quba are happy to finally meet and become young again. They live long and fulfil their dreams.

6.1.3.2.2. Overview

The luckily born, exceptionally strong, caring son and brother, Er Tostik fled from a cannibal and ended up spending long years wandering the world, making powerful friends, accomplishing heroic deeds, and destroying his enemies. Upon completing all that, he eventually returned home, where he, his bride and animals rejuvenated and lived happily and fulfilled their dreams.

While the feats of Er Tostik took place in a number of ordinary and extraordinary locations, with four types of the story's detail, its audience could recognise the story's world as their own. First, the environmental settings. The disaster of Zhut that opened the story immediately evoked the image of the difficult lifestyle of nomadic herders[138] (Masanov 1995). The tale also highlighted the typical features of the central Eurasian landscape[139] with its long distances[140] and hallmark locations next to the named wells[141].

Second, the mention of familiar "social institutes of society" (Mingisheva 2015). *Bay* or not, the characters lived in families and won bread by traditional archery and hunting or by herding specific livestock - sheep, horses, camels. The match-making and marriage was up to the parents, as it historically used to be in Kazakhstan.

Third, the political order. During the trying period of his life in the underworld Er Tostik met three Khans, who ruled their own kingdoms. Nevertheless, in his typical life on the surface of the earth there were no Khans. This reflected the relatively autonomous status of individual nomads and the decentralised character of political power during the era of feudal rule in Kazakhstan (Masanov 1995).

Fourth, the signs of the "life philosophy of the community" (Tursunova et al. 2016). Almost passive acceptance of fate. Ernazar never lamented losing his sons. Er Tostik never confronted his father about promising him to the cannibal. Nor did he try to escape the underworld, when he suddenly fell there. Instead he heeded the advice to stay true to his

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[138] The mention of the Zhut plunged the audience into the realm of harsh winters, open grazing livestock, scarce faraway pastures, where Ernazar's sons had to decamp to, and the paramount value of the family's winter settlement that Ernazar himself didn't dare to abandon.
[139] Steppes, mountains, lakes (**not** forests, rivers or seas).
[140] Some places that Er Tostik visited were months apart.
[141] Like the Sorqudyq well.

surface-of-the-earth heroic persona and proceeded with dignity and calm. This reminded me the way, in which Kazakhstan accepted its 1991 "catapult to independence" (Olcott 1992), discussed later in this chapter.

In addition to this general overview, below I presented some specific features of the tale, interpretation of which related more closely to the aspects of social imaginary discussed in the previous chapters of this thesis.

6.1.3.2.3. The authority responsible for the child

Ernazar's encounter with the cannibal showed that a person's fate was seen as within the authority of their parents[142]. No one else had equal right to command Er Tostik's life as his father. Even the underworld Bapy Khan, who hosted Er Tostik, could not give him orders, but had to ask for a favour - fetching him a bride.

Also, the kin were shown as responsible for looking after each other: Er Tostik lived with, provided for and took care of his elderly parents; he also went searching for his lost brothers. In this way, it was to the family that the person's primary allegiance wasto.

6.1.3.2.4. The desirable one of us; We

As a hero tale, the story highlighted a set of features of the "desirable one of us". *Youth* - the youngest were the best children; the final rejuvenation was the highest reward. *Loyalty to one's family. Readiness to heed advice* - Tostik survived by taking advice from the stallion, while proud Ernazar fell prey to the cannibal, unable to listen to a girl. *Courage* - staying poised in the face of adversity. *Acceptance of fate* - putting up with loss, or betrayal. *Unusual strength/gift* and ability to win respect, friendship and support of the powerful and the other unusually gifted people. The gifted naturally gravitated toward power and each other, and, by putting together their talents, were able to accomplish Khan's requests.

The above characteristics resonated with the way some of my Kazakhstani interviewees described an educated person - someone, who had discovered own talent, developed it, and contributed to the country, as well as someone humane, with moral qualities, able to build relationships and knowing how to behave in various situations.

6.1.3.2.5. Role of the school and the teacher

No specific educational institutions or educational premises were mentioned in the tale. Metaphorically, we could interpret the entire life path of the protagonist as an educational experience. Its educational value was derived from practicing own skills and heeding the advice of people and animals. As a learner, Er Tostik was unassuming - none of the advice he

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[142] The closer Ernazar felt to the death, the more generous offers he made to the cannibal in exchange for keeping his own life - beginning with the dowry of his daughters in law, then his own livestock, then his dearest daughter in law Kenzhekey, then his own eight older sons, and only after that, his dearest son Er Tostik. This episode demonstrated that the father was seen as liable to command the lives of his children as much as he was liable to command his own wealth.

received was rejected, whoever it came from. His journey to find the brothers, for example, became possible only because he listened to an angry woman, who scolded and dared him to "go find the bones of his stray brothers".

6.1.3.2.6. The role of and the attitude toward the technology

Although he was exceptionally strong from birth, Er Tostik never refused to take advantage of special equipment. It was Kenzhekey's idea for him to saddle Shalquiryq (her father's head stallion) and wear Aqsyrmal (her family's treasured armour) on his way to the cannibal. And, although the story did not say how exactly Aqsyrmal helped Er Tostik, there were numerous occasions, where the decision to saddle Shalquiryq had proven vital. Similarly, the only magical object in the whole tale - Samuryq's feather - did prove to be of great consequence.

Not all the feats in the tale were accomplished thanks to the horse, the armour, or the magical feather - many indeed were possible thanks to the hero's cleverness or the naturally born talents of the hero and his friends. Still, being in possession of top-notch technology was portrayed as both prestigious and useful. This attitude to equipment rhymed with the way, in which most of my Kazakhstani teacher interviewees talked about the role of technology in the classroom.

6.1.3.2.7. Innovation

Most of the accomplishments in the tale were made thanks to the protagonist's skill (like archery, when killing the dragon), his cleverness (when droving the brothers' herds), or the talents of his mighty friends and supporters. In several instances the friends did "overcome all difficulties and troubles, instead of the hero" (Mingisheva 2015).

While in the case of Er Tostik the sum of these methods was not immediately recognisable as innovation, a clever application of ready approaches imported from elsewhere was frequently described as innovation in the interviews that I conducted in Kazakhstan.

6.1.3.2.8. The location of knowledge and know-how

In the tale of Er Tostik, there was a consistent premise that valuable things and know-how were located far away from the hero's native land. The protagonist had to travel the world, show openness, maintain the heroic image and build connections in order to be able to command those valuable things and know-how. For example, all valuable technology - stallion, armour, magical feather - was a gift from his bride or from Samuryq bird. And most of the valuable talent - Samuryq, six extraordinarily gifted heroes of the underworld - were from faraway as well.

The theme of openness and connection was also highlighted by the fact that Er Tostik brought his lost brothers home and befriended powerful rulers. Moreover, the tale's strongest characters were bilingual: Kenzhekey communicated with camel Quba and made a pact, Shalquiryq and Samuryq both spoke human to Er Tostik.

All these observations resonated well with how Kazakhstani teachers spoke of the role of school and education: "The school is necessary, because it enables the emergence of multilingual, knowledgeable children, who would travel the world and collect the newest know-how, various technology and knowledge, in order to bring them to Kazakhstan and to make own contribution to Kazakhstan's development"[143].

6.1.3.2.9. The perception of the flow of time

Unlike the story of Assipattle, all available variants of which were written in the past tense, the tale of Er Tostik set off with 9 short sentences in the past tense and then drew the audience to witness the action from inside, by narrating the rest of the story in the present tense, as if in real time. This stylistic manoeuvre[144] symbolically emphasised the importance of the present moment in the story, assigning the Now more weight than the Before or the After.

Overall, it seemed that the time within the tale was not organised as a continuous flow, but as a chain of loosely connected bouts. Er Tostik's life seemed as a series of separate adventures with their sole connecting character - Er Tostik himself - and the rest of the characters entering the story at some point and exiting it later. As the story progressed the number of co-travelling entities grew - a speaking stallion, servant girl Kunkey, Samuryq bird. Nevertheless, neither Samuryq, nor Kunkey kept Er Tostik a company when he finally returned home.

6.1.3.2.10. The attitude toward the Past

The characters of the tale, it seemed, were willing to see their lives in chunks, punctuated by some life calamities. For example, Ernazar lost eight sons along with all his wealth, and then had a new child. He never told the boy about the brothers, as if, after the loss, the life took a fresh start and the tragic Past no longer mattered.

After another life calamity - the capture by the cannibal and the painful exchange of Er Tostik's life for own freedom - Ernazar sent Tostik back to Sorqudyq without warning about the dangers and with no reported remorse, as if Tostik's existence no longer mattered.

When Er Tostik fell under the ground, he spent years blending in, making friends, implementing tasks. He even got married. All as if, once in the underworld, he began his life anew.

Similarly, when he decided to return to the surface of the earth and lost all his retinue and the new wife on the way, Er Tostik never was shown as lamenting the loss, or looking back at all.

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[143] The English text of the quote is my translation of the following phrase: "Мектеп - бүкіл тілдер меңгірген, білімді балаллар, әлем аралап жаңа әдіс-тәсілдерді, түрлі жабдықтарды, білімді жинақтап, Қазақстанға әкеліп, Қазақстанның дамуына өз үлесін қосуға мүмкіндік туғызу үшін керек."
[144] Having checked the texts of several more tales in volume 75 of a 100-volume book series of Kazakh cultural heritage "Бабалар Сөзі" ("The Word of Ancestors"), I came to appreciate that this kind of stylistic move was rather widespread in Kazakh folk tales (Kaskabasov 2011b).

6.1.3.2.11. The attitude toward the new

When the tale's characters faced life calamities and became surrounded with new circumstances, their main approach, it seemed, was to simply accept the new circumstances as a new reality and to move on.

Taken together, the above observations - on the flow of time and the attitude toward the Past and the new - appeared to offer some explanation to the rhetoric of "back then" and "nowadays" that I encountered in my Kazakhstani interviews. During the interviews, I rationalised the persistence of those perceived temporal locations as the consequence of the dramatic recent changes in the organisation of school education. The observations based on Er Tostik's tale, however, seemed to suggest that a sizeable distortion to the established way of society's life - like the break-up of the USSR and Kazakhstan's independence, discussed further on in this chapter - could contribute more clearly to the perception of a new pocket of time-space emerging and the previous one - closing.

6.1.3.3. Comparing the tales

The scholars of nationhood in both countries saw the elements of culture, including folklore, as meaningfully implicated in the national identity (identities), regardless of whether they saw that identity as gradually developed (Masanov 1995), invented by elites (Gellner 2006; Hobsbawm 1983), imagined and socially constructed (Anderson 1991), habitually reproduced (Billig 1995), reported as perceived (Haesly 2005), or articulated as experienced (Symon 1997). The Scottish scholarship even demonstrated how some dubious studies of folklore in the past contributed to creating the persistently essentialist images of Scottishness (Trevor-Roper 1983). And while those scholars of nationhood did not specifically discuss the role of individual folk tales, the two folk tales that I selected for comparison could well be described as pieces of "well-defined educationally sanctioned and unified cultures" (Gellner 2006, p.54) that were set to contribute to the two nations' contemporary self-images.

The folklore studies, perhaps somewhat contrary, tended to view the folk tale as "monumental" (Kaskabasov 1972, p. 227) and a suitable object for anthropological research (Haase 2008) - as something that mainly reflected a culture, rather than guiding it. As such, the Scottish tales were generally described as mesmerising adventures in picturesque though dangerous environments full of natural threats and supernatural foes (Westwood and Kingshill 2009, p.ix). The heroes of the tales were cognizant of the dual and contradictory nature of the barriers and opponents that they faced (Harris 2009, p.6), knew to keep the worst at bay by appearing respectful, and often managed to conquer them by relying on cleverness and wit (Harris 2009, p.22). The Kazakh tales were described as revolving around a "hero-seeker", who undertook a dangerous journey, overcame various perils with the help of assistants and returned home (Mingisheva 2015; Tursunova et al. 2016).

My analysis of the selected tales was based on the premise that a folk tale possessed both of the qualities highlighted by the political scientists and folklorists above. I took the two tales as both the records of cultures as they were, and the outlines for the potential becoming of those cultures. The fact that these two folk tales were offered to schools in the form of open educational resources by organisations outside the school systems appeared to justify such a stance.

In the comparison below I discuss the key commonalities between the two tales, followed by a number of their differences. I also interpret the ways in which the two tales relate to the aspects of social imaginary discussed in the analysis of previous research materials.

The two selected folk tales were conventional hero tales - the main protagonist left home, accomplished feats and united with his bride in a marriage. The youngest among many sons of the non-aristocratic, but successful agricultural workers - a farmer and a herder - the two heroes came from the typical and strong families. Such origins along with the other contextual features were, presumably, supposed to make the heroes and their worlds easily relatable for the tales' audiences. Among those other contextual features - the specific geography, the emblematic "social institutes of society" (Mingisheva 2015), the recognisable political set up, and some familiar features of the "life philosophy of community" (Tursunova et al. 2016).

The discrepancies between the two selected folk tales had to do with four different issues, in relation to which I interpreted their texts. These issues were: (1) the authority responsible for the child; (2) the desirable one of us and the role of education; (3) the location of knowledge and know-how; (4) the perception of the flow of time.

6.1.3.3.1. The authority responsible for the child

Each of the two tales touched upon the issue of claiming a child's life - in "Assipattle" the awful monster was weekly fed with young girls, in "Er Tostik" the hero himself was promised as a prey to a cannibal. The ways, in which the corresponding decisions were arrived at, I interpreted as the two tales' stances on who had the authority over a child. In the Scottish tale the decision was made by the state and arrived at through a wide consultation and expert recommendations. The parents of children campaigned and managed to modify the decision of the state, but not to completely overturn it. In the case of an individual child (the King's daughter), the wishes of the parent came second to those of the state and could only postpone implementation. In the Kazakh tale the decision was made by the hero's father, it was arrived at due to the pressure and intimidation from the cannibal. No other entity had a say about the life of Er Tostik. I matched these stances with the contexts of school education in the two countries and noticed a resonance with the level of school's responsibility (on behalf of the state) for the young person's life and wellbeing. This level was more salient in Scotland with its established system of pastoral care and guidance, as well as with the new Named Person policy, which was about to be launched at the time of my interviews.

6.1.3.3.2. The desirable one of us and the role of education

As hero tales, both stories portrayed the 'desirable one of us'. Both protagonists were brave and harnessed unusual gifts to contribute to the common good: Assipattle - imagination, Er Tostik - strength. As such, their images coincided with how teachers in the two countries described an educated person: in Scotland - someone, who built on own strengths and achieved own potential; in Kazakhstan - someone, who identified and developed a talent and contributed that to the country.

The two heroes differed in how socially acceptable their development paths were. Assipattle's thirst for storytelling, seen as impractical, was frowned upon. He was regularly punished for his unwillingness to engage in conventional farming with his father and brothers. Er Tostik was portrayed as socially praiseworthy for using his strength and archery to take care of his parents and to find his brothers. He also was a conforming learner, who took all advice that others shared with him. Despite these differences, both heroes proved victorious at the end, justifying own development paths. While the tales did not specifically mention school, the tales' attitudes toward the heroes' development paths could be interpreted as their broad approaches to education.

In this way, the story of Assipattle appeared to question the rationale for the strict uniformity in education. And I saw parallels with that in the way the Scottish educational policies advocated for the high quality, yet diverse content of school education. There also appeared to be some parallels with how the Scottish teachers spoke about not forcing some uniform subject knowledge upon individual pupils, but instead making efforts to "develop the whole child".

The story of Er Tostik, conversely, seemed to highlight the conventional way of educating a young person. And, specifically, a gifted young person. Moreover, this conventional way of educating was shown as free of challenges to it. Interpreting this somewhat liberally, I could notice parallels with the way, in which the contemporary Kazakhstani educational policies promoted a uniform type of schooling, developed on the basis of the experience of uncommonly-resourced schools for the gifted children.

