C2C Digital Magazine (Spring / Summer 2021)

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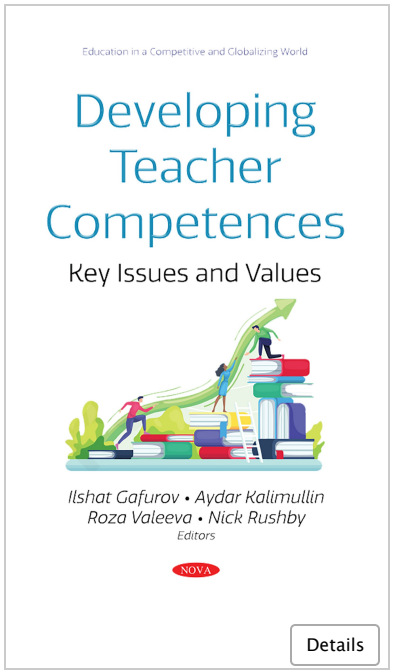
Book review: Education reform in Russian Federation and Balkans

By Shalin Hai-Jew, Kansas State University

Developing Teacher Competences



Developing Teacher Competences: Key Issues and Values
Ilshat Gafurov, Aydar Kalimullin, Roza Valeeva, and Nick Rushby
Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
2020
333 pp.

Ilshat Gafurov, Aydar Kalimullin, Roza Valeeva, and Nick Rushby's edited collection *Developing Teacher Competences: Key Issues and Values* (2020) includes various research works around better understanding the public education sector in the Russian Federation (Rossiyskaya Federatsiya) in a time of reform.

An early question is what motivates people to become teachers—in their rich diversities—given the importance but high difficulties of the work (reaching learners in their

challenges with cutting-edge math and science education

14. Book review: ANNs applied in vivo to industrial and environmental systems

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diversities, working in complex social spaces) and the requirements for lifelong learning. How much of the call to teaching comes from the individual, and how much is developed in a graduate level educational program and in a lifetime of work? These various works also engage questions of what core competencies are for teachers to be effective both in their specific topical disciplines and in teaching in general…and where these are acquired and developed, in formal training but also on-the-job and from mentors.

The 16 works are from the Fifth International Forum on Teacher Education (May 29 – 31, 2019) at Kazan Federal University (IFTE-2019), a conference with a number of sponsors from Russia, Ireland, and various associations based out of Europe.

Teacher Values and their Criticality to Society

Ilshat R. Gafurov, Aydar M. Kalimullin, and Roza A. Valeeva's "Value Orientations and Competences of Future Teachers" (Preface) shows a sense of the central role of the state in shaping each new generation. Teachers' values are seen to have effects on "children's development of a moral stand and a civic position" and further on peoples and nations (Gafurov, Kalimullin, & Valeeva, 2020, p. ix). Teachers hold a vaunted position of being "holders of material and spiritual culture of society and universal human values" (p. ix). These ideas are suggestive of a fully actualized person as being a contributing member of society (collective?) with state-preferred understandings of the world perhaps, with less focus on individualism, freedom, and self-will.

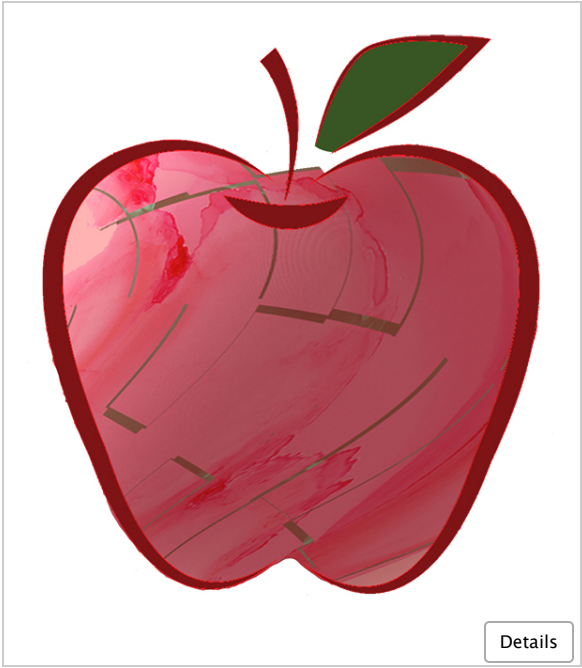
This work is partially about broadscale metacognition in the profession.

