**EFL school teachers' language proficiency as a key factor of language**

**educational environment: a case of Kazakhstan**

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This research investigates the significance of school teachers’ English Language (EFL) proficiency as a crucial factor developing the language educational environment in Kazakhstan. The study explores the theoretical aspects of the language educational environment and aims to compare EFL teachers’ self-assessment of their English language proficiency in urban and rural schools across the country. Employing a mixed-method approach, the research combines quantitative assessments with qualitative analysis to gain comprehensive insights into the subject. A total of 500 EFL teachers, including 263 from urban schools and 237 from rural schools, participated in the study. The findings shed light on potential differences between urban and rural school teachers’ self-assessment of their English language proficiency. Factors such as access to language learning/teaching resources and Internet, interaction with native speakers, and professional development opportunities contribute to variations in language proficiency levels. The research highlights the importance of addressing potential disparities in English language proficiency among urban and rural EFL schoolteachers, as this can significantly impact the language educational environment in both urban and rural schools. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of the role of EFL school teachers’ language proficiency in shaping the language educational environment in Kazakhstan and emphasizes the need for targeted measures to support school teachers.

*Keywords:* EFL school teachers, English language proficiency, language educational environment, urban schools, rural schools, Kazakhstan.