6.1.3.3.3. The location of knowledge and know-how

In accomplishing the feats, the two heroes relied on different sets of help. For Assipattle the major breakthrough came thanks to his own fearless and imaginative application of the simple household skill and resources. This tale invited one (us?) to question the powerful reputation of sophisticated technology: the Sikkersnapper sword, though nominally available, played no role in slaying the monster. This turn of the plot could be interpreted as indicative of three attitudes that were also present in the other research material from Scotland. Toward technology: advanced equipment (like Sikkersnapper or electronic tablets) were seen as fashionable and convenient, however, its ability to contribute toward the goal (killing the beast or ensuring better learning) was considered, at best, unclear. Toward knowledge: what mattered the most was not the accumulation of various skills and resources, but the ability to

effectively apply those in daily life - akin to functional literacy, measured by the PISA examinations. Toward the source of know-how: the local skill (igniting fire) and local resources (knife and peat) were of the greatest consequence in accomplishing the most pressing tasks (defeating the monster). A complementary call for the localisation of school education was part of the agenda of the Curriculum for Excellence.

For Er Tostik the reliance on special resources - the stallion, the armour and the magical feather - was not only prestigious, it proved an important factor in eventual success. The main accomplishments were made thanks to Er Tostik's own strength and cleverness, or thanks to the talents of his willing assistants, whose friendly support he managed to earn. All special resources and talented assistants were shown as not hailing from the hero's native land. To come in possession of those resources and assistants Er Tostik had to travel far, demonstrate openness, keep heroic demeanour, lend his own assistance and then build mutually beneficial partnerships.

This repertoire of help that proved useful for Er Tostik could be interpreted as matching some attitudes that I found in the interview material from Kazakhstan. Toward technology: most of Kazakhstani teachers that I talked to were enthusiastic about the role of technology in the classroom, seeing it as a great contributor to learning. Toward advancing education: inviting and adapting ready approaches from other countries (akin to Er Tostik's reliance of friends' talents) was frequently described as innovation in education. Toward the location of know-how and the role of school education: Kazakhstani interviewees often said that the schools aimed to produce a multilingual educated person, who could go abroad, harvest the newest know-how and technology, bring it and apply it in Kazakhstan and, in this way, contribute to the country's goals.

Two ready ways to interpret the difference in the perceived location of know-how between Scotland and Kazakhstan were by relying on the cultural and intellectual centre-periphery thinking of the colonial discourse (Said 1978), or the geopolitical and economic notions of the core and periphery in the world system theory (Wallerstein 2004). I did, however, prefer to rely on Masanov's (1995) idea of the primacy of the nomadic lifestyle as a factor in the socio-cultural formation of the Kazakh nation. The year-round migration cycles of nomadic herders could be seen as imparting a predisposition to internalise movement and travel as emotionally rewarding and crucial for economic wellbeing.

6.1.3.3.4. The perception of the flow of time

The two compared folk tales narrated own stories in different tenses. Whereas the story of Assipattle apparently took place in the ancient times and was conveyed in the past tense, the story of Er Tostik was said to have happened long ago and then was conveyed using the present tense, as if unfolding in real time. As such, the two tales highlighted different temporal niches as central to the meaning.

The story of Assipattle, set in the Past, hinted at the continuous flow of time between when the story happened and when it was read. The souvenirs of the past events - the rocking seas, resilient islands and burning volcanoes - did still evidently go on in the Present. Moreover, the protagonist and his bride were said to be probably living still. The Past smoothly phased into the Present. Such a view of time and history as indelible resonated for me with the mindset of "It's Aye bin!" that some of my Scottish interviewees considered to be a psychological barrier to embracing change.

Narrated in the present tense, the tale of Er Tostik emphasised the present moment and, by doing so, created the demarcated Then and Now. The characters' lives seemed to consist of separate bouts of time-space, severed from each other by some life calamity - loss of kin, famine, betrayal, terrible accident. Whenever such calamity occurred and shook the way things used to be, the characters appeared to accept the changed circumstances as a new reality, shed their previous experience and moved on.

I interpreted this perception of the flow of time as enabling a pragmatic (if not fatalistic) acceptance of change, which was probably a useful attitudinal trait in the harsh and mobile lifestyle of nomadic herders. This interpretation became a key to my understanding of the earlier observations about the presence of the temporal locations of "back then" and "nowadays" in the conversations with my Kazakhstani interviewees. Using that key, I could settle a seeming paradox of why some teachers would mention having employed many advanced teaching techniques "back then" and yet wouldn't be willing to promote those techniques in the face of the active "nowadays" roll out of the "not so new" new techniques. The key seemed to suggest that by mentioning the technique as from "back then" the interviewee was in fact psychologically archiving that experience, as opposed to my previous interpretation that they were brandishing it as something deserving to be brought into the "nowadays".

Overall, the comparative analysis of the two selected folk tales appeared to reiterate or enrich some of the insights drawn from the analysis of the research materials in the previous chapters. In the section below, I examined political speeches with the aim to further widen the evidential base of this dissertation.

6.2. Public speeches by government leaders

At the level of society, the aspects of social imaginary discussed above did not only permeate the established cultural artefacts. They were also embedded in the contemporary public exchange of ideas that steered the daily unfolding of the countries' histories. Two formal speeches by high profile state officials were chosen to illustrate this point. One of them was the speech by Donald Dewar, the first Scottish First Minister during the ceremony of the opening of the devolved Scottish Parliament on 1 July 1999 (BBC 1999a). The other one was

the speech by Nursultan Nazarbayev delivered on 10 December 1991 in lieu of his inauguration as the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, who was elected by popular vote (Akorda n.d.). Below I considered the contextual commonalities between the two speeches, the ways in which their contexts were unique, the texts that I relied on, the content of what actually was said during each speech and how I interpreted the similarities and differences that stood out.

The commonalities between these two speeches included that they both were relatively brief ceremonial communications. Both speeches were delivered by the top state officials in the presence of the members of the countries' highest legislative bodies. The audiences of both speeches also included the representatives of executive-branch state authorities, prominent public figures, leading intellectuals and celebrities. The speeches were part of two formal ceremonies held at the grand locations of the two capital cities, not in the operational premises of the state legislatures. (Akorda n.d., BBC 1999c, BBC 1999d, BBC 1999e, Kasymbekov et al. 2010, Vox Populi 2012). Both ceremonies took place at two marking occasions on the two countries' gradual paths to independence. The two ceremonies occurred within the same decade. At the same time, given the dramatically different historical contexts, the two occasions were unique and differed from each other in some meaningful ways.

6.2.1. The ceremony of the opening of the Scottish Parliament on 1 July 1999
With the earliest written references to it dating back to 1235, the Scottish Parliament was the state legislative body for Scotland for at least five centuries. In 1707, following the 1706 Treaty of Union, the Scottish Parliament was dissolved and since then the representatives for Scotland passed legislation for the whole United Kingdom of Great Britain (UK) as the members of the single UK Parliament in Westminster, London. With the colossal growth of the UK, by 1885 the issues pertaining to Scotland had to be overseen by a specially set up unit of the UK government – the Scottish Office. Initially based in London, the Scottish Office moved to Edinburgh in 1939. In the second half of the last century the public calls intensified, demanding that Scotland should have a separate legislative organ, if not a complete political independence from Westminster. After one unsuccessful (in terms of securing devolution) referendum in 1979 and two decades of intensive work to develop an effective framework, in 1997 the Scottish electorate voted in favour of a devolved Scottish Parliament. Based on that vote, in 1998 the UK Parliament passed the Scotland Act, setting up the devolved Scottish institutions with legislative and executive powers. (The Scottish Parliament n.d.b). The elections to the first devolved Scottish Parliament took place in 1999 (The Scottish Parliament n.d.b), putting in charge of Scotland a minority Labour government under the leadership of First Minister Donald Dewar - a seasoned Labour politician with over twenty years of experience as a member of the UK parliament in London (MacAskill 2000). The official

commencement of the Scottish Parliament was a highly celebrated event with Queen Elizabeth II coming to Edinburgh on 1 July 1999 to formally open it (BBC 1999c, BBC 1999f).

6.2.2. The inauguration of President Nazarbayev on 10 December 1991

Since the 18th century, the Kazakhs - long known as a self-standing society of nomadic herders with their first eponymous state formed in 1465[145] - had entered a complex and profound entanglement with the Russian Empire[146], replaced in 1917 by the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)[147]. By the end of 1980s, among the 15 republics of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan was one of the most deeply, albeit awkwardly, immersed in it (demographically, culturally, economically)[148], which made Kazakhstan a vocal and active proponent of negotiating a new format of inter-USSR relationships, as opposed to those, who insisted on the simple undoing of the Soviet Union[149]. (Dave 2007, National Digital History Portal 2013a-2014, Olcott 1992)

In the early 1990s a series of rapid changes to the Communist-Party-led structure of power division[150] were taking place all over the USSR with Kazakhstan often among the last to follow

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[145] The Kazakh Khanate was formed in 1465. The khanate consisted of many Ru (tribes, clans) that were organised into three large Juz (hordes) (National Digital History Portal 2013b).

[146] Being part of a highly volatile region, the Kazakh Khanate was embroiled in many armed conflicts with the neighbouring states. Following the 1730s' desperate request for Russia's military support by the leader of Kishi Juz (junior horde), by 1850s the entire territory of the three Kazakh Juz became gradually absorbed by the Russian Empire in a process that was a combination of peaceful accession and forceful annexation (National Digital History Portal 2013a).
Within the Russian Empire, the ruling over the nomadic Kazakh herders was mostly delegated to the Kazakh nobility, while the steady flows of the new military and peasant settlers occupied more and more fertile land that was previously used for herding. The Empire sliced the territory of Kazakhstan and added it to different administrative regions. (National Digital History Portal 2013g, National Digital History Portal 2014).

[147] The USSR's policy of nationalities saw the Kazakh territories re-bundled together into a separate Republic, Kazakh national cadre built up through affirmative action, and the country's economy rapidly modernized, albeit through a tragic forced settling of the nomadic herders that claimed millions of lives. (Dave 2007, Isaacs 2015, National Digital History Portal 2013d, National Digital History Portal 2013e).

[148] The Soviet Kazakhstan became one of the republics that were the most immersed in the Union. It was highly multi-ethnic - between 1897 and 1989 the share of Kazakhs in the population dropped from 81.7% to just about 40% and the number of resident nationalities grew from just over 60 to almost 130 (National Digital History Portal 2013f, National Digital History Portal 2013c). Many commentator agreed that Kazakhstan was the most Russified - the Russian language was the most spoken in the Republic, with 64% of indigenous Kazakhs claiming fluency in it in 1989 Census (Dave 2007). The economy of Kazakhstan - mostly extracting, agricultural or producing supplies - was highly dependent on the coordinating role of Moscow (National Digital History Portal 2013h).

[149] The beginning of 1990s was a period densely packed with the tumbling changes taking place all over the USSR. Some other republics were engaged in civil unrest and interethnic armed conflict (Litvin and Glezin n.d.).
Unlike other parts of the USSR, where the nationalist independence movements or interethnic conflicts proliferated since mid-1980s and contributed to the demise of the Soviet Union, in Kazakhstan the danger of various nationalist and interethnic mood-swings leading to the open confrontations became acute only in the face of the imminent collapse of the Union and the unpredictability of the ensuing changes to the existing connections between its former parts. (Olcott 1992).

[150] The structure of power in the Soviet Union consisted of administrative, representative and control branches, as well as the political oversight by the Communist Party. The head of the state in the USSR was the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR - political oversight. The government was led by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers - administrative branch. The parliament (Supreme Council) was headed by its own Chairman - representative branch. And there

the trend[151]. In August 1991, in condemnation of the attempted coup by the core group of the Communist Party of the USSR and the subsequent stalling of the negotiations about the new format of the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of Kazakhstan decided to disentangle itself from the functioning of the state bodies[152]. (Kasymbekov et al. 2010, Kordonskiy 1996, Litvin and Glezin n.d.)

On 1 December 1991 Nursultan Nazarbayev won the first popular vote elections to the post of the President of Kazakhstan. His inauguration took place on 10 December and was meant to celebrate an obvious achievement in the country's history. However, the unexpected events of 8 December 1991 - Belarus, Russia and Ukraine unilaterally left the USSR and formed a new Commonwealth - signified a de-facto collapse of the USSR and threw into disarray any hope for the gradual reform of the Soviet Union. For Kazakhstan this meant a "catapult to independence" (Olcott 1992) - a shaky and obscure path with no guarantees of success. (Kasymbekov et al. 2010, Litvin and Glezin n.d.)

These stark contextual differences provided the clues to the difference in the tones of the two speeches. As shown below, the two statesmen infused their speeches with two contrasting takes on what the day was for - a deep and quiet reflection or a heated call for action.

Despite this obvious mismatch, both speeches were telling in terms of conjuring the image of who the 'we' were, where 'we' stood in relation to time and from where 'we' were to acquire the necessary knowledge and strength to accomplish 'our' own missions. I specifically looked for the kinds of expressive features that these speakers employed. Their use of those features must have relied on an expectation that they would speak to and make sense to their fellow

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were a number of officials in charge of the control branch: for example, the General Prosecutor or the Chairman of the Supreme Court. (Kordonskiy 1996).

The power structure in Soviet Kazakhstan was largely similar to the one of the USSR as a whole: First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan led the Republic (Kordonskiy 1996). On 25 October 1990 the Supreme Council of Kazakhstan adopted the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, which established the new principle of power distribution: the Supreme Council was in charge of legislative power, the President - in charge of administrative-executive power, and the Supreme Court - in charge of the judicial power (Kasymbekov et al 2010).

[151] For example, on 24 April 1990 the Supreme Council of Kazakhstan elected Nursultan Nazarbayev, the then First Secretary of the Communist Party Kazakhstan and the Chairman of the Supreme Council, to the post of the President of Kazakhstan (Kasymbekov et al 2010). This was over a month after the Supreme Council of the USSR elected Mikhail Gorbachev, the then General Secretary of Communist Party of the USSR and the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the USSR, as the first President of the USSR on 15 March 1990 (Litvin and Glezin n.d.).

Also, in what was dubbed as the 'parade of sovereignties' of 1988-1990, each of the 15 Soviet republics declared the primacy of own state laws over any other laws, including those of the Union. Kazakhstan's Declaration of State Sovereignty from 25 October 1990 made it the 14th out of 15 republics to adopt such a document (Litvin and Glezin n.d.). It was only the neighbouring Kyrgyzstan that adopted own declaration after Kazakhstan did.

[152] On 28 August 1991 the Communist Party of Kazakhstan held an emergency Plenary Session, where it made the decision to withdraw from the Communist Party of the USSR, to adjourn its Central Committee and to recommend that there should be no combining of the leadership positions in the state bodies with the leadership positions in political parties (Kasymbekov et al 2010).

citizens. Before going on to describing what I noticed, however, a few words about the specific texts that I relied on.

6.2.3. The texts

6.2.3.1. The speech by the First Minister of Scotland

While I eventually chose to rely on the transcription published on the BBC website on the day of the event (1999a), at the time of research there were two other transcriptions openly accessible online. One was part of Political Speech Archive - a collection of speeches by UK public figures (UKPOL 2015). Another was an educational resource for language and literacy curriculum published by the Scottish Parliament (The Scottish Parliament n.d.a).

The three transcriptions noticeably differed in their choices of punctuation, in their choice of when to begin and when to stop transcribing, and had numerous word choice differences. These differences confirmed my methodological misgivings about the task of transcribing, which could not be considered a neutral act of relay, but had to be seen as an act of interpreting and co-producing the written word.

I chose to rely on the BBC transcription as the 'more complete' and the best corresponding to the video of the speech (C-SPAN 1999), although I appreciated the necessarily tentative or proxy character of any one of the three alternative versions.

6.2.3.2. The speech by the President of Kazakhstan

I relied on the transcription of the speech published on the official website of the President (Akorda n.d.). Another transcription was available in the first volume of a printed book series *Первый Президент Республики Казахстан Нурсултан Назарбаев. Хроника деятельности. 1990-1991* (*The First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev. Chronicles of Activity. 1990-1991*) (Kasymbekov et al. 2010). In contrast with the Scottish case, the two transcriptions were identical, except for one comma. This stunning similarity drove me to two unrelated considerations. On the one hand, I surmised that, being published by governmental agencies, they both could have relied on the same initial written version of the speech, or on a uniform transcription, circulated within the state's bureaucracy. On the other hand, I became alive to the fact that in the face of scarcity of information about the Past (when only the similar sources were available) one could end up under the impression that he/she was able to learn for certain what was or wasn't said at some historic event.