> …young teachers' established beliefs about the subject affect the way they teach it. If the discipline is believed to be a series of axiomatic facts, then the teacher would choose a directive instruction. If the discipline is thought of as the constantly changing body of knowledge, then the teacher would use communicative technologies, actively engaging students into the learning process. (Gafurov, Kalimullin, & Valeeva, 2020, p. xii)

This increased awareness should shed light on beliefs that are formed "as a result of complex repeated life experiences"; such ideas may benefit from being more purposefully included in pre-service teacher trainings (Gafurov, Kalimullin, & Valeeva, 2020, p. xii).

Figure 1: Apple

Apple



School teachers are a particular group of individuals in a society with outsized potential effects on societies and individuals.

Understanding Core Beliefs of New Teachers

Timirkhan B. Alishev, Johannes Dammerer, and Oksana V. Polyakova's "Future Schoolteachers' Preconceptions and Their Transformation: Training Program Impact on Epistemological Beliefs" (Ch. 1) explores how student teachers' ideas about themselves and their profession evolve, from their preconceptions to their new thinking in the learning program and in the work. Through interview-based research and grounded theory-informed bottom-up coding, this study explores "how teachers conceptualize their work, and whether they use concepts based on their personal experience or use the theoretical knowledge that forms their perception of the profession" (p. 3). Of special interest is how teachers' beliefs change in the program, especially through "the influence of critical or stressful situations on their preconceptions about the profession" (p. 4).

Teaching is seen as a form of stimulating "children's congenital abilities" and needing to customize various approaches (Alishev, Dammerer, & Polyakova, 2020, p. 8). Here, teachers facilitate learners' desire for knowledge and use learning to "make this process coherent and productive" (p. 9).

The researchers theorize that teachers' "cognition, socialization and emotion" are considered "crucial for professional concept formation" (p. 4). An educational training program frames "the vision of the future profession" and supports learners in transforming into the profession (Alishev, Dammerer, & Polyakova, 2020, p. 8). Proper training may enable further supports for teachers and enable higher teacher retention, given that so many new teachers leave the profession especially in early years. For some, there may be a gap between their imagined profession and the real-life work context. For some new teachers, there is the sense that "their first days at

school in the role of pre-teachers" serve as "shocking therapy that changed their mental picture" (p. 8).

This comparative study found some national differences between students from Austria vs. Russia. One finding was that Austrian students were "much more confident in their abilities to be a teacher" vs. Russian students who showed "a high level of uncertainty regarding their future professional activities" (Alishev, Dammerer, & Polyakova, 2020, p. 10). It was not clear if more work was done to understand the differences here.

Creative Competence in Teachers for More Innovative Learners

In a changing and complex world, research innovations are important to advance fields, come up with multiple possible solutions to challenges, solve problems, generate ideas, and improve the world. Teachers are explicitly expected to "use the innovative methods, forms and technologies and improve their educational activity" and to teach flexibly in Dinar V. Ivanov, Valeriya A. Stepashkina, and Vera K. Vlasova's "Creative Competence of Future Teachers" (Ch. 2) (2020, p. 20). In the present age, creativity is understood as a human skill that can be trained, not something that is an intrinsic capability. The idea here is not that one-size-fits-all or that centralized control should dominate a classroom but that future teachers of Russia should show creative competence in teaching, learning, assessing, problem-solving, and other tasks. Perhaps such creativity in the classroom may engender creativity in learners and protect the various STEM / STEAM pipelines from toddler-hood on through university and into professions.

This study used two tests applied to each student: the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) and the Guilford Test of Creative Thinking (GTCT). These involve the assessing of "flexibility, fluency (creative problem solving) and originality" (Ivanov, Stepashkina, & Vlasova, 2020, p. 23), in thinking with pictures and words. Fluency is defined as characterizing "a person's creative productivity" (p. 25). This study found the importance of the following four factors: "problem searching and solving style of thinking; specific personality features (curiosity, flexibility, enthusiasm, novelty); readiness for risk in teaching practice; interest in creative classroom climate and creativity in children etc." (p. 23)

The researchers found that a high level of creativity "is more common in the final year students" while first-year students showed "an unequal distribution of creative thinking indicators" (Ivanov, Stepashkina, & Vlasova, 2020, p. 24). The researchers suggest that it is helpful to have a number of ways to express creativity in terms of modalities (visual and verbal). The "uniqueness and specificity of creative thinking" or "originality" are important to the work (p. 25). Finally, the researchers expressed concerns about teacher resistance to "increasing novelty in creative competence" (p. 26), perhaps given social and other risks.

Teacher Resilience through Emotional Intelligence and Uncertainty Tolerance

Aida F. Minullina and Kseniya V. Pyrkova's "Emotional Intelligence and Tolerance for Uncertainty in Future Teachers" (Ch. 3) focuses on two psychological factors seen to have a large impact on teachers and their professional competence. Pedagogical

activity is inherently stressful and demanding and often leads to emotional burnout and people leaving the profession. As a social actor, teachers need to have emotional intelligence—both to engage others and to manage themselves. Said another way, teachers have to combine "intellectual, emotional, volitional, value, moral, spiritual, and reflexive components" and maintain an appropriate psychological atmosphere (p. 34). Teachers have to recognize the role of emotions in others and themselves. They need sufficient self-control to manage their own emotions. At heart of this work is a hypothesized "relationship between the characteristics of emotional intelligence and indicators of tolerance of uncertainty in future teachers" and perhaps some gender differences in how various features manifest in future teachers (p. 36). There are mental costs of dealing with heightened uncertainty, and teachers require internal fortitude to persist (p. 38).

Figure 2: Emotions

Based on an emotional intelligence (EI) questionnaire responded to by graduate students in education, the researchers found often higher levels of interpersonal indicators of EI in females than males in factors such as "emotionality, interpersonal relationships, social responsibility" whereas males seem to score higher in intrapersonal indicators "(self-assertion, ability to defend one's rights), ability to manage stress (stress resistance, control of impulsivity) and adaptability (determination of plausibility, problem solving)" based on some research in the emotional intelligence space (Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 37).

The co-authors summarize:

> Future male teachers exhibited low scores in understanding other people's emotions (MP) (19.8), understanding their own emotions (VP) (16.04), and a general scale of understanding emotions (PE) (34.85). Average values were found for EI characteristics of: interpersonal EI (MEI), i.e., the ability to understand other people's emotions and their management (43.4); intrapersonal EI (VEI), i.e., the ability to understand and handle your own emotions (45.24). High values of EI characteristics were found for: managing your own emotions (VU) (17.52); managing other people's emotions (MU) (23.6); control of external manifestations of emotions (UE) (59.56); and general EI (OEI) (95.4). (Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 41)

For females, the coauthors found that they…

> had low scores for managing your own emotions (VU) (10.7); the management of other people's emotions (MU) (15.92); control of external manifestations of emotions (VE) (7.8); and general EI (OEI) (34.44). They had average values for: intrapersonal EI (VEI) – the ability to understand and control your own emotions (42.6); interpersonal EI (MEI) – the ability to understand and control the emotions of other people (45.24); and general EI (OEI) (87.84). They scored highly on: understand your own emotions (VP) (24.08); understanding other people's emotions (MP) (29.32); and the general scale of understanding emotions (OEI) (53.4). (Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 42)

Finding that the male subjects "show high confidence in their abilities; their eagerness to find something new and unknow; a remarkable ability to find their way out of difficult situations; self-control when in a situation where information is deficient or lacking…characteristics (which) determine their general high level of tolerance and uncertainty" (Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 44).