The above inspection of available texts allowed me to appreciate that any transcriptions necessarily sat on a spectrum of accuracy and that the scarcity of information could invite an unnecessary air of certainty. With that in mind I set out to examine the broad-stroke aspects of the speeches, keeping in mind that their finer aspects were an outcome of interpretation.

6.2.4. The speech by the First Minister of Scotland

Donald Dewar's speech was a reply to the Queen, who opened the Parliament and made the gift of a specially commissioned Ceremonial Mace (BBC 1999b, BBC 1999c, BBC 1999f). The tone of the speech, which BBC called "emotional" (1999e), sounded resolute, solemn and poetic (C-SPAN 1999). The content of the speech (BBC 1999a) inspired to reflect on the historic significance of the day and the distinct national character of Scotland that was trusted to manifest itself in the work of its Parliament. The speech was highly illustrative of a number of aspects of social imaginary that this dissertation has dealt with in previous chapters.

6.2.4.1. Flow of time

A consistent theme recurring throughout the speech was about the place of the day's events within the context of historical continuity. The First Minister traced the emergence of the Parliament "through long years" from "hope" to "reality", called this process a "long haul", saw the opening of the Parliament as "a new stage in a journey begun long ago and which has no end", and pondered about the values and principles that "have brought us to this point and which will sustain us in the future".

There was also a strong call for contemplating the past and appreciating the nation's journey. The First Minister saw the day as "a moment anchored in our history", when, if attentive, "we might hear some echoes from the past", the echoes of "the struggles of those who brought democracy to Scotland" and "that other parliament dissolved in controversy over 300 years ago". "The past is part of us, part of every one of us and we respect it", he maintained.

As the core string that tied the past, present and future together, thus creating the continuous flow of time, the First Minister highlighted the "principles of social justice", "the traditions, the democratic imperatives" that he believed to be part of the proud and distinctly Scottish national character. So, it was the specific 'who we are' that firmly glued the past, present and future into the one continuous 'story'.

6.2.4.2. A desirable one of us; We

The references to a distinct Scottish national character and values came up twice and formed a consistent image. The First Minister drew attention to the "very Scottish conviction that honesty and simple dignity are priceless virtues not imparted by rank or birth or privilege but part of the soul", which he believed to be the key message of Robert Burns' song "A Man's A Man For A' That" sung earlier on during the opening ceremony.

The First Minister further referred to the four words engraved on the Parliament's Ceremonial Mace - "wisdom, justice, compassion, integrity" - as the "timeless values", which were now the "honourable aspirations for this new forum of democracy born on the cusp of a new century".

Interestingly, these four words, chosen by the Mace's silversmith Michael Lloyd (BBC 1999b)[153], were to become the key words again in the Curriculum for Excellence.

6.2.4.3. Location of knowledge and know-how

As frequently seen in other Scottish material, the main source of expertise to support the Scottish Parliament was described as very local. The First Minister praised the Mace as the symbol of the "great democratic traditions from which we draw our inspiration and our strength". He saw the day as the one to go down in history as "the day when democracy was renewed in Scotland when we revitalised our place in this, our United Kingdom". In both of these statements the source of expertise and authority were essentially 'from here', were local - the "great democratic traditions" and "this, our United Kingdom".

6.2.4.4. Attitude toward the new

Balancing his statement about the past being "part of every one of us", the First Minister was quite upbeat about the happening changes, saying: "But today there is a new voice in the land, the voice of a democratic parliament, a voice to shape Scotland, a voice above all for the future". He summed up the optimistic attitude toward the new by stating: "I look forward to the days ahead...".

6.2.4.5. Timing of the Future

There was no direct reference to the timing of the future, however it was alluded to in some abstract terms, when imagining what the people in the future would think about the day of the Parliament's opening. "Today we can look forward to the time when this moment will be seen as a turning point", said the First Minister. In principle, given the importance of the event, "this moment" could be "seen as a turning point" already on 1 July 1999. So, as it was frequent in the previously discussed Scottish material, in the speech the timing of the future was again experienced as starting from now on.

6.2.4.6. Romanticism vs. Pragmatism

While the greater part of the speech was poetic and reflective, the First Minister made two 'hands on' pragmatic comments. He said that the Parliament was "not an end but a means to greater ends" and told Her Majesty that he and the other newly elected members of the Scottish Parliament would "dedicate ourselves to the work that lies ahead".

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[153] According to the BBC (1999b), Michael Lloyd's design almost entirely ignored the commissioning specifications and was mostly a product of the professional skill, the artistic passion and the ingenious parsing of the public mood by this Galloway-based silversmith. Apparently, Lloyd wished to engrave a fifth word - Courage - but there wasn't enough space on the head of the Mace to fit the fifth word (Uruisg 2012a-b).

6.2.5. The speech by the President of Kazakhstan

The inaugural address by Nursultan Nazarbayev was made after his formal swearing in and the passing of the Supreme Council's Resolution on his assumption of the office (Kasymbekov et al. 2010). The tone of the text was dramatic, decisive and persuading to act. It read as a determined thrust to outline the situation and offer an agenda, to gain the people's trust and secure their commitment, and to urge them to actively engage in the painful social and economic re-organisation of their country. In doing so the speaker employed a number of aspects of social imaginary that were also present in the other parts of the thesis material. In keeping with the earlier methodological decision, I analysed the text of the speech (Akorda n.d.) in its original language - Russian. In order to write up the analysis below, I translated some selected passages into English by myself.

6.2.5.1. Flow of time

For the most part, the President's speech focused on the pivotal role of the present moment and how it was crucial to implement what was necessary at present in order to safeguard independence, democracy and stability.

The extraordinariness of the Now was stressed through statements like: "Not every generation is destined to witness and take part in such grand historical changes as the ones that we all are experiencing" and "Today, with the society in the situation of crisis - at the threshold of two epochs - the factor of time is of great importance". The Now was presented as a new trying period, the successful passage of which would determine the country's chance to exist in the future. The President said: "And at this new historic turn the peoples of Kazakhstan made a decisive choice in favour of a civilised democratic society" and "As such, we are to radically change the entire socio-economic way of life and this undertaking, as the history has shown, can only be successful in places, where the society is powered by the common idea, in the name of which the people are willing to withstand the temporary hardships and even some failures".

In one sense, the Now was being highlighted as a time for action: "... the acuteness of the problems that we will face in the nearest months leave no time for delay, forcing us to act quickly, decisively and with precision" and "Nowadays it is clear to almost all that the history has left us no choice, except for the cardinal changes in the relations of production".

In another sense, the all-potent Now was pictured as a moment that palpably punctuated the flow of time, separating the before and the after, creating a new chunk of history. Looking back at Kazakhstan's past, the President noted that there used to be many previous historic chunks like this: "Many state formations used to exist in its ancient land, which, just like people, experienced their childhood, youth, maturity, suffered decay and were reborn from the ashes". Of course, those chunks of the Past were not seen as completely disconnected from the Now or from each other - the President did mention the example of Kazakh khan Abylai's actions that he deemed worthy of repeating at the present moment, he also mentioned the "thousand

years long Kazakh history". However, those chunks did not nearly form as continuous a flow as the history of Scotland, evoked in the speech of the First Minister Dewar. One of the explanations for this could be the perceived lack of a consistent 'we' - whether defined by the values or the DNA - that continuously paddled on throughout the history of Kazakhstan[154].

6.2.5.2. Attitude toward the Past

The Past in the speech consisted of chunks not only in a chronological sense. There were also different Pasts, toward which the President expressed different attitudes. There was a distant Past with wise rulers like the 18th century Abylai khan, who, according to the President, understood the intricacies of Kazakhstan's geopolitical location and acted with prudence and cunning to preserve the country's unity and independence. There was also a not-so-distant Past of 1917 socialist revolution, the crushing resolve of which was alluded to and condemned in the passage: "Having said that, the radical course should not be equated with the total undoing and destruction. We have been there already". Finally, there was the Soviet yesterday governed by the Communist Party, which was remembered as bleak, but not completely without a seed of good: "Even though our yesterday has left us with few positives, the truly valuable experience and the historical ties should nevertheless be carefully preserved".

6.2.5.3. Attitude toward the new

As already noted, the Now was described as the moment that opened a new era. That is why the President expressed the same spectrum of attitudes to the new as the wary yet excited feelings toward the challenging and promising Now. On the one hand, the speech was upbeat about the new: "We should be mindful of the fact that we received an historic chance that should not be allowed to slip away". On the other hand, the new was seen as risky although the President was still positive about its odds: "However, Kazakhstan must be ready to face any turn of events. We are capable of living independently".

6.2.5.4. A desirable one of us; We

As the common idea that was supposed to power the society through the trying times the speech put forth the "free sovereign democratic state of Kazakhstan", in favour of which the citizens of the republic had apparently voted during the presidential elections. The three ready assets that were expected to help the republic to successfully pass through the period of challenges included the people, the existing industry and the natural resources:

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[154] To this day many scholars had found the issues of national identity in Kazakhstan baffling and not really well-fitting the conventional bifurcation between the ideal types of 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalisms (Dave 2007, Burkhanov 2017, Isaacs 2015, Melich and Adibayeva 2013, Ó Beacháin and Kevlihan 2011).

We are capable of living independently. To that end we possess the necessary economic potential, the richest natural resources, and, most importantly, we have the qualified cohort of workers and farmers, talented scholars and engineers. We have a remarkable creative intelligentsia and the youth, ready to serve the cause of wellbeing for their native republic. (Akorda n.d., ¶12)

As seen from these statements, the President underlined the ideal of a people united and diverse. This idea was twice reiterated in more multi-cultural sense toward the end of the speech: "On the 1 December the polling stations saw not simply an election. What happened there laid the basis for the forming of a new brotherhood community of Kazakhs, Russians, Ukrainians, Koreans, Germans, Uyghurs - all those, who as a united team had decided to break their path through the dramatic present into the robust future of our republic". The speech also read: "I believe that we will manage to create on the territory of our country a highly developed polyethnic civilisation, where the Kazakh nation will see its renaissance, where all the nations and ethnicities living there will experience freedom"[155].

Commenting on the lack of cadre competent to implement the necessary market reforms, the President said: "To me the solution of this issue looks unequivocal: we need a pleiad of young leaders, who will ensure the republic's breakthrough into the future". This statement drew on a deep-seated sentiment that I often heard from Kazakhstani interviewees that, if properly educated, the young would shine and save the day. It was also consistent with the expectation in the numerous hero folk tales, like Er Tostik, where the young were portrayed as the strongest and the best fit to ensure the security for their own people.

6.2.5.5. Location of knowledge and know-how

Apart from the ready assets - like people, economy and natural resources - the future success of Kazakhstan was seen as reliant on its policy of openness and willingness to integrate into the larger world. The speech suggested the need to "cultivate good neighbourly relations with all adjacent countries", confirmed Kazakhstan's enthusiasm for "integration processes" and envisioned that Kazakhstan would one day become "an independent subject of international relations, actively functioning entity in the world's economic space".

The President drew attention to the auspicious geographical location of Kazakhstan, which granted it access to both Asia-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic regions. The foreign direct investments that the government was about to invite were portrayed as the "important factor for cardinal structural changes in the country's economy".

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[155] As noted by many scholars (Burkhanov 2017, Dave 2007), the Kazakhstani idea of multi-cultural society is reminiscent of the Soviet era internationalism, where all Soviet people - Russians and non-Russians - were seen as part of the Soviet brotherhood of nations. This type of multi-culturalism is, at its core, privileging one big brotherly nation over all the others and thus is perplexing for an outside observer.

With those structural changes being a very difficult process the earlier experience of other countries - like Turkey, South Korea, Singapore, East European countries - was presented as a valuable source of expertise to take the lessons from.

6.2.5.6. Romanticism vs. Pragmatism

There was almost no space in the 1,238-word speech for romanticising the past or the future. The bulk of writer's creativity was devoted to depicting the dramatic nature of Now. However, even the Now was demonstrated as a time for action rather than awe. A traditionally 'thank you for entrusting me with the country, of which I am very proud' speech had long passages on the critical nature of the current moment and what tasks standing before the country the speaker perceived as the most pressing. In other words, the entire tone of the speech was mostly pragmatic.

6.2.6. Comparing the speeches

To tally up, the two speeches had some obvious similarities in style, some clearly explainable differences in focus and some interesting mismatches in tone and the ways in which they chose to speak about the time, the 'who we are', the 'what helps us' and the 'what we need to do'.

In terms of style, both statesmen talked with resolve, used a rich and dramatic vocabulary and were infusing their speeches with highly patriotic sentiment. Despite these stylistic similarities, the tone of the two speeches differed. The First Minister's speech sounded high-minded, thoughtful and had some poetically structured segments. The President's speech appeared to present a case and promote specific solutions in a more business-like manner. On the one hand these differences in tone could stem from the same contextual factors as the differences in the focus of the speeches. On the other hand, they could be illustrative of the difference in the aesthetics of public communication in the two countries. Unfortunately, checking the justifiability of the latter supposition lay outside the scope of the current dissertation.

The drastic differences in the focuses of the speeches were explainable by the contextual circumstances. The First Minister of Scotland was opening a long-desired body that would add political weight to the voice of the Scottish people within the safe environment of the common United Kingdom - on balance, a positive and poised situation. His speech was far-sighted and called the audience to reflect beyond the celebrations of the day and to deeply contemplate the distinctly Scottish principles and values that made the day possible and should persist into the future. The President of Kazakhstan was accepting a new highest office in a subdivision of a shuddering empire, a subdivision that was unexpectedly pushed into a hard-breakup independence as opposed to its desired re-negotiated interconnectedness - on balance, a high-risk yet exciting situation. His speech was giving the assessment of the current moment, setting a bright common goal, soliciting commitment, outlining the path and calling for a concerted effort. These contextual differences, nevertheless, were not enough of a basis to

explain the differing ways in which they chose to talk about time, people, expertise and the plans for action.

I interpreted the two speeches as considerably different in the portrayal of the flow of time. The First Minister of Scotland described time as a seamlessly continuous flow of history, where the past was part of every person's identity, the present was the direct product of the past and the future began right now. In his interpretation, the connecting string that linked the times into this continuous flow was the consistent 'who we are'. His attitude toward the new was positive. The President of Kazakhstan portrayed the time as a series of epochs, where the past consisted of semi-connected chunks of time-space and the Now was so potent that it clearly broke the fabric of history into a before and an after, kick-starting a new era. The new era was coming with a new 'we' - instead of the Soviet brotherhood of Russians and non-Russians, the new era was bringing a new brotherhood of Kazakhs and non-Kazakhs.[156] The President's attitude toward the new was wary, but optimistic.

The collective ethos, the 'we' that the two speeches alluded to were also different. In the speech of First Minister Dewar the 'we' was primarily defined in normative terms - as the people upholding the democratic principles of social justice and valuing above all "honesty and simple dignity", as well as "wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity". Although the First Minister employed some specific historical markers, like the "parliament dissolved in controversy over 300 years ago" or the "shout of the welder in the din of the great Clyde shipyards", the Past, which according to him was "part of every one of us", was not drawn in strictly nationalistic colours - the 'we' were still a fond, integral part of "this, our United Kingdom".

In the speech of the President Nazarbayev the 'we' was primarily defined in political terms - as all those, who took part in the elections and voted for a "free sovereign democratic state of Kazakhstan", and thus made up a united polity, a "brotherhood" of socio-economically and ethno-culturally diverse people. This entity of 'we' was presented as one of the three main assets that the republic possessed in its quest for success - the other two being the natural resources and economy. Consistent with the other Kazakhstani material, the central figure of 'we', the 'desirable one of us' presented in the President's speech was an educated, star-like young person, on whom the society was placing its highest hopes.

Another interesting mismatch was in the location of 'that, what helps us'. In the speech of the First Minister Dewar the nation drew strength from some very local things, like the principles, values and "democratic imperatives". And in the speech of the President Nazarbayev the nation was expected to draw strength from both local and foreign things: local - its cherished goal of a "free sovereign democratic state of Kazakhstan", and foreign - the experience of other countries, who had passed through a similar trying period as the one that Kazakhstan was about to enter. Moreover, in the speech of Kazakhstan's President the openness and

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[156] This is consistent with the analysis of nation-building conducted by Burkhanov (2017) and Dave (2007).

connectedness with abroad, including the foreign investment, was presented as the key factor that was supposed to help the nation to accomplish its main goal. By contrast, Scotland's First Minister never mentioned anything from the world broader than Scotland itself, or "this, our United Kingdom".