Females "have two low level indicators of tolerance of uncertainty: 'courage' (17.76), and 'tolerance of ambiguity' (17.6). They exhibit average levels in indicators for 'resourcefulness (22.4), 'confidence' (22.56) and by the integrative (general) indicator of tolerance of uncertainty (168.56). They score highly for 'passion' (emotionality) (29.4), 'optimism' (29.36), and 'adaptability' (29.4)." (Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 44)

Certainly there is progress to be made for all future teachers. There are some assertions of research that read as sexist and stereotyping, by assigning particular characteristics to sexual identity: "Women (and feminine men) tend to defend themselves and solve difficulties emotionally, while men (and masculine women) on the contrary, do this instrumentally, by transforming an external situation (Shipilov 2008, as cited in Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 45). Perhaps it may help to couch the research findings perhaps as less deterministic and more cultural and situational. Perhaps the setup of the research may be done to control for biasing. Perhaps there is a cultural effect of stereotypes on learners of different genders and their emotional intelligence and tolerance for uncertainty (Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 47). The risks of "stereotype threat" may be highly present here given the suggested ideas of

inherency of characteristics in masculinity, in femininity.

Side Note: It is unclear what human subjects research protections were used or how these differ from U.S. "gold" standards. This study was conducted at Kazan Volga (Federal) University among senior students in a Pedagogical Education course participating (so a non-random convenience sample) (Minullina, & Pyrkova, 2020, p. 40). It is unclear if students felt free to decline to participate from the beginning or at any time. It is unclear if those that participated felt any pressure given the power relations between the researchers and the students.

Lifelong Learning as a Core Teaching Requirement

Viara T. Gyurova's "Teachers and Lifelong Learning" (Ch. 4) highlights the importance of lifelong learning for teachers as a basic assumption given the advances and new thinking in respective disciplines. This researcher took a "six-questions" approach to understand this phenomena, including: "*Why* is life-long learning a challenge?...*When* does life-long learning become a challenge?...*What* is the challenge?...*Who* is at the center of the challenge?...*Where* is the challenge (for Bulgaria)?...*How* can we respond to this challenge?" (pp. 57-58) Also, a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was conducted about the current state of teaching and teacher education and teacher certification in Bulgaria. This study was conducted out of Sofia University in Bulgaria, in S.E. Europe. This country has "a considerable shortage of young teachers and also a shortage of teachers in a number of subjects (foreign languages, ICT, natural sciences" (Gyurova, 2020, p. 59). Beyond a lack of people to fill positions, this country has "outdated legislation and lack of standards for initial training" have will have effects on training for future teachers (p. 59). The lack of established mechanisms for assessing different forms of training mean that there are varying levels of training and differing qualities. Also, there is a need for better coordination between secondary and higher education, "which has a negative impact on the relationship between university teacher training and the particular needs of a school and teaching staff themselves" (p. 59).

The researcher notes that there are different markets for the conferring of Professional and Qualification Degrees (PQDs), even as there are limits to learning outside the formal system of education and training.

> Within an extended market of educational services in Bulgaria outside the higher education, the system of non-formal education (with its private companies for educational services, educational centers, NGOs, etc.) offers courses, seminars, training, etc. that are different in duration, form and subject and that enable teachers to complement and upgrade their professional competencies (knowledge, skills, experience) and to develop their pedagogical, methodological, and psychological culture. (Gyurova, 2020, p. 62)

The Ministry of Education and Science is coming out with the National Strategy for developing pedagogical staff (2014-2020) and working three main areas: "a legal framework; a system for improving qualification; and institutions and organizations" (Gyurova, 2020, p. 60).

A SWOT analysis of the various educational options for teachers to improve their professional qualifications include the following insights. Strengths include "statutory requirements for planning and carrying out qualification activities at institutional level" and "clear rules and procedures for acquiring professional and qualification degrees and career development of teachers," (Gyurova, 2020, p. 62), and "a variety of institutions and formats" for acquiring teacher professional qualifications (p. 63). Weaknesses include "an outdated and cumbersome system for acquiring five vocational qualification degrees" and "organizational inefficiencies of the system" (p. 63). "Opportunities" include the accessing of international programs, learning from new colleagues met during the courses, career advancement (pp. 64-65). "Threats" and risks may be seen from the perspective of the teachers "with regard to their involvement in qualification activity" (p. 65). Other ones may be trainings that are "too 'theoretical'" (p. 65) and insufficiently applied. There may be opportunity cost in wasting time that could have been better used elsewhere (p. 65). Some teachers may not receive "their due recognition from colleagues and management for their efforts" (p. 65). There may be "'unprofessional' trainers" (p. 65).

This researcher sees up sides in some of the advances in this space. "By 2020 Bulgaria should have established a unified and efficient system of education, training, continuing qualification and conditions for professional development of pedagogical staff" (The National Strategy, 2016, 33). This will require the building out of many aspects of the system: updating the relevant legislation, enabling smoother acquisition of professional degrees, creating diagnostics for the various qualifications formats, broadening available trainings for online teacher qualification, and better linking remuneration for teachers acquisition of skills, among others (Gyurova, 2020, p. 66). This work shows clear rationales for the policymaking and bureaucratic actions.

Effective Curricula for New Teachers

Elena V. Asafova and Oksana V. Vashetina's "Professional and Pedagogical Self-Development of Master's Students, Future Teachers of Vocational and Higher Education Institutions" (Ch. 5) takes as a basic premise the importance of student-teachers and teachers continuously developing themselves. In the spirit of educational renewal, this study explores student abilities for self-development, with the understanding of the "basic components of professional and pedagogical self-development" as including "motivational, cognitive, moral-volitional, gnostic, organizational, communicative, and an ability to self-control" and such factors (p. 74). This study suggests that students' ability for self-development improves as they spend more time in the program. Another aspect to this program uses the knowledge of master's students readiness for their own "professional and pedagogical self-development" to enable "the modelling, designing and planning of the educational process as a personalized preparation for future pedagogical activity" (p. 74).

The researchers used a questionnaire developed at an institute of pedagogy in Giessen, Germany to elicit responses from students majoring in pedagogy tracks at Kazan Federal University in 2018 – 2019. The "professional and pedagogical self-development components include: a persistent cognitive interest in the field of pedagogy and psychology, the need for psychological and pedagogical self-education, determination, autonomy, performance, self-control, and many others" (Asafova & Vashetina, 2020, p. 78). In their self-assessments: "…first-year students assessed their

motivational, moral-volitional components and the self-control ability slightly higher than the second-year students" (p. 78). Also, students with a university degree in teacher education… "evaluate the cognitive component of professional and pedagogical self-development higher than other components, compared with students without that degree" (p. 78). The co-researchers suggest that awareness of professional and personal self-development enables learners to apply personalization to their planning around educational processes.

Preschool Educator Preparedness to Teach Children with "Mental Retardation"

How prepared are preschool educators for teaching children with developmental delays and deficiencies? Gulnara V. Valiullina and Natalia Y. Boryakova's "Competence of Preschool Educators in Regard to Children with Mental Retardation in the Context of Inclusion" (Ch. 6) points to a need to modernize the knowledge of teachers, especially in the areas of "correctional and developmental education." The Federal State Educational Standard for Preschool Education" (FSESPE) includes standards for creating adapted basic educational programs. The co-researchers write: "Mental retardation is a complex polymorphic disorder which affects various components of cognitive activity, the emotional-volitional sphere, and psychomotor development" (p. 91). They point to a large gap in knowledge about this space among educators in preschool groups:

> Frequently, educators in preschool groups and the senior educators who providing (sic) methodological guidance in nursery schools lack basic ideas about causes and manifestations of psychomotor and speech development retardation in children of early and preschool age. Educators are not fully aware of the content of the ABEP Model for preschool education of children…they are not ready to select educational content, to design a developing subject-spatial environment for these children because of the fragmented presentation of this knowledge in secondary special and higher education programs (Valiullina & Boryakova, 2020, p. 91).