Finally, there was a difference in how the two speakers talked about 'what we need to do'. First Minister Dewar envisioned the future work, when he mentioned that the new Parliament was "not an end but a means to greater ends", that he and his colleagues would "dedicate ourselves to the work that lies ahead", and that he expected that the Parliament "will sound with debate, argument and passion, when men and women from all over Scotland will meet to work together for a future built on the first principles of social justice". The speech of President Nazarbayev was much more detailed on what specific things he aimed to implement, how painful he expected them to turn out and where he planned to obtain the investment to cover those activities. I interpreted this difference as the more accentuated pragmatic streak that could be characteristic of the Kazakhstani public communication in comparison with that in Scotland.

To take stock, the above discussion of the two selected high-profile speeches by government officials demonstrated that, despite the unique historical and political contexts, there was a measure of similarity between the speeches and the circumstances surrounding them. This made the respective contents of those speeches relatable to each other and a suitable material for meaningful comparison. The undertaken comparative analysis of the aspects of social imaginary permeating the speeches converged with some of the salient points from the analysis of other research material undertaken in the earlier sections and chapters. Below I offered a summing up discussion of the findings from the comparative analyses of the two sets of societal level materials - the folk tales and the political speeches.

6.3. Discussion

This chapter examined the presence of the earlier discerned aspects of social imaginary - through the analysis of interviews, educational conferences and scholarly publications - in the materials pertaining to the level of society as a whole. By doing so I expected to corroborate the previous findings and, potentially, broaden and enrich them.

In order to accomplish this, I compared and analysed two sets of materials: folk tales - "Assipattle and the Stoorworm" and "Er Tostik"; and high-profile speeches by political leaders - the speech of Donald Dewar, First Minister during the ceremony of the Opening of the Scottish Parliament on 1 July 1999 and the speech of Nursultan Nazarbayev, President during his inauguration as the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan elected by popular vote on 10 December 1991. By examining the folk tales, I was looking at the long-established cultural artefacts that informed many generations of people in Scotland and Kazakhstan. By

considering the speeches of statesmen I concentrated on what aspects of social imaginary they evoked in order to be best heard and understood by their current-day nation-wide audience.

The reasons to select these particular folk tales included: (1) their belonging to the genre of hero tales that often showcased the national self-image; (2) their relative popularity and presence in various collections of folk tales; (3) the fact that they both were recommended for use in schools; and (4) their public availability online as parts of two collections of educational resources, organised and curated by bodies outside of the system of school education. The selected speeches were chosen on the basis of their important similarities: (1) both were delivered by the heads of the government in front of the members of the highest representative bodies; (2) the speeches were delivered within the same decade; (3) both were parts of official ceremonies, marking momentous occasions on the two countries' paths to independence; (4) the two ceremonies were conducted in grand historic locations of the two capital cities; and (5) both were attended not only by the members of the representative bodies, but also by the prominent figures of civil society, leading academics, celebrities.

The actual texts for comparison were 1,238-word English language text of "Assipattle and the Stoorworm" by Bea Ferguson (2014), 6,709-word Kazakh language text of "Er Tostik" (Kaskabasov 2011b), 707-word English language text of Donald Dewar's speech (BBC 1999a), and 1,238-word Russian language text of Nursultan Nazarbayev (Akorda n.d.). In accordance with the earlier methodological decision, the texts were analysed in their original languages and the relevant excerpts were translated into English to be presented as part of the texts' discussion within this dissertation.

The process of locating the actual texts was less straightforward than I expected and entailed some searching and matching, which I described in detail earlier in this chapter. In this process, an interesting pattern emerged. Both with the tales and the speeches, the materials from Scotland had more than one version of the English language text available, with those versions differing considerably. The texts found in relation to the materials from Kazakhstan, on the contrary, were almost identical with each other.

This contrast between the two countries in the number and diversity of available records of, presumably, the same thing said something about the ways, in which Scotland and Kazakhstan felt about the Past and recalled it. As expressed by Donald Dewar, in Scotland "the past is part of us" and, perhaps, that is why its representations were alive and shifting. Conversely, Kaskabasov's assertion that the Kazakh tale "has, indeed, become monumental and undoubtedly is of exceptional aesthetic and educational value" (Kaskabasov 1972, p. 227) conveyed a different, reverential attitude toward the static beauty of the frozenly preserved Past.

This contrast also made me appreciate that any record of event or a story, whether or not we could find an alternative to it, would necessarily belong to a spectrum of accuracy; and that keeping a smaller number of records contributed to a comforting, though misleading air of certainty, as if it was possible to clearly know what happened. Therefore, any judgement would need to sit on a widely cast set of materials that could corroborate each other. And no judgement should claim to have discovered a totally sure answer.

In terms of the main question of this chapter, in each set of the examined materials there were a number of correspondences with the salient aspects of social imaginary discerned from the interviews - the core material of this dissertation. Below I have pulled together and discussed four clusters of these correspondences.

6.3.1. The desirable one of us and the role of education
In comparing the tales and comparing the speeches, the images of the 'desirable one of us' appeared to possess some common and some country-specific streaks. The tales and the speeches were unanimous in conveying that there was something very distinct about the 'desirable one of us', a single person of 'we'. Both tales, for example, stated that the hero, the main protagonist was marked with a unique talent - Assipattle had unusual imagination and Er Tostik was extraordinarily strong.

The country-specific streak in Scotland - common to the tale and the speech - was the emphasis on social justice and equal rights despite differences. The tale conveyed this indirectly. It showed that neither his unconventional lifestyle, nor his impractical love of storytelling justified the ridicule, to which the hardworking older brothers subjected the central character Assipattle; and that a true hero could, in fact, reside in a person, whom others never expected to possess any hero-like qualities. The speech asserted Scotland's distinctive enthusiasm for social justice and equality much more directly - the First Minister stressed "a very Scottish conviction that honesty and simple dignity are priceless virtues not imparted by rank or birth or privilege but part of the soul". In sum, the Scottish idea of the 'desirable one of us' combined the personal uniqueness and the aspiration for social justice and equality. This idea of the 'desirable one of us' related well to the way, in which teachers in Scotland described 'an educated person' and the 'role of the school'. An educated person was frequently described as someone, who developed own talents and achieved full potential. The role of the school was often seen as providing a high quality of education through diverse means with the aim of "developing the whole child" instead of drumming in a uniformly prescribed set of knowledge.

The country-specific streaks in Kazakhstan - both in the tale and the speech - were loyalty to the family/brotherhood, ability to heed advice, and youth. In the tale, these streaks were directly observable in the persona of the main protagonist Er Tostik - the youngest sibling, who took care of the elderly parents, sought and brought home the lost brothers and succeeded thanks to taking various advice from people or animals. The speech touched upon these

issues indirectly. It praised the new "brotherhood" that was forged in the Republic as the result of the almost unanimous vote in favour of the "free sovereign democratic state of Kazakhstan" during the Presidential elections. Call for the loyalty to that politically defined "brotherhood" was a call to patriotism toward the Republic of Kazakhstan. In terms of heeding advice, the speech mentioned several times the need to learn from the experience of other countries. And the high hopes placed on the youth were demonstrated in the President's statement: "we need a pleiad of young leaders, who will ensure the republic's breakthrough into the future". In sum, the Kazakhstani idea of the 'desirable one of us' combined the personal talent, obedient learning, and loyal patriotism of a young person. This idea of the 'desirable one of us' corresponded well with the way, in which teachers in Kazakhstan described 'an educated person' - someone, who identified and developed their own talents and contributed them to the benefit of the country. The 'role of the school', in accordance with such idea, was in providing the initially gifted child with the best advice and preparation and instilling the patriotic allegiance in them. This description largely corresponded with the mission of the highly-resourced schools for the gifted children, whose experience was planned to be cascaded to the rest of Kazakhstani schools.

6.3.2. The authority responsible for the child

Although neither tales, nor speeches did directly touch upon this question, the theme of claiming a child's life, present in both tales, could serve as an indirect indication of the answer to it. In the tale of Assipattle the key decision to protect the country by providing the monster with a weekly meal of seven girls was made by the state and the parents' opinion appeared to be of secondary importance. In the tale of Er Tostik the only authority commanding the hero's life was his father. Avoiding own death from the hands of the cannibal, the father promised to give him Er Tostik instead.

This country-specific mismatch corresponded well with the salience of the role that the state played in the young person's life and wellbeing. In Scotland this role of the state (through the established system of pastoral care and guidance, and the new Named Person policy) appeared to be more salient than in Kazakhstan.

6.3.3. The location of knowledge and know-how

The comparison of folk tales and the political speeches suggested that the materials from Scotland differed from materials from Kazakhstan in how they assigned the location of valuable resources and know-how.

In the tale of Assipattle and in the speech of the First Minister of Scotland, the resources, skills, traits and values that helped the 'desirable one of us' to achieve goals were almost exclusively local, from his own homeland. The prestigious non-local equipment like the Sikkersnapper sword, hailing from Odin himself, was shown as of little consequence for the main battle of the

tale. What did matter was the courage and cleverness of Assipattle, who imaginatively combined the simple local resources to defeat the beast.

These ideas matched well the aspirations of the Curriculum for Excellence to make school education more locally relevant, the skepticism of my Scottish interviewees about the classroom effects of technology and their opinion that it was more important that the young person learned to apply own knowledge, than accumulated much of it without actually using it.

In the tale of Er Tostik and the speech of the President of Kazakhstan, most of the valuable resources and expertise were portrayed as from faraway, not from the homeland of the 'desirable one us'. Moreover, the tale of Er Tostik showed the prestigious non-local resources as of crucial value for the success of the main protagonist's mission. In some episodes of the tale the hero was able to win by almost exclusively relying on the expertise of his benevolent foreign assistants.

These attitudes resonated strongly with the views of most Kazakhstani interviewees, who were enthusiastic about the effects of classroom technology, as well as with the general calls to modernise Kazakhstani school education by creatively borrowing the ready foreign expertise. Moreover, there were correspondences with the widely shared opinion about the aims of schooling - to produce a multilingual educated person, who would travel abroad, collect know-how and technology and bring them to Kazakhstan to benefit own country.

The difference between the two countries in the way that the folk tales and the political speeches conveyed the perceived location of know-how could be interpreted from several standpoints. On the one hand, it was possible to consider the centre-periphery rhetoric of colonial discourse (Said 1978) or world system analysis (Wallerstein 2004). On the other hand, it looked plausible that the austere and regimented lifestyle of nomadic herders contributed to the development of a predisposition to view the travel as desirable - economically rewarding and emotionally satisfying (Masanov 1995).

6.3.4. The perception of the flow of time

The comparison of the two sets of materials showed that there were country-specific ways of portraying the flow of time. In the case of Scotland, both the folk tale and the speech gave off an impression of time as the continuous and seamless sequence of temporal locations. The tale showed the Past as smoothly phasing into the Present: the coiled body of the burning sea monster formed Iceland, where the fire still lingered under the surface in our days; having defeated the beast, the heroes lived happily and might still be alive now, unless they died. Similarly, the speech described the Past as an integral part of the person's identity, and the Present success as the concerted result of the numerous contributions made in the Past. I interpreted this approach to time as a cumulative Forever and, as such, it appeared to resonate with the attitude of "It's Aye bin!", which was cited by a number of my Scottish interviewees as a barrier to social change.

In the case of Kazakhstan, both the tale and the speech prioritised the temporal niche of Now as central to the meaning. In both, the flow of time was portrayed as a series of loosely connected bouts of time-space.

In the tale, the characters tended to react to life calamities by beginning their life anew (Mingisheva 2015, p.33) - whenever a loss, famine, betrayal, or accident destroyed a set way of life, the characters appeared to be able to adapt quickly to the new circumstances and to let go of the previous way of life without regret. For example, Ernazar, who lost eight sons to a Zhut, luckily had a ninth son and raised him as if he was the only child, without ever mentioning that there used to be other children as well.

In the speech, the dramatic events of the Now were depicted as so potent that the country appeared to be standing "at the threshold of two epochs". The imperatives of the current moment were reported as demanding an urgent action to kick-start the new era. The Soviet yesterday with its Communist Party regime was presented as bleak, with only a few things worthy of preserving. In this way, the President was demonstrating the need to sever the Before from the After and to launch a new chunk in the country's history. Similarly, his speech highlighted a number of other unconnected chunks of history in the country's Past.

My preferred interpretation of such way of experiencing the flow of time was by seeing it as an internalised psychological device that enabled a pragmatic (if not fatalistic) acceptance of unexpected change, which was an inescapable part of the harsh and mobile lifestyle of nomadic herders (Masanov 1995). Another potential interpretation was that Kazakhstan could have acquired such a philosophy of history due to the relatively frequent fundamental changes of the political and administrative authority over its land. For example, within the last three centuries since 1707 Scotland had constantly stayed a legal part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Within the same three centuries, the territory of Kazakhstan saw several different lawful owners: it was under the exclusive rule of the Kazakh khanate until 1730, was gradually absorbed by the Russia Empire between 1730s-1850s, saw the collapse of the Empire in 1917 and became part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which again collapsed some 74 years later, giving birth to the Republic of Kazakhstan in 1991. This second interpretation seemed less persuasive as it took into account a relatively recent period of Kazakh history, which was unlikely to have been the basis for the attitudes conveyed in the archaic folk tale of Er Tostik, which Kaskabasov (2011a) believed to belong to one of the most ancient genres of the Kazakh folk tales. The lifestyle of nomadic herders, conversely, had been in existence since the middle of the I millennium BC and stood a better chance of explaining the predispositions reflected in an archaic folk tale (Masanov 1995, p.28).

Relying on the above interpretation of this country-specific way of viewing the flow of time, I was able to fine-tune my understanding of the presence of the concurrent temporal locations of "back then" and "nowadays" in my Kazakhstani interviews. Before arriving at this interpretation, I was startled by a seeming mismatch between the teachers' desire to mention the advanced teaching techniques that they used "back then" and their unwillingness to

promote those earlier techniques in the face of the current roll out of the "not so new" new techniques. By applying that interpretation, I was able to appreciate that by denoting those advanced technique as "from back then" the interviewees could have been psychologically letting go of that experience, not re-inviting it into their "nowadays".

In sum, this chapter addressed the question of whether the aspects of social imaginary detected through the analysis of materials from the practitioners and the industry levels were also saliently present in the materials from the level of society as a whole. The comparisons of folk tales and political speeches offered some insights in connection to that question. There appeared to be some consistent country-specific patterns of the aspects of social imaginary.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

This dissertation has studied how educators from different nations – Kazakhstan and Scotland – perceive and experience innovations in school education. For that, it has comparatively explored and examined the social imaginaries of school education that exist in the two countries. In doing so, it has relied on a variety of research materials, including the interviews with education practitioners, the materials of large-scale educational conferences, the texts of folk tales and prominent political speeches. This closing chapter begins with a brief overview of the ground covered in previous chapters. It then discusses how the dissertation has addressed its main research questions and what implications that carries for policy and practice. After that, the details of employed methodology are critically considered. The chapter closes by considering the dissertation's limitations and future research.

7.1. What did this study cover? A brief summary

Chapter 1 detailed that, despite my initial excited focus on massive open online courses (MOOCs), several pertinent factors shifted me from researching the unconventional online higher education to juxtaposing the definitions of innovation and imaginations about future schools held by educators in Kazakhstan and Scotland. One of those factors was the insistence in literature that innovations tend to be culturally and socially embedded (Williams, Edge 1996; Flichy 1995, 2007) and are rather underdefined in the field of education (OECD 2009; Hofman et al. 2013). Another factor was the gradual filtering of MOOC-related discussions into the field of school education (Hollands, Tirthali 2014; Bill and Melinda Gates foundation n.d.; Coursera 2017; UK Department for Education 2014). Two more factors were the relative scarcity of Kazakhstani MOOC-takers compared to the 2.5 million army of Kazakhstani schoolers (Kultumanova et al. 2014, p. 91) and my fortuitous acquaintance with four organisations - 2 in Kazakhstan and 2 in Scotland - that worked with secondary schools to introduce innovative practices.