This work involves a literature review to understand educator methodological competence for working with children with "mental retardation" to enable inclusive education (Valiullina & Boryakova, 2020, p. 92). This is an important endeavor to enable all people to self-actualize, work to capability, and contribute to societal betterment. One approach is to improve knowledge, skills, and abilities through "advanced training courses involving specialists from various fields including pathologists, neurologists, therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, etc." (p. 93), to formulate "inclusive competence" in the target labor force. Teachers need to be able to formulate appropriate individual approaches for children with special educational needs.

This work involved the study of 48 teachers and assessing them to three levels of methodological competence: low, middle, and high. The first involves a "lack of skills to create individual programs of psychological and pedagogical support for preschool children with MR," the second as "difficulties in creating individual programs of psychological and pedagogical support of preschool children with MR," and the highest

as “having a wide range of diagnostics and designing a psychologically comfortable correctional and developing environment, the ability to create individual programs for psychological and pedagogical support of preschool children with MR” (Valiullina & Boryakova, 2020, p. 98). In terms of percentages, a majority of educators (63 – 66%) had low skills in the space, 17% - 25% had middle skills, and only 13 – 17% had high skills (p. 99). This study found educators with “a low level of knowledge about clinical, psychological and pedagogical features of mental development retardation” and resulting necessary work for the government to advance the teaching and care of young learners with developmental delays (p. 100).

Math Teachers and Inclusive Education

What does inclusive education look like in the math teaching and learning space? Elena R. Sadykova, Ilnar F. Yarullin, Olga V. Razumova, and Ramis R. Nasibullov’s “The Formation of Professional Competencies of Future Math Teachers in The Context of Inclusive Education” (Ch. 7) examines the work of developing “a didactic model of the formation of professional competencies of future mathematics teachers in inclusive education” (p. 110). This work is centered around the stated values of multiculturalism and humanity (p. 115).

The desired end state requires proper teaching for young learners with mental retardation. The co-authors suggest that if the following endeavors are implemented, then future teachers of math will have improved competencies in supporting learners with disabilities:

> - integration of subject, methodological and psychological-pedagogical training;
> - organization of the educational process using metacognitive technologies with the means of information and communication technologies;
> - an organic combination of classroom and extracurricular educational work;
> - implementation of the continuity of theoretical and practical training;
> - humanization of pedagogical communication and interaction, the organization of partnerships and creative cooperation between teachers and students” (Sadykova, Yarullin, Razumova, & Nasibullov, 2020, p. 111)

The researchers assess math teacher readiness for inclusive education; they identify the requisite professional competencies of future teachers of mathematics and create a model “for the formation of professional competencies of the future teacher of mathematics in inclusive education” (p. 113). They observe:

> The readiness of a teacher for the professional activity consists in mastering the system of special knowledge, professional psychological, pedagogical and scientific methodical actions and social humanistic interrelations. Such training should include the following aspects: knowledge of the essence of inclusive education, the differences from traditional forms of education; knowledge of psychological patterns and features of the age and personal development of children with disabilities;

> knowledge of the methods of psychological and didactic design of the educational process for the joint training of children with impaired and normal development; the ability to implement various ways of pedagogical interaction between all participants of the educational environment (Sadykova, Yarullin, Razumova, & Nasibullov, 2020, p. 115)

The conduct of an "ascertaining experiment" which showed "a relatively low level of formation of competences: 61.2% of all surveyed showed a low level, 31.7% - an average level and only 7.1% - a high one. The results showed a weak cognitive component formation. Most of them (over 60%) are poorly aware of the essence of inclusive education. Many students have shown little interest in children with disabilities" (Sadykova, Yarullin, Razumova, & Nasibullov, 2020, p. 122). Various pedagogical interventions, though, were shown to be effective at raising competencies (p. 125).

While the ideas seem generally solid, it is unclear where the discipline overlap is with math. Is this context the same as inclusive education in other disciplines, or is it different? And if it is different, how and why?

"Foresight" Simulations to Anticipate and Prepare for the Future

Traditional teacher training prepares students to teach in a so-called static world based on "a predesigned scenario" and not a dynamic world full of risk. So goes the core assertion in Leysan R. Kayumova and Venera G. Zakirova's "Simulation-Based Technologies in Teacher Education, Using Foresight Sessions as an Example" (Ch. 8). The challenge, then, is to integrate riskology and teaching in teacher training. This work uses simulation-based technologies ("Foresight Sessions" and a forum theatre experience followed by focus group debriefing) and hands-on activities to prepare future teachers to work under risk. One aspect of this is future-seeing to help teachers anticipate a more complex and dangerous world.

This work begins with the employing of a questionnaire, Heim's coping strategies assessment (1995). Among research participants, behavioral and emotional coping strategies were found to be low in dealing with risk and unpredictability. In the simulations, cases are raised and solved, through the employment of strategic thinking (Kayumova & Zakirova, 2020, p. 147). Future visioning seems to be part of this approach, too, by mapping the future to better address the dynamism:

> The map of the future can be easily transformed into a goal-oriented road map which is not just the visual projection of the collective future that reflects current trends, predictions of technological development, strategic forks, and events, but also contains decision making milestones to set in motion specific social and technological actions or the plan for legislative and lobbing (sic) measures. (Kayumova & Zakirova, 2020, p. 149)

The team works on setting timelines, setting goals, and other efforts. The visioning involves bringing together experts from different fields including various security experts (all of which smack of early Delphi studies). One threat mentioned in this work

is a real-world set of malicious online persons that aimed to dupe children and drive them to suicide.

The risks are transformed into "forum theatre" for game-based simulation by readying participants to immerse in "risk-charged situations and gain new emotional and behavioral experience (Kayumova & Zakirova, 2020, p. 152). This occurs in two parts:

> First, the theatrical part is implemented—a problem-based situation is presented. In our case we focused on the situation of children being pushed towards suicide. Then comes the forum part in which every step in the action plan is examined. The actions of every character are considered and their motivation is analyzed. The expert group can join the game-based simulation and participate in the forum. At the end of this stage the road map is developed further. (Kayumova & Zakirova, 2020, p. 153)

The teachers come away with heightened awareness of potential nasty surprises in the classroom and their environs and may have improved skills to address these.

Improving Training Programs in Master Courses

Tatiana A. Baklashova, Elena G. Skobeltsyna, and Elena M. Galishnikova's "Modification of Practical Training Programs in Pedagogical Master Courses" (Ch. 9) focuses on the importance of professional development and their evaluation and redesign in a pedagogical master's course.

Using polls and interviews, this study focused on four research questions:

> - How can the modified practical training programs, and updated content of the practice affect the level of professional development and motivational activity of students, and the attraction of the teaching profession for master's students on the pedagogical course?
> - What pedagogical conditions should be created in the implementation of practical training in the university to ensure the effectiveness of the educational process, and the professional and creative development of future teachers?
> - How advisable is the use of practice-based learning technologies in the organization of practical training in educational institutions?
> - To what extent do they contribute to obtaining the teaching experience, building research, scientific and the pedagogical potential of graduate students? (Baklashova, Skobeltsyna, & Galishnikova, 2020, p. 164)

The co-authors write here about the importance of defining clear learning goals and working through the complexities of how the goals interrelate among interdisciplinary trainings (especially "practicals" or "practicums" as context- and place-based learning) and various areas of study. There is work towards the "unification of interpenetrating trajectories in the content, in the system of ideas, concepts, skills and abilities, and elements of cognitive experience" (Baklashova, Skobeltsyna, & Galishnikova, 2020, p. 169).