Chapter 2 described how the literature on socio-cultural origins of innovations led me to the works of the key authors, who theorized the construct of social imaginary (Taylor 2004; Appadurai 1996), employed it in the field of education (for example, Rizvi, Lingard 2010; Connelly 2013; Drew 2013), and applied it in comparative research of different countries (Jasanoff and Kim 2009; Felt et al. 2007) and education systems (Bråten 2009). Drawing on Taylor (2004), I came to understand "social imaginary" as the widely shared, complex, part-lived and part-assumed awareness of the social milieu[157] that grants the basis for the mutual expectations and collective efforts by the members of a society. Or, in Bråten's words, as the

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[157] Including the society's values, principles, normal/deviant practices, relationships and power hierarchies.

"symbolic imagery to which citizens of a nation state tie their identities" (Bråten 2009, p.195). And, drawing on Bråten (2009), I designed my study along the lines of her methodological template for comparative research.

At the end of Chapter 2, as a way of exploring the relevant literature and learning about the two national contexts, I examined two scholarly books devoted to the topic of school education in Kazakhstan (Bridges 2014) and Scotland (Murphy et al. 2015). An intent look at the two back-of-the-book indexes displayed differences in how they approached and made sense of their national school education sectors, confirming the potential fruitfulness of the proposed theoretical framework and comparative setup.

Chapter 3 reported how, in pursuit of a rigorous and even-handed configuration for a two-country comparative study, I had to make many and sometimes thorny methodological choices, which included:

- deliberations about the sources, geography and languages of interviews,
- deciding through whom, by what means of communication and transportation to access the interviewees,
- dealing with "on the ground" surprises of sampling – nation-specific urban/rural categorisation and intricacies of publicly available school information,
- trying out various technological means of facilitating research endeavours – automatic translation, voice typing, qualitative data analysis software,
- learning that even a strict protocol for transcribing does not eschew the inescapable "roughness" of material,
- establishing a two-tier ecology-based approach to interview analysis, and
- contemplating the role of researcher and issues of reflexivity.

By conveying the story of these various decisions, the chapter went some way in surfacing the sizeable contextual differences of conducting educational research (and, perhaps, of general meaning-making) in the two national locales of this study. And, by conveying this story, it also illustrated a number of typical challenges of international comparative projects. For example, the fact that, by being sensitive and delicately adapting to the context, the researcher does necessarily tread the borderline of engaging in conformity with the dominant power relations.

The following three chapters were devoted to the analysis of the various sets of research materials. Chapter 4 examined the primary evidence – interviews with educators[158] – to detect various aspects of social imaginaries of education that exist at the level of practitioner in the two national contexts. Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 aimed to ascertain the presence of these same aspects of social imaginaries at the level of the country's education sector and at the level of society as a whole. For that, Chapter 5 examined the word clouds emanating from two large-scale educational conferences conducted in Fall 2015 – one in Kazakhstan and one in

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[158] Teachers and staffers of four key organisations.

Scotland. And Chapter 6 studied one folk tale and one high-profile political speech in each country.

The 'nation-specific' aspects of social imaginaries noted in these chapters were not necessarily stark explicit differences in perspective. Indeed, the large material discrepancies between Kazakhstan and Scotland in terms of the actual practice of schooling[159] did not necessarily match the things that differed in the views held by the two countries' teachers. These 'nation-specific' aspects of social imaginaries did often manifest as subtle idiosyncrasies of emphases and were noticeable only when juxtaposed against the other country. Often, the specific cross-national differences that I noticed were in themselves not very illuminating, but they pointed toward some deeper underlying differences in views about the world and life, which could be noticed to also underlie many other specific differences. What made those deeper underlying differences compelling and appeared to confirm their veracity was their consistency throughout all three levels of materials from the same country that I considered in these three chapters.

The analysis of interviews (Chapter 4) did also offer a potent revelation about the ubiquitous nature of social imaginary as the deep-seated background understanding that underlies one's views and predispositions. Any piece of interviewees' communication – whether invited by a question that intended to probe their social imaginary or by supposedly inconsequential ice-breaker – offered insights about the aspects of social imaginary at work in their country.

One more important revelation put forth by the analysis of interviews had to do with the character of educators' imaginings about the school of the future. Responses to three different questions were heavily amalgamated. Despite different intended purposes of these questions – (1) sharing one's fantasy, (2) linking it to one's experience, and (3) comparing it to current practice and policy – the respondents provided strikingly similar answers to all three. These answers appeared to involve looking around at the respondent's school as it is now and concentrating on desirable change. The proposals put forward by the interviewees tended to sit comfortably within a triangle formed by three vertices: government-planned changes, experiments done elsewhere, and old philosophical foundations of education. Faced with similar 'failure' of Scottish teachers to freely fantasise about desirable future, Drew (2013) saw it as a lack of independent professional judgement learned by the teachers under the inhibiting regime of control imposed in contemporary schools by the state. To overcome this 'failure', she suggested to sporadically engage members of educational community in "edu-imaginary interruption" – a meeting to engage in open-ended discussion of questions, fantasies and desires for good education. While I see Drew's suggestion as intriguing, the situation with the amalgamated answers to the above three questions in my interviews inspires me to view the

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[159] For example: number of pupils studying in one school; number of class-periods that school runs in a week; labs, equipment and sports facilities; indoors toilets; size of guidance cohort; presence of specified non-curricular subject to be delivered by guidance teachers.

practice-rooted approach to imagining future not as a failure to think freely, but as an indication of strong experience-based professional identity. In other words, the aspects of social imaginary that underlie school education appear to be simultaneously practice-induced and practice-motivating.

7.2. What did this study discover? Addressing the research questions

Looking back at the initial research questions of this study (please, view Figure 7.1), one may notice that this dissertation has gone some way in addressing all of them. However, as pertinent as is the discussion of specific answers, is the discussion of the role played by these research questions in this study.

Figure 7.1. Research questions

Research question 1. Looking separately at each national context (Kazakhstan and Scotland), what priorities are perceived and suggested for the secondary education innovations? This question is supported by a set of sub-questions:

1.1.   What are the secondary education innovations defined as?

1.2.   What are the progress routes associated with innovative secondary education?

1.3.   What are the benefits associated with those progress routes?

1.4.   What are the notions (visions of future, conceptions of progress, educational ideologies, etc.) invoked to argue about those benefits?

Research question 2. What influence do international cooperative initiatives render upon the in-country priorities for secondary education innovations? To address it, the following sub-questions are put forth:

2.1.   What idiosyncrasies of the national priority-setting for secondary education innovation are revealed through the comparison of Kazakhstan and Scotland?

2.2.   How do national imaginaries compare and relate between countries?

2.3.   What are the dynamic interrelationships between national imaginaries in the context of international cooperative initiatives?

7.2.1. The role played by the research questions

Figuratively speaking, the initial set of research questions was akin to a somewhat faulty map to a treasure island. Four of the nine caches, which supposedly contained one item of value each, appeared to be already emptied, but all those 'missing' valuables happened to hang together on a tree branch in the forest that lay between the hiding places of the nine caches. Plus, unacknowledged on the map was the fact that the entire floor of the forest between the hiding places was covered with gems – a unique form of local dew. Similarly, the initial set of questions anticipated that there would be clear-cut individual answers to research questions

1.1.-1.4. In reality, when answering either of them, the educators immediately pulled at all the rest, as their views (and even fantasies) appeared to be moored to the existing practice in many complex ways. Moreover, almost any of the interviewees' utterances – even during the seemingly trivial warm-up chit-chat – carried insights about the aspects of social imaginary at work in their country.

Based on the abundance of natural treasures on the island, it became logical to question the assumed direction of resource accumulation. Was the island a storage place for scarce valuables brought from elsewhere (as initially thought), or was it an overflowing trove, where some of the enriched visitors left their humble valuables as gratitude? Analogously, the initial set of questions appeared to assume that "international cooperation" was an almost agential phenomenon, which imposed own rules and logic upon the cooperating parties, creating certain "context of international cooperative initiatives" (research question 2.3). By diving into the research material, I came to appreciate that "international cooperation" should rather be seen as that, which happens between those, who believe themselves to be cooperating. In other words, I used to reify "international cooperation", now I am sceptical that it normally exists. I now think that "international cooperation" is possible, if those, who think they cooperate, do actually share enough background to correctly understand each other; or if the ways, in which their background understandings click, are fruitfully compatible (even if not always resembling each other).

Before stepping on the island, the purpose of the visit seemed to lie in finding the nine valuables and taking them home. But, having been there, this earlier purpose seizes to be the central concern. The main question becomes – how to make sense of, explore and what to do about the island's natural wealth? In similar fashion, by starting my study with the set of 2 main and 7 supplementary questions, I hoped that by the end of the thesis works I would be able to address them fully and state clear answers. However, by exploring the ethereal and complex nature of social imaginaries and learning to appreciate the idiosyncratic un-same-ness of seemingly 'same' categories employed in the two countries, I grew alive to the dangers of mechanical cataloguing of findings, as if they were some 'discovered truths' about Kazakhstan and Scotland. The last thing one may wish to accomplish when questioning the wisdom of existing stereotypes[160] is to offer a new set of stereotypes that they had arrived at on their own.

The different misconceptions embedded in the 'faulty' map do not, however, undermine its value for the island's visitor. Indeed, they would never reach the island was it not for the map. In analogous way, I do not feel the need to re-think my initial set of research questions. They have led and directed me to the specific types of materials and information, which I interrogated with that particular set of questions in mind. In fact, it was thanks to the sum of

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[160] For example, about the benefits for 'developing countries' of 'learning' the best practices from 'developed countries'.

findings that these questions afforded that I came to deeper understand the field of my research and was able to problematise the assumptions, which were present in the initial questions themselves.

In parting with the rhetorical analogy, the following two sub-sections offer: some tentative comments in response to the posed research questions (as opposed to misleadingly certain 'answers'); and an argument in favour of standing by my initial research questions.

7.2.2. Comments in response to the research questions

The first main research question asks to describe what priorities and suggestions for educational innovations are mentioned in the research materials from each country. That is why each country's case is presented separately below. Each country-specific comment begins with addressing the sub-questions (1.1.-1.4.) and then turns to the overall research question 1. Given the fact that most interviewees tended to amalgamate their thoughts pertaining to sub-questions 1.1.-1.4., the comments possess a necessarily provisional character.

Kazakhstan. 1.1. The Kazakhstani definitions of secondary education innovations tended to emphasise "newness" of practices (in case of interviewed educators) and the applied character of "real innovations" (in case of the large education conference). 1.2. Among the progress routes, the interviewees noted improving the facilities, implementing trilingual education and introducing new teaching methods, while the educational conference highlighted educational measurements and inclusive education. 1.3. Only the interviewees argued some benefits of the mentioned progress routes. Almost unanimously, they believed that trilingual education will increase pupils' access to the world outside the country. Their views on the benefits of new teaching methods varied greatly and ranged from the expectations of vast improvement in pupils' performance to sincere disdain about the not-so-new nature of the methods. 1.4. To argue about the benefits of trilingual education, the interviewees evoked the image of a smart, good, and patriotic school graduate, who travels abroad in search of cutting-edge knowledge and know-how and delivers those back to help Kazakhstan develop and become a respected member of international community. 1. On the surface level, the Kazakhstani priorities for secondary education innovations appear conflicted – interviewees' opinion about the need for trilingual practices and 'truly new' teaching methods does not match the stance of education conference, which prioritises "real innovations" of educational measurements. Both types of materials, however, seem to subscribe to the times-chasing aspiration of Kazakhstan to come close to standing abreast with the developed countries of the world.

Scotland. 1.1. The Scottish definitions of secondary education innovations did strongly resonate with ongoing initiatives of education authorities: the interviews and the materials of

large education conference – both – appeared to highlight ideas from GIRFEC, HGIOS and DYW. The interviewees also believed that the bottom-up direction of improvement was more innovative. 1.2. Among the progress routes, interviewees noted the streamlining of practice around the flexible curricular options, addressing the issues of social justice, and negotiating away the pressure on teachers, while the educational conference highlighted local partnerships and collaboration, self-evaluation, and work-related learning. 1.3. The interviewees argued the benefits of the mentioned progress routes by citing the aspiration to help the pupils overcome individual barriers to learning and achieve as best they can. 1.4. To argue about the benefits of streamlining curricular imbalances and upholding social justice, the interviewees evoked the image of educated person (a desirable 'one of us'), which they described along the lines of 4 CfE capacities or 8 wellbeing indicators from GIRFEC. 1. The Scottish priorities for secondary education innovations demonstrate consistency across research materials and often resonate with the current policies of educational authorities. Additionally, the interviewees tend to display taste for the principles of social justice and participatory democracy.

The second main research question asks about the influence of international cooperative initiatives upon the in-country priorities for secondary education innovations. To comment on this question, I first turn to each of three sub-questions (2.1.-2.3.) and then come back to the research question 2.

2.1. Many expectations about the desired change in secondary education coincide between Kazakhstan and Scotland. The idiosyncratically Scottish feature is the idea of cherishing and supporting the 'whole person' – not the most able, the best performing or the most socially praiseworthy – any individual in their wholeness. Specific personality featured as the most frequent 'acting agent' in the back-of-the-book index of the Scottish publication. The willingness to "get it right" for every youngster was central to the professional aspirations of guidance teachers. The SLF was devoted to "raising achievement and attainment for all". The story of Assipattle showed that a country's fate may come to depend on one person, who could be a far cry from conventional hero. And the speech of First Minister Dewar was preceded by Burns' song "A Man's A Man For A' That", which again argued that each person was crucially important to the society as any other.

The idiosyncratically Kazakhstani aspiration has to do with the zeal to secure good future for the following generations – even if the 'future' may arrive no earlier than 2050. The back-of-the-book index of the Kazakhstani publication listed four different long-term national development strategies. The horizon of the future anticipated by Kazakhstani interviewees went up to 2050. The presentations at the NAE focused on the future-oriented and strictly-drawn temporal locations, as well as featuring a stronger insistence on the story's 'contemporariness'/'newness' than presentations at the SLF. The story of Er Tostik and the

speech of President Nazarbayev – both featured the view of the fabric of time as consisting of separate bouts of time-space, severed from each other by some life calamity.

2.2. At the main level of country-specific aspects of educational imaginary, there were some readily comparable items. There also were some idiosyncratically Kazakhstani or idiosyncratically Scottish aspects of social imaginary that, on the surface level, didn't appear to have a match in the other country. Among the readily comparable items were things like the takes on the 'good/other teacher' and the 'educated person', the balance of the state's and parents' responsibility for and authority over the young person, the awareness about the policies and the presence of the country-wide educational ethos, the titling of policies, the attitude to technology and equipment, the timing of the future, and the motivation for innovating. The views on most of these items had a degree of similarity between the two countries, suggesting a healthy degree of compatibility. In those instances, where the opinions were dissimilar, like in the case of the attitude toward technology, the configuration of that dissimilarity still made them compatible, should the countries cooperate.

The idiosyncratically Kazakhstani aspects of social imaginary had to do with the high salience and the hybridity of languages, the view of abroad as the location of knowledge, the take on the time as consisting of separate epochs, the sceptical attitude toward the new, and the competing views about the clarity of the country's educational goals. The idiosyncratically Scottish aspects of social imaginary had to do with the concern for social justice and democratic decision-making, the professionalisation of teacher's education, the high salience of the state's imagination, the frequent use of abbreviations, playfulness in policy titling, the taste for locality storytelling, and the "It's Aye bin!" folk philosophy of constancy. Given the apparent mismatch of these idiosyncratic aspects of imaginary, it is difficult to speculate how they may affect the chances and the prospects of international collaboration. A better awareness of these idiosyncrasies could be the first step in preventing misunderstanding, to which purpose this current thesis could, perhaps, be of some use.

2.3. In terms of the dynamic interrelationships between national imaginaries, most of the detected aspects of social imaginaries suggested a healthy fit between the countries, especially given the current configuration of the partnership between Kazakhstan and the UK, where the former positions itself as a promising apprentice of the latter. As for those aspects of social imaginaries, which did not have a direct match between the countries, detecting them was still useful, even if to simply bring them to light - so that the practitioners may take them into account, when forging international partnerships.

2. Although the two countries are contemporaries and belong to one globalised world, they differ – not necessarily in desires, but in how they look at the world. This is sometimes trivial, but it's also important to learn about each others' respective world views. For example, most people appreciate the contrast between winter and summer, yet, depending on where they live, they may be aware of some specific manifestation of that contrast, with people from different places unable to decipher a reference to those manifestation as a comment on

seasons' change. The main takeaway here is that a more laid-back 'getting to know' is important for international co-operation.

At the same time, it is important to be careful not to essentialise or stereotype the aspects of social imaginaries into the kinds of cultural diagnoses, which they are not. For one thing, social imaginaries are not fixed and rigid – as discussed by Taylor (2004) they may alter over time as a result of complex interaction between material circumstances, practices, politics of identity and social theories put forward by elites or charismatic leaders. Furthermore, the aspects of social imaginary are not the algorithms that prescribe (let alone predict) practice in literal terms. For example, the strong-held Scottish notions of social justice and equality have not precluded Scotland from exercising a capitalist economy. Or the Kazakhstani fondness of merit-based elitism has not precluded it from being part to the rigidly equal socialist economy of the USSR. Aspects of social imaginary are akin to levers resorted to in order to navigate through events and experiences – they are not constantly 'switched on', but are 'activated' as necessary. Some aspects of the social imaginary in each country encourage stability, while others encourage flexibility. Together, they pose as the necessary tools that eventually serve the adaptability and sustainability of the community.

7.2.3. Standing by the initial formulation

As stated earlier, the analysis of materials collected with the help of the initial set of research questions pointed toward impracticability of clear-cut answers and highlighted some problematic assumption inherent in the questions. At the same time, it was only thanks to this specific configuration of questions that it was possible to uncover those problematic assumptions and to learn from that. Having provided some tentative comments in response to the questions (to demonstrate their partial workability), I would like to offer one more reason to stand by the initial formulation of the questions.

The word choice of my research questions, including the constructs employed in the 'amalgamated' questions 1.1.-1.4. – the "secondary education innovations", the "progress routes" towards them, their "benefits", or the "notions invoked to argue about those benefits" – is part of what made them problematic. This same vocabulary, however, belongs to the typical formal language used to discuss positive change in education. That is why the fortunate 'faultiness' of this wording is useful not only for my learning about social imaginaries. The fact of its 'faultiness' is also relevant to all other students of education, who employ this type of formal language to interrogate the subtler, less formal and more contemplative fields of research, similar to the field of social imaginaries in education.

In addition to that, I believe that, by keeping the initially formulated questions, I am at less risk of loosing relevant readership, who might turn this study down as non-topical should they not encounter this formal mainstream word choice in the set of research questions. By keeping those in, I hope to reach more people, who might appreciate learning from my mistakes.

Indeed, the same is true about the title of this dissertation. Having done this research, I notice how heavily my title draws on the typical language that in Kazakhstan is often associated with topicality and expertise. For example, the word 'worldwide' denotes a connection with abroad, the phrase 'XXI century' conveys a times-chasing spirit, the word 'innovation' implies exciting newness, the phrase 'challenges and opportunities' carries an air of pragmatic business sensibilities – all of which are perceived as appealing in Kazakhstan.

By making the above point about the title, I am in no way suggesting that it is not apt for the undertaken work. In fact, I think that the dissertation has satisfactorily accomplished what its title did imply. My comment simply explained that I have come to recognise many rhetorical stamps in my title and, yet, decided to keep the initial formulation in order to continue 'talking to' and to continue being discoverable by the most relevant audience – other Kazakhstani scholars curious about the school education.

7.3. Implications for policy and practice

In short, the implications of this dissertation for policy and practice are rather cliched: even when a practice has 'worked' in one country, the potential success of its meaningful transfer to another country should be carefully assessed by paying close attention to the differences between the two national imaginaries – deep background understandings espoused in the two countries.

For example, having studied the Scottish regime of "Getting it right for every child" (GIRFEC), one can be sincerely impressed with its commitment to the flourishing of "whole person" and its promotion of social justice by helping the pupils to overcome barriers to learning posed by disadvantage. They can become even more impressed with the smooth coordination between schools and relevant agencies, as well as with the widespread ethos among education practitioners in favour of supporting the "whole person". Overall, this observer may notice that the GIRFEC regime is not simply an effectively working framework, but also an approach that organically fits the deep-seated beliefs of the society. Based on these impressions, this observer may contemplate bringing a similar regime to Kazakhstan. "After all," the observer may think, "Kazakhstan has long history of being a socialist country and the principles of equality and social justice are probably still dear to the hearts of educational practitioners there." With making guidance a full-time occupation and providing teachers with enough training, could GIRFEC be successfully emulated in Kazakhstan?

Based on several key mismatches of the aspects of social imaginary, I believe that such policy, while outwardly sound, will run the risk of implementing an unfaithful and ineffective 'copy' of GIRFEC in Kazakhstan, which may turn out to be detrimental to the very purpose of social justice and cohesion that GIRFEC serves in Scotland. Why?

First, the idiosyncratic Kazakhstani take on time as consisting of separate epochs would likely translate into at least partial irrelevance of the country's "long history" of living under socialism.

Moreover, the Kazakhstani predilection for kinship-based meritocratic elitism is both – much more ancient (learned due to the austere and regimented lifestyle of nomadic herders) and much more compatible with the capitalist realities of the recent decades.

Second, the views on primary authority responsible for the young person are diametrically opposed between the two countries: in Kazakhstan the primary responsibility sits with the parents, and in Scotland – with the state channeled by the school. Moreover, judging by the large educational events, the typical perceptions about the range of acting agents, who make up the education sector, also do not match between the countries. In Kazakhstan the sector is mainly seen as consisting of learners, teachers and educational authorities, while in Scotland it is seen as also including a wide spectrum of agencies, businesses, charities, embassies, non-governmental organisations. That is why, even if Kazakhstani teachers take up full-time guidance obligations and are provided training, they will have extremely hard time attracting partners and persuading the parents to allow those teachers to contact partners on pupils' behalves.

Third, the deep-rooted understandings of the young person's primary allegiance drastically differ between the countries. The Scottish young, like Assipattle, are essentially their own persons and decide to whom to pay their primary allegiance (to state or kin) depending on the context and situation. This, together with the strong-held Scottish notions of social justice and equality, turn the state's proactive stance in taking care of the young person into a socially fair and socially cohesive practice of the collective "us" (the state) providing support to "one of our own" (the young person). When that young person grows up, he 'gives back' – is willing to be a loyal member of the collective "us" (the state), which now takes care of a new "one of our own" (another young person).

Fourth, the traditional Kazakhstani welfare safety-net is kinship-based. For example, Er Tostik is first of all a good and caring son and brother. This, together with meritocratic elitism form the basis of traditional Kazakhstani schema of kinship-based welfare and social cohesion. In this schema, when the talented gravitate toward the power and toward each other (creating meritocratic elites), their privileges and entitlements trickle down to the wider population through their family links, because their primary allegiances stay with the parents and kin.

Fifth, if we were to forcefully establish the "state" (via full-time guidance teacher) as the primary champion of the young person's welfare, we would be running a considerable risk of alienating Kazakhstani children from their traditional safety-nets – family and kin. Then, the ensuing breakdown of family-based mutual responsibility would put another feature of Kazakhstani social imaginary – meritocratic elitism – into a precarious position. Once we remove the person's primary allegiance to the family, we may find that the state-fostered elites never develop allegiance to the state and, therefore, would see no reason to re-distribute own privileges and entitlements among anyone. In other words, in Kazakhstan, an aggressively proactive stance of the state in taking care of the young person may lead to the formation of

closed elites (like the Janissaries of the Ottoman Empire), who are detached from the wider population and do not yearn 'to give back' to their kin or fellow-citizens.

In order to mitigate these kinds of negative consequences of policy transplantation, it is crucial to re-design the newly borrowed practices from elsewhere, so that they harmoniously adapt to the salient aspects of social imaginary that exist in the given national context.

7.4. Reviewing the toolset of this study. Critique of methodology

7.4.1. What has been done?

The core frame of the research design for this study was adapted from Bråten (2009), who undertook a comparative study of England and Norway to see how different national systems of religious education react to the same supranational challenge (pluralisation in the demographics). To carry out her study, Bråten developed a methodology for the comparative analysis of national imaginaries, which combined Dale's (2006) three-scale classification of factors influencing the education governance with Goodlad and Su's (1992) writing about the levels of the curriculum - societal, institutional, instructional, and experiential. She began her investigation at the widest level and zoomed in. She first explored the societal level by analysing the key texts in "academic debates". She then examined the institutional level by sampling the documents on "legal and policy developments". She then focused on the instructional level to learn the "teacher's perspective" through observation and interviews. And she finally concentrated on the experiential level by conducting observation and interviews to learn the "pupil's perspective." (Bråten 2009, p.79) The application of this methodology allowed Bråten to not only notice the differences and similarities in the two nations' historical, demographic, political, professional contexts, but also to identify and question some distinct national styles of interacting with the apparently similar international pressures and challenges (Bråten 2009, pp.346-355).

In her closing chapter, Bråten suggested that one way of further testing her methodology could be by reversing the order of the considered levels (Bråten 2009, p.345). Taking up that proposition, I opted to begin my investigation by exploring the Practitioners' level through analysis of in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews. I then checked whether the findings from the Practitioners' level persisted at the level of Industry by looking at large-scale education conferences. Further, I traced the same findings at the level of Society as a whole by studying salient cultural and political texts. In simplest terms, I've conducted a basic content analysis from different sources and different corpora, and then sifted for the indications of rhyming beliefs and predispositions. To put the results of content analyses into perspective, at each level, both Bråten and I furnished them with extensive descriptive detail about the context. As a result, similar to Bråten, I was able to detect and describe a number of salient aspects of social imaginary at play in each of the two compared countries. This outcome – that both 'zoom in' and 'zoom out' directions of analysis allow detecting social imaginaries –

appeared to bolster the claim that 'social imaginary' is actual and is not an accidental artefact of the particular sequence of examining the qualitative data.

By Bråten's admission, her initial key interest was "to understand the context of English RE"; however, the application of the comparative perspective and the use of her methodology did equally prioritise the Norwegian context, increasing her understanding of it as well (Bråten 2009, p.366). In other words, the use of this comparative approach compelled her as a researcher to balance the share of attention cast on each of the two studied countries. That is why, when I decided to borrow Bråten's comparative framework, I expected that it would lead me to equally prioritise Kazakhstan and Scotland in my study. I actually wrote in Chapter 2: "Thus, instead of showing what and how Kazakhstan could glean from the practices employed elsewhere, the dissertation would now focus on demonstrating what insights the comparison of the two countries' idiosyncrasies revealed for each location and for the interaction between them." Having gone through the exercise, I want to make a subtle, but important distinction – the framework did require to carefully study and portray both countries, but it did not require to equally prioritise them. Let me detail this distinction.

In my experience, just as in Bråten's, by inviting equal number of sources from each country into the spotlight of comparison, this framework assigned very similar amount of 'podium space' to each – Kazakhstan and Scotland. In fact, to describe and interpret a piece of data from one country I had to first reflect on whether or not that piece of data had an 'equivalent' in the other country's dataset, and in what ways it was similar to or different from that 'equivalent', or, if there was no 'equivalent', how that absence-presence could be explained and interpreted. That is why, in terms of the volume of attention and in terms of my intention to faithfully present the specific nature and character of each national context, this framework can indeed be seen as equally focusing on the two compared countries. The balance of the volume of attention, however, is not the only aspect of the parity of prioritising in comparative research. Equal prioritising, in my view, means that the interpretation of findings is done with a caring eye for what those findings may mean for each studied country[161]. In my case, most interpretations were done with my eyes on the prospects of mutual understanding and professional cooperation between the two countries. Given the current configuration of that cooperation, where Kazakhstan does mostly assume the role of enthusiastic learner, it is more often than not Kazakhstan, who turns out to be the main benefactor of the partnership. In that sense, despite the equal share of spotlight that Kazakhstan and Scotland receive in this dissertation, this comparative study appears to inadvertently assign higher priority to

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[161] Let me, please, offer a set of simplified examples.
Lopsided prioritising: "The older brother has an apple. The baby brother has an orange. Should the baby brother become hungry, all he can eat are just those two pieces of fruit."
Equal prioritising: "The older brother has an apple. The baby brother has an orange. If they agree to share those, they can together prepare a nice fruit salad. Alternatively, if his sibling doesn't mind, the older brother can sell those in the market place and buy himself an ice-cream, which he enjoys. Equally, if the older brother agrees, the baby brother can feed both pieces of fruit to his pet rabbit."

Kazakhstan than to Scotland. Perhaps, this inadvertent prioritising is both unsurprising and expectable, should one consider that the study has been conducted by a state-sponsored student from Kazakhstan. In fact, the non-neutral positioning of researcher (whether as an 'insider' or an 'outsider' to the studied context) is a typically contentious issue not only in international comparative projects, but, indeed, in most research projects (Dave 2007; Yakavets 2014; Zumkhawala-Cook 2008).

Apart from borrowing and reversing Bråten's methodology, this dissertation has also tried and tested a number of unconventional methodological choices. For example, it has argued and demonstrated the merits of multilingual approach to conducting, analysing and reporting qualitative research. Chapter 3 of this thesis took stock and analysed how the available means of communication influence the research processes and logistics. It also explored and commented on the non-neutral nature of technological tools and solutions, routinely employed in qualitative research.

7.4.2. How did it go?

To populate the borrowed framework of comparative analysis, an assortment of different research materials was chosen. Some of them, like folk tales[162] and large-scale educational events[163], were rather unusual options; while the others – publications, interviews and political speeches – were quite mainstream. By the nature of materials and the type of analysis that I subjected them to, they fall into three different groups. The sub-sections below detail every group, describe the type of analysis employed in it and discuss what kinds of insights the analysis offered. After that I comment on the ways, in which each group of materials was helpful for the purposes of this dissertation.

7.4.2.1. Books and events

This group consists of two scholarly books that I looked at as part of literature review in Chapter 2 and the programmes of two large-scale educational conferences that I examined to explore industry level conversations in Chapter 5. In both cases, the idea was to catch a glimpse of the education sector's self-image.

From the books, I worked with the back-of-the-book indexes. And from the conference programs, I worked with the list of presentations. In each case, it was a written material in the form of a list or a catalogue. The analysis of these materials involved various ways of sorting these lists and visualising the prevalence of sorting categories in a number of diagrams. Where

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[162] Folk tales are significant elements of national culture. The content of individual tales is routinely studied by the linguists and folklorists in both Kazakhstan and Scotland. That is why it is especially surprising that folk tales have escaped the attention of scholars, who explore the issues of national identity in the two countries.

[163] While the literature goes some way to highlights the practical value of professional conferences (Hunter 2013; Casserly 2014; Oester et al. 2017), their generative role as the sites of "(re)production" of "'collateral reality'" (Sheail 2016, slide 18) is rarely explored.

it was possible, I tried to stick to similar sorting categories when working with similar kinds of materials from the two countries. This cross-national correspondence of categories made the diagrams look informative about the similarities and differences between the education sectors in the two countries.

The sorting of the book indexes surfaced two dimensions of information: what the index entries were about and what location the subject of index entries belonged to. The country specific diagrams showed what types of things made up the Professional environment of education sector, what kinds of Acting agents were present there, and what sort of additional information about the Wider (non-educational) environment the book authors chose to include in the index. Also, one could see what share of those kinds of acting agents and aspects of professional and wider environment were from the country itself or from abroad.

The lists of presentations in the conference programs contained at least a dozen dimensions of information: conference themes; room; time; session theme, length and number of presentations in it; number and names of authors, author's organisation, language of presentation, topic of presentation, style and wording of the title. Obviously, all this information could be sorted and categorised further. It could also be cross-referenced. Thanks to that, it was possible to produce 8 diagrams, 9 tables, and to describe each conference in much detail. The fact that I had first-hand experience of each event meant a lot – my observations as a delegate were helpful for conveying the events' atmosphere.

While visually impressive and informative, the diagrams and tables can be difficult to digest. Also, not all insights gained through them come across as equally convincing. For example, the sorting of organisations participating in the two conferences appeared to convincingly suggest that the understanding of 'who belongs to the education sector' is much broader in Scotland than in Kazakhstan. Or, the crosstabulation of the types of organisations, room and number of presentations in NAE clearly showed that the organisers gave the presenters from schools and Universities much smaller chance of actually presenting than to the presenters from state bodies. On the other hand, a diagrams with the prevalence of presentation themes (like Figure 5.5.) looks like a much more tentative insight. Why? I think this difference in impression has to do with the amount of subjective judgement, which the reader may suspect had gone into identifying categories and sorting. The more obvious the categories, the easier it is to trust quantified representations.

7.4.2.2. Interviews

Interviews were the primary material, on which I based this dissertation. Overall, as initially planned, I collected 23 interviews in the two countries. I did my best to offset the relatively modest number of collected interviews by the in-depth character of analysis that I subjected them to. The approach to the analysis of these interviews was explained at length in section 3.2.2.2. in Chapter 3. In general terms, I undertook a context-aware interpretive and thematic analysis. The opening stage of the analysis had to do with gleaning detail to appreciate the

ecology around the conversation: information about the school, interview access and rapport, personal facts about the interviewee, etc. The next stage of the analysis had to do with interpretive reading of the transcripts. And then, based on the threads and details noted during the interpretive reading, I would identify themes for the thematic and, later, international comparative analysis. As I shared in section 4.2. in Chapter 4, it took me some time to become ready to narrate 'what the interviewees told me'. The central challenge came from the fact that answers to three planned question became 'amalgamated' (as discussed in sections 7.1. and 7.2. of this chapter) and that scrambled the flow of the interviews. Nevertheless, the insights gained through the analysis of interviews are the key insights of this dissertation.

7.4.2.3. Tales and speeches

This group consists of two folk tales and two high-profile historical political speeches. I looked at these with the aim to ascertain, whether the aspects of social imaginary detected and the level of Practitioners were also detectable at the level of Society as a whole. My analysis of the folk tales and political speeches resembled the analysis of interviews. I first gathered and wrote down much background information about each tale and each speech. I then engaged in interpretive reading of the texts, keeping in mind the above contextual details. One more set of things, which I kept in mind during the interpretive analysis, were the aspects of social imaginaries that were gleaned through the analysis of interviews.

I found the insights gained through working with these materials to be very valuable. For example, by reading the Kazakhstani tale and speech I noticed the same tendency to speak of time as if it consisted of separate epochs, which I earlier noticed in Kazakhstani interviews. But, if in the interviews this tendency looked as a strange but insignificant detail, in the tale and the speech the force of this tendency surfaced dramatically. Especially the stoic (if not fatalistic) severing of connections with one's immediate past in the face of life calamity, which happened several times in the tale of Er Tostik. I suppose it was this surfacing of correspondences with the messages from the other materials that made me appreciate tales and speeches as very powerful types of research materials. In fact, by their nature, folk tales and political speeches are supposed to 'speak' to every person in the society, which was the reason why I chose them to represent the Societal level. Perhaps, this requirement for impressiveness compels the tales and speeches to up the volume on the salient aspects of social imaginary that they contain.

Of course, for the purposes of this dissertation all three groups of materials mentioned above were helpful and contributed to detecting and making sense of the discussed aspects of social imaginaries. If I were to rate their helpfulness, the interviews and tales would share the number one spot, with events and speeches sharing the second place, and the back-of-the-book indexes closing the rating. Having said that, I don't think that I could successfully complete this

research with any less types of materials than I had used in this thesis. On the contrary, I would love to have been able to add more sources and materials.

7.4.3. What other materials could be added?

The bulk of the Kazakhstani and Scottish aspects of social imaginary detected in this dissertation were initially identified based on the interviews with the teachers and the staffers of the key organisations at the level of Practitioners. Since I was following the reversed order of Bråten's methodology, it is possible that the identified aspects of social imaginary would be different, if I chose to start not at the Practitioners' level, but at the Experiential level and did first interview school pupils. It also seems that it would have been a valid idea to reinforce the interviews with pupils by conducting interviews with their parents. The type of analysis to which I had subjected interviews in this work included attending to the 'ecology' of the conversation. Thanks to interviewing the parents, I believe, one would greatly improve the chances of accurately understanding the 'ecology' around the pupils' ideas and opinions.

Another option for having done this research differently could be if I reached the interviewees through a different set of key organisations. Perhaps, a stronger concern for international cooperation could surface in the research materials, if my key organisations did in fact deal with the ongoing partnership between Kazakhstan and the UK in the field of reforming secondary education.

This dissertation could also have benefitted, if, at the level of Industry, I added the analysis of education-related laws and policies. Although the low policy awareness in Kazakhstan and the high policy awareness in Scotland represent two sizeable findings of the current work, by analysing laws and policies I could come closer to explaining this sizeable discrepancy. Is there something very unmemorable about the Kazakhstani policies? Do they change too often and too much? Is it the scarcity of such documents, which makes them forgettable? Or the length and the quality that makes them unreadable? Similarly, what is it that makes GIRFEC, CfE, HGIOS, DYW so specially remembered? Are they produced in a special way – for example, through large nation-wide consultation? Are they championed by exceptionally charismatic authors? Or are they very short and pleasant to read?

At the societal level, two more types of research materials, which I wished to include, but didn't manage to consider in time were national anthems and films.

In terms of the anthems, the situations in Kazakhstan and Scotland are somewhat similarly complex. The official national anthem of the UK is also the national anthem for the residents of Scotland; however, the claim for Scotland's own anthem is shared by a number of songs, including Burns' song mentioned earlier in this chapter and the 'Flower of Scotland', which I mentioned in Chapter 2. Some of those songs are better known as the opening numbers at sports games. In Kazakhstan, the current national anthem is the second 'new' national anthem since independence gained in 1991. Before that, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic had its own anthem, while the national anthem for the residents of Kazakhstan was the common

national anthem of the Soviet Union. Even this brief comment does already betray something about the two country's take on time and progress through time – the Kazakhstani fascination with the 'new' and the Scottish tendency to continuously accrue the current Forever. A careful and detailed analysis of situations with and the wordings of the anthems could, probably, offer many more insights of value.

As for the films, I identified two classics that centred around the persona of a charismatic teacher and for generations served as the cultural tags for an inspiring educator. "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie", set in Edinburgh, came out in 1969. It is a UK film about a veteran female teacher working with particular cohort of female students through their secondary school at the time of the rise of the fascist regime of Mussolini. I first learned about this film, when visiting an exhibition "Wha's like us?: A nation of dreams and ideas" held by the National Library of Scotland ahead of the 2014 Referendum. "Доживем до понедельника" (We'll Live Till Monday), set in Moscow, hit the screens in 1968. It is a Soviet film about an older male teacher of History, who is a principled and noble veteran of World War II working in the current-day school. Again, even these short synopses hint at the likelihood of encountering the traces of certain aspects of the Kazakhstani and Scottish social imaginaries in these two films.

One more opportunity for enriching the current study could have been by adding the analysis of two external publications about Kazakhstan's and Scotland's school systems. Undertaken in recent years by the OECD are two reports about school education in each of the two studied countries. If implemented, this analysis could have been part of the literature review in Chapter 2. Alternatively, the examining of this publications could pose as a separate Supranational level. Doing that would be a way of experimenting in order to further develop, and possibly enhance, Bråten's framework.

7.5. Limitations and further research

Two limitations of the current study warrant a special mention. First, despite the deliberately widely-cast evidence base, being the result of a one-person-study, the detected aspects of social imaginaries are vulnerable to idiosyncratic personal impressionability, which cannot be totally dismissed or, indeed, mitigated using the metaphorical "lancet of analysis" (Mattheou 2010, p.6). To offset this potential limitation, as a direction of future research, I am proposing to discuss the plausibility of both my Scottish and Kazakhstani findings with the scholarly communities, who study the Scottish and the Kazakhstani school education.

Second, while conducting the analysis and juxtaposing the findings from the two countries, I came in contact with a wealth of literature pertaining to Comparative and international education (CIE), as well as the literature on Teachers' beliefs and agency. Seeing a high value in the Sadler-inspired "socio-cultural and interpretivist" branch of the CIE (Crossley 2012, p.4) and the highly Scotland-related studies on teachers' agency by the Edinburgh and Stirling-based scholars (Biesta et al 2015; Pantić 2015), I nevertheless decided to put off my

acquaintance with these literatures in order to ensure a more expedient completion of my current research endeavour. I look forward to exploring more of this scholarship and relating more of my findings to what I may glean from it as yet another direction of future work after this PhD.

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INTERVIEW GUIDES IN THE THREE LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, RUSSIAN, KAZAKH

INTERVIEW GUIDE

BEGINNING (5-10 min)

- Greetings and consent form
- Getting acquainted

Question: As a starting point, would you, perhaps, like to share a bit about how you came into this work? What does your current role involve in this organisation?

MAIN PART (40-45 min)

- About Education

Question: Simply speaking, in your opinion, what schools are generally for?

Potential prompts: What purpose you think does the school education serve? What it may mean 'to educate a person'? In your view, are there any approaches to schooling that are especially valuable? Could you, please, share certain principled positions, statements about school (and education in general) that you approve of? Have you always felt this way?

- About future

Question: Please take a few moments to imagine how you would like to see the school education of the future.

Potential prompts: What changes you'd like to see in the future? What do you feel should be preserved? How would you compare the 'educated person' of today with the 'educated person' of the future? Are you seeing any of that being brought about? Who/what do you see as being instrumental or as getting in the way? How would you describe the school of the future? How distant you feel this future is? Is there some date that you might suggest as likely?

- About the priorities in innovative education

Question: In relation to the future school education that we've just discussed, what development pathways could there be, in your opinion? What kinds of priorities could be drawn?

Potential prompts: In what ways you think it would be apt to describe these development pathways as 'innovation pathways'? What feels for you as an appropriate way to define educational innovation? In your view, how often do educational innovations figure in programmatic documents and official statements about the future development of school

education? What kinds of innovations are mentioned more often? What could be the reasoning behind this?

- About the literature that has influence
  Question: With regard to the agenda and discussions about the future development of education, what kind of materials (documents, programs, studies, speeches, articles, books, etc.) have you found to be influential?
  Potential prompts: What have you felt has not been influential? What do you think should have been more influential?

COLSING PART(10 min)

- Summing up and things to add
  We covered much ground: the purposes of Education; your aspirations for its future; the development pathways that you would prefer, as well as possible definitions of the concept of educational innovation. Would you like to briefly sum up how these ideas connect together?
  Is there anything which we haven't discussed that you would like to add at this point?
- What happens next? If you'd prefer to receive a copy of today's recording or to view the transcription, please, let me know.
- Thank you.

СХЕМА ИНТЕРВЬЮ

НАЧАЛО (5-10 мин)

- Приветствие и форма письменного согласия
- Знакомство

  Вопрос: Для начала, расскажите, пожалуйста, немного о себе? Как Вы пришли в эту профессию? Какие функции включает в себя Ваша нынешняя роль в этой организации?

ОСНОВНАЯ ЧАСТЬ (40-45 мин)

- Об образовании

  Вопрос: Пожалуйста, расскажите, в целом, для чего, на Ваш взгляд, нужны школы?

  Потенциальные уточняющие вопросы: В чем, по Вашему мнению, предназначение школьного образования? Что значит дать человеку образование? На Ваш взгляд, какие подходы к школьному образованию особенно ценны? Можете ли Вы озвучить некоторую принципиальную позицию, утверждение о школе (или образовании в целом), которых Вы придерживаетесь? Всегда ли Вы придерживались этого принципа?

- О будущем

  Вопрос: Пожалуйста, задумайтесь на пару минут и представьте себе, каким Вы хотели бы видеть школьное образование будущего.

  Потенциальные уточняющие вопросы: Какие изменения Вы хотели бы видеть? Что, по Вашему мнению, нужно сохранить? Чем, по Вашему, отличаются "образованные люди" сегодняшнего дня и завтрашнего? На сегодняшний момент, можно ли заметить какие-то подвижки в данном направлении? Кто (или что), на Ваш взгляд, способствует необходимым переменам? Что является препятствием на пути к ним? Пожалуйста, опишите школу будущего. По Вашим ощущениям, насколько далеко такое будущее? Можете ли Вы назвать его дату?

- О приоритетах инновационного образования

  Вопрос: С учетом нашего предыдущего обсуждения школ будущего, какие траектории развития, на Ваш взгляд, могут вести к такому школьному образованию? Какие приоритеты необходимо было бы обозначить?

  Потенциальные уточняющие вопросы: На Ваш взгляд, насколько уместно было бы назвать эти траектории развития "инновационными траекториями"? Какое определение, по Вашему мнению, лучше всего подходит термину инновационное образование? На Ваш взгляд, как часто инновационное образование упоминается в программных документах и официальных докладах о развитии школьного

образования? Какие инновации чаще всего упоминаются? В чем могла бы быть причина этого?

- О влиятельной литературе

  Вопрос: В плане повестки дня и дискуссий относительно дальнейшего развития образования, какие материалы (документы, программы, исследования, выступления, книги и т.д.) на Ваш взгляд являются наиболее влиятельными на данный момент?

  Потенциальные уточняющие вопросы: Какие материалы не обрели влияния? Какие материалы, Вы думаете, заслуживают большего внимания и влияния?

ЗАКЛЮЧИТЕЛЬНАЯ ЧАСТЬ (10 мин)

- Резюме встречи и дополнительные мысли

  Мы много о чем поговорили: о целях образования; о том, каким Вы хотите видеть будущее школ; о желательных траекториях развития; а также о том, как Вы понимаете термин инновационное образование. Может Вы могли бы подвести краткий итог - так сказать, связать эти идеи воедино? Возможно, есть другие аспекты и темы, которых мы не коснулись сегодня, но которые Вы хотели бы обсудить?

- Что дальше? Если Вы хотели бы получить запись этой встречи или ознакомиться с ее стенограммой, пожалуйста, дайте мне знать.

- Спасибо за участие.

СҰХБАТТЫҢ ТӘСІМІ

БАСТАЛУЫ (5-10 мин)

- Сәлемдесу.және жазбаша келісім пішіні.
- Өз-өзін таныстыру.

Сұрақ: Ең алдымен, өзіңіз осы кәсіпке қалай келгеніңіз туралы айтып өтсеңіз? Сіздің осы ұйымдағы қазіргі рөліңізге қандай міндеттер (қызметтер) кіреді?

НЕГІЗГІ БӨЛІК (40-45 мин)

- Білім беру туралы

Сұрақ: Жалпы алғанда, Сіздің ойыңызша, мектептер не үшін керек?

Әлеуетті сұраулар: Сіздің ойыңызша, мектепте білім берудің мақсаты қандай? Адамға білім беру дегеніміз не? Сіздің ойыңызша, мектепте білім берудің қандай тәсілдемелері айтарлықтай құнды? Сіз ұстанып жүрген мектеп (немесе жалпы білім беру саласы) туралы біршама түбегейлі ұстанымды, пікірді айта аласыз ба? Осы қағидатты әрдайым ұстанасыз ба?

- Болашақ туралы

Сұрақ: Болашақтағы мектепте білім беру саласын қандай сипатта көргіңіз келетіні туралы біраз минуттай ойланып, соны елестетіп көріңізші.

Әлеуетті сұраулар: Болашақта қандай өзгерістердің орын алуын қолдайсыз? Сіздің пікіріңізше, нені сақтау керек? Бүгінгі және ертеңгі заманның «білімді адамдары» несімен ерекшеленеді деп ойлайсыз? Қазіргі сәтте, осы бағытта қандай да бір алға басуды байқауға болады ма? Сіздің көзқарасыңыз бойынша, қажетті өзгерістерге кім (немесе не) ықпал етеді? Оларға не кедергі келтіреді? Болашақтың мектебін сипаттап беріңізші. Сіздің түйсігіңіз бойынша, осындай болашақ алыс па? Оның күнін атай аласыз ба?

- Инновациялық білім берудің басымдықтары туралы

Сұрақ: Бұған дейін болашақтың мектептерін талқыға салғанымызды ескере отырып, Сіздің көзқарасыңыз бойынша, осындай мектепте білім беру саласына қандай даму траекториялары апара алады? Қандай басымдықтарды белгілеу керек еді?

Әлеуетті сұраулар: Сіздің көзқарасыңыз бойынша, осы траекторияларды «инновациялық траекториялар» деп айту қаншалықты орынды? Инновациялық білім беру терминіне қандай анықтама барынша сәйкес келеді деп ойлайсыз? Сіздің көзқарасыңыз бойынша, мектепте білім беру саласын дамыту туралы ресми баяндамалар мен бағдарламалық құжаттарда инновациялық білім беру саласы қаншалықты жиі айтылып тұрады? Қандай инновациялар жиі айтылады? Бұның себебі неде болуы мүмкін?

- Ықпалды әдебиет туралы

  Сұрақ: Білім беру саласын одан әрі дамытуға қатысты пікірталастар және күн тәртібі тұрғысынан алып қарағанда, Сіздің пікіріңізше, қазіргі сәтте қандай материалдар (құжаттар, бағдарламалар, зерттеулер, сөйленген сөздер, кітаптар және т.б.) ең ықпалды болып табылады?

  Әлеуетті сұраулар: Қандай материалдар ықпалға ие бола алмай қалды? Қандай материалдар көп назар аударуға және ықпал етуге лайықты деп ойлайсыз?

ҚОРЫТЫНДЫ БӨЛІК (10 мин)

- Кездесудің түйіндемесі және қосымша ой-пікір.

  Біз көп нәрсе туралы сөйлестік: білім берудің ортақ мақсаттары туралы; мектептердің болашағын қалай елестететініңіз туралы; дамудың қалаулы траекториялары туралы; сондай-ақ инновациялық білім беру терминін қалай түсінетініңіз туралы айтып бердіңіз. Сіз осыдан қысқаша қорытынды шығара аласыз ба, яғни осы идеяларды біріктіре аласыз ба? Бәлкім, бүгін біз қозғамаған, бірақ Сіз талқыға салғыңыз келген басқа да аспекттер мен тақырыптар да бар шығар?

- Енді не? Сіз осы кездесудің жазбасын алғыңыз келсе немесе оның стенограммасымен танысқыңыз келсе, бұл жөнінде маған хабар беруіңізді сұраймын.

- Қатысқаныңызға рахмет.

DATA TABLES ON LARGE-SCALE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES

Table 5.1. SLF conference. Presentation themes by types of organisations, all

Organisation types / Themes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Education system overall		1								1
Raising attainment	8	16	1							25
- Raising Attainment and Achievement for All	5	13	1							19
- Raising attainment with focus on literacy, numeracy	1	3								4
- Raising attainment with focus on health and wellbeing	2									2
Partnerships	5	6	3	2						16
- Partnership and collaboration - general	3	3	1							7
- Partnership and collaboration - with parents		1	2	2						5
- Partnership and collaboration - within school	2	2								4
Developing the Young Workforce	2	9				1				12
Progression	5	4	1							10
- Assessing and tracking progress and achievement	1	3								4
- Widening participation in higher/further education	3		1							4
- Continuity and progression at key transition points	1	1								2
Teachers	1	3		3					1	8
Creative change		6								6
Raising the Digital Generation		4				1		1		6
Special Issue	1	5								6
Languages		3			1		1			5
Outdoor education/Sustainability	1	2	2							5
Inclusion	1	1	1		1					4
Participation, democracy, rights		3			1					4
School improvement		4								4
Curriculum for excellence		2			1					3
All themes	**24**	**69**	**8**	**5**	**4**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**115**

Legend for organisation types (in the heading row):
1. Educational institutions   **6**. Education network
2. State bodies   **7**. Foreign Embassy
3. Charity organisation   **8**. Technological company
4. Independent educational organisation   **9**. UK Society in Scotland
5. Independent social organisation

Table 5.2. SLF conference. Presentation themes by types of organisations, fully booked by 19 August

Organisation types / Themes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Education system overall										
Raising attainment	2	7								9
- Raising Attainment and Achievement for All	1	4								5
- Raising attainment with focus on literacy, numeracy		3								3
- Raising attainment with focus on health and wellbeing	1									1
Partnerships		1	2	2						5
- Partnership and collaboration - general										
- Partnership and collaboration - with parents		1	2	2						5
- Partnership and collaboration - within school										
Developing the Young Workforce						1				1
Progression	1	4								5
- Assessing and tracking progress and achievement	1	3								4
- Widening participation in higher/further education										
- Continuity and progression at key transition points		1								1
Teachers		2		1						3
Creative change		4								4
Raising the Digital Generation		2						1		3
Special Issue	1									1
Languages		1				1				2
Outdoor education/Sustainability		1								1
Inclusion										
Participation, democracy, rights		1								1
School improvement		2								2
Curriculum for excellence		1								1
All themes	**4**	**26**	**2**	**3**		**1**	**1**	**1**		**38**

Legend for organisation types (in the heading row):

1. Educational institutions
2. State bodies
3. Charity organisation
4. Independent educational organisation
5. Independent social organisation
6. Education network
7. Foreign Embassy
8. Technological company
9. UK Society in Scotland

Table 5.3. NAE conference. Presentation themes by types of organisations, detailed

Organisation types / Themes	Educational institutions	State bodies	Independent bodies	Total
New pedagogy	13	7		20
- Conceptualising pedagogical mastery	2	2		4
- ICT tools	1	2		3
- Methods	5	2		7
- Ways of organising learning	5	1		6
Educational measurements	6	4	2	12
- Educational measurements	1	3		4
- Assessment	4			4
- International comparative measurement studies	1			1
- Testing		1	2	3
Education system reform	6	5		11
- Education system reform	1			1
- Education system reform: management and organisation	4			4
- Updated content of education	1	5		6
Inclusive education	7	4		11
- Inclusive education	3	3		6
- Inclusive education: Parents	1			1
- Inclusive education: Social psychology, pedagogy	2			2
- Inclusive education: Teachers education	1	1		2
Technology	6	3		9
- Technology: ICT	3	1		4
- Technology: Innovative	2			2
- Technology: New	1	2		3
Teachers	3	5		8
- Professional competence	1	4		5
- Teachers education	2	1		3
Learners	5	1		6
- Learners' information culture	1			1
- Inspiring the learners with limited capacities	1			1
- Learners' values	3	1		4
Innovations in education	3	2		5
Underfilled ungraded schools (UUS)	1	3		4
- UUS in Kazakhstan and abroad		1		1
- Legal issues		1		1
- UUS teachers	1	1		2
Critical thinking	2	1		3
Functional literacy	1	2		3
Environmental education	2			2

Themes \ Organisation types	Educational institutions	State bodies	Independent bodies	Total
Special issue	1	1		2
Home education		1		1
Trilingualism	1			1
Lifelong learning	1			1
Greeting address from the Ministry		1		1
All themes	**58**	**40**	**2**	**100**

Table 5.4. NAE, SLF conferences. Key characters, pedagogical and temporal locations

NAE total 100 presentations		SLF total 115 presentations	
1. Who - persons			
Mentioned in 45 titles:		Mentioned in 52 titles:	
Learners (school)	15	Learners (various)	7
Teacher/pedagogue	13	All	5
Children with limited capacities (with special needs)	3	Children, young people, youth	5
Specific personalities	3	Pronouns (me, we, you)	5
Students	3	Young Workforce	5
Creative person	1	Parents/family	4
Future teachers	1	Specific personality	4
Hard of hearing pupil of primary school	1	Attainment Advisers	2
Management	1	Digital generation	2
Parents	1	Leaders of Learning & 'Learning superheroes'	2
Patriot citizen	1	Leadership	2
Pre-schoolers	1	Early years' workforce	1
School leavers	1	Employers	1
		Modern Language Assistants and Global citizen	1
		Participants	1
		People	1
		Service Cadets	1
		Staff	1
		Teacher	1
		Young Applicants	1
2. Where - pedagogical location			
Some indication provided in 72 titles.		Some indication provided in 56 titles.	
2.1. Type of education			
Mentioned in 24 titles:		Mentioned in 7 titles:	
Inclusive (additional support needs) education	13	Inclusive (additional support needs) education	4
Underfilled ungraded school	4	Forest kindergartens	1
International baccalaureate	2	Gaelic medium education	1
Comprehensive school	1	International education	1
Home education	1		
Lifelong learning	1		
Non-Kazakh medium education	1		
Technical and vocational education	1		

NAE total 100 presentations		SLF total 115 presentations	
2. Where - pedagogical location (continued) 2.2. Level of education			
Mentioned in 47 titles:		Mentioned in 28 titles:	
School	39	School	23
College	2	Transitioning from school to higher education	2
Higher educational institution	2	College	1
Pre-school	2	Higher educational institution	1
Technical and vocational educational institution	1	Pre-school	1
Secondary education	1		
2.3. Cohort, learners' age			
Mentioned in 13 titles:		Mentioned in 24 titles:	
Secondary school	5	Early years learning	8
Primary school	5	Primary school	4
Pre-school	2	Secondary school	3
Main school (lower secondary)	1	Children and young people (3-18)	3
		Secondary school, S4-S6	2
		Secondary school, S1-S3	1
		Secondary school, S3	1
		Young University applicants	1
		Younger learners	1
2.4. Specific academic subject, discipline			
Mentioned in 26 titles:		Mentioned in 22 titles:	
History and History of Kazakhstan	3	Modern Languages	3
Kazakh language (and literature)	3	Broad general education (BGE)	2
Professional disciplines	3	Literacy	2
English language	2	Science	2
Mathematics	2	Language	1
Separate disciplines	2	Literacy and English	1
Biology	1	Literacy and numeracy	1
Chemistry	1	Literacy, Maths and Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing	1
Foreign language	1	Numeracy	1
Geography	1	Philosophy	1
Geometry	1	Religious and Moral Education	1
Informatics	1	Science education	1
Languages	1	Scots Language	1
Pedagogical practice (internship, placement)	1	Social Studies	1
Physical education	1	STEM	1
Pupils' upbringing	1	STEM and engineering	1
Russian language (and literature)	1	Technology	1
3. When - time			
Some indication provided in 31 titles.		Some indication provided in 11 titles.	
3.1. Temporal location			
Mentioned in 8 titles:		Mentioned in 8 titles:	
Future	2	Life	2
Prospects	2	Now	2
2012-2016	1	10 years on – four years reported	1
2015-2020	1	Bedtime	1
Historic period of Alash Orda	1	Future	1
Nowadays	1	World War One	1

NAE total 100 presentations		SLF total 115 presentations	
3. When - time (continued) 3.2. Time-related quality			
Mentioned in 25 titles: Updated Contemporary New Continuous (lifelong) Modernisation Future (teachers)	8 7 5 2 2 1	Mentioned in 3 titles: New Revised	2 1

Table 5.5. NAE and SLF conferences. Presentation titles with particular wording: numbers and search items

Conference Wording theme	NAE total 100 presentations	SLF total 115 presentations
Technology	16 техн*, компь*, ИКТ, АКТ, интернет, онлайн, программн*, бағдар*, электр*, цифр*, Windows	8 tech*, online, ICT, internet, comp*, app , digit*, electron*, Windows
Innovation	9 иннов*, жаңаш*	3 innov*
Quality	6 сапа, качест*, жақс*, үздік, жара*, хорош*, отлич*, лучш*	4 qual*, wort*, good, excel*, bett*
International	5 междунар*, глоб*, халық*, әлем*, дүние*	3 internation*, world, glob*
National	3 наци*, госуд*, ұлт*, ел*	5 nation*
Aspiration	3 вдохн*, мечт*, мотив*, ориент*, қызы*, интер*, направ*	4 aspiration, ambit*, expec*, orient*, motiv*, motif, inspir*, dream, interest
Creative	3 шығар*, творч*, креат*, выдум*, фант*	4 imag*, creat*, fant*, tink*
Nurture	3 воспит*, пест*, тәрб*, забот*	2 nurtur*, upbring*, guid*, pastor*
Standard	1 станд*	3 standard
Disadvantage	-- равен*, равн*, благ*, бедн*, экон*, имущ*, тең*, кедей*, кемш*, жарл*	5 adva*, equ*

Table 5.6. NAE and SLF conferences. Type of presentation titles as per Hartley's categories

Conference / Title types (Hartley 2007, 2008)	NAE total 100 presentations	SLF total 115 presentations
General subject	33	34
General heading and specific theme	26	31
Controlling question	2	--
States the findings	6	2
Answer to a question implied	23	16
Thesis – the direction of the author's argument	--	--
Emphasises the methodology	4	2
Guidelines/comparisons	5	--
Attracts by using expressive features:	--	29
- startling/effective openings		15
- alliteration		8
- literary/biblical allusions		2
- puns		3
- mystifying		1

Table 5.7. NAE conference. Examples of the types of presentation titles as per Hartley's categories

Title types (Hartley 2007, 2008)	NAE examples	
	in the original language	in English[164]
General subject	Білім беру жүйесіндегі жаңашыл бағыттар	The innovative trends in education
	Экологическое образование в школе	Environmental education in schools
General heading and specific theme	Бағалау жүйесі: мәнін түсіну және қолдану тәжірибесі	Grading: understanding the values and experience of using
	Обновление содержания образования: опыт и перспективы	Updating the content of education: experience and prospects
Controlling question	Инклюзия – только иллюзия?	Inclusion - an illusion?
	Семейное (домашнее) образование: возможно ли в Казахстане?	Domestic (family) education: is it possible in Kazakhstan?
States the findings	Орта мектептегі сапалы білім кепілі – инновациялық үдеріс	Innovation processes - a guarantee of quality education
	Личный менеджмент учителя как условие успешной модернизации казахстанской школы	A teacher management as a condition for the successful modernization of schools in Kazakhstan
Answer to a question implied	Интернет-блог как средство обучения английскому языку	Internet forums as a means of learning English
	Қазақ тілі сабағында фор活ивті бағалаудың тиімділігі	Effectiveness of formative assessment on the lessons of the Kazakh language

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[164] The English language versions provided below were translated by the conference organisers and published in the in the event's brochure, which came out in 3 languages - Kazakh, Russian and English.

Title types (Hartley 2007, 2008)	NAE examples	
	in the original language	in English[164]
Emphasises the methodology	Качество оказания образовательных услуг детям с особыми потребностями (по итогам социологического опроса)	The quality of the provision of educational services for children with special needs (according to the poll)
	Қазақстан тарихы пәні бойынша «depth of knowledge» қолданбалы педагогикалық өлшем жүйесін қолдану тәжірибесі	Experience in the use of applications of pedagogical measurements "Depth of knowledge" on the subject of "History of Kazakhstan"
Guidelines / comparisons	Жаңа педагогикалық идеялар және дәстүрлі педагогикалық жүйе	New pedagogical ideas and traditional educational system
	Пути повышения эффективности подготовки будущих учителей к работе в малокомплектной школе	Ways to improve the efficiency of training future teachers to work in the ungraded schools

Table 5.8. SLF conference. Examples of the types of presentation titles as per Hartley's categories

Title types (Hartley 2007, 2008)	SLF examples
General subject	Improving outcomes for deaf learners Social Studies Resource Launch
General heading and specific theme	Bedtime Reading – Improving parental engagement in a child's early learning Scottish Attainment Challenge – The Challenge Fund
States the findings	Integrating Career Management Skills (CMS) to develop skills for learning, life and work Online self-evaluation – an innovative and rigorous approach to improvement
Answer to a question implied	1+2 languages – where are we now? Developing the Young Workforce – Where does it all begin?
Emphasises the methodology	Leaders of Learning – The Learner Journey SCEL Fellowship Programme – Participants' experiences
Attracts by:	
- startling/effective openings	Think about it! Philosophy with children and young people Magic of Music – Early Stages Literacy, Maths and Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing
- alliteration	Braw Blethers: Scots Language Networks Mentoring Matters
- literary/biblical allusions	Breaking good with big partnerships If You Go Down to the Woods – Developing Forest Kindergartens
- puns	Implementing Donaldson – the story of PLAN C Working in tandem – using bicycles in the curriculum
- mystifying	'Joined up Thinking'. Using the John Muir Award

Table 5.9. NAE and SLF conferences. Abbreviations, question and exclamation marks

Conference / Various details	NAE total 100 presentations	SLF total 115 presentations
Number of titles with abbreviations that are not disambiguated	9	17
Using question marks	2	10
Using exclamation marks	--	3