Assessing Teacher Classroom Abilities with Accuracy

In modernizing the education system in Russia, the skills of the teaching profession are important. Assessing teacher competencies with accuracy and fairness is important. Inna I. Golovanova, Nadezhda V. Telegina, and Olga I. Donetskaya's "Assessing Student Teachers' Ability to Design and Conduct Classes" (Ch. 10) involves the analysis of "students' final reports on their teaching internship" based on various criteria in order to improve the teaching and learning and support further student-teacher development (p. 183). The findings have Implications on the design and teaching of courses (to improve the overall learning and outcomes).

Systematic analysis of the Federal Educational Standard and defined required competencies for the master's in pedagogical education, the development of practice-oriented situations for teaching internships, a system of "criteria and parameters" based on reports and evaluations of classes and self-assessments, the assessment of pedagogic competences, and the identification of areas for further development (Golovanova, Telegina, & Donetskaya, 2020, p. 186). The graduate program involves six functional groups in the master's programs: "pedagogical work, research, project activities, methodological work, managerial work, (and) awareness-building activities" (p. 185). These areas also offer sources of assessment criteria. This work offers some shared rubrics, defined competencies, and other tools from these processes.

Reimagining Portfolios for Student Teacher Learning

Student-teacher portfolios may be an important source of competency building, according to Regina G. Sakhieva's "Master's Portfolio in Education: A Fresh View on the Process of Designing and Implementation" (Ch. 11). Such master's portfolios in education should "document the process and the results of various activities in order to create an account of the individual's strategy of both their personal and professional development" (p. 203). The portfolio contains multimodal items, a reflective essay, third-party assessments, and other elements. A portfolio includes "a motivation letter which presents and justifies the student's personal point of view (their position and attitude)" (Sakhieva, 2020, p. 211). Various learner tasks are tied to the usage of the portfolio as a learning tool. They motivate individual and group study. The lay the groundwork for future "self-actualization and self-realization within the professional and pedagogical community" (Sakhieva, 2020, p. 209).

The purpose of the research is to identify "essential, purposeful, content, procedural and criterion characteristics" that ensure an effective use of portfolios for master's education learning (Sakhieva, 2020, p. 204). The deeper analysis provides insights about what goes into such a portfolio and the implications of such on teaching and learning activities.

This work is based on multimodal and multi-sourced primary and secondary research (the first to contribute new insights, and the latter to set baseline understandings of portfolio use in teaching and learning). Formally, the educational master's portfolio is "a method aimed at designing and implementing an individual trajectory for personal development based on reflection that indicates the process of his/her participation in educational and professional activities and demonstrates the level of competencies'

development" (pp. 207-208). This "elaborated portfolio" (p. 219) works as a showcase of the "student's educational, research and other achievements" (p. 221); this is used by potential employers and other stakeholders to assess the individual and likely by extension the university.

Psychological Well-being

A novice teacher is a "newly qualified" one, and induction refers to their process of professional adaptation in Rezeda M. Khusainova's "Psychological Well-Being of Novice Teachers" (Ch. 12). This critical early career phase is one characterized by "high professional ambitions and their ability to accomplish them, a proactive stance and optimistic approach to professional difficulties, and satisfaction with their professional achievements" (p. 227). It is in the interest of society to have schools absorb new practices and the high energy of the new teachers and to make such contributions sustainable. Sometimes, the early idealisms can be turned to cynicism if the impetuses are quashed.

This work explores ways to promote teacher psychological well-being. For the respective teachers, "high efficiency, autonomy and independence in decision-making, acceptance of loss of energy and the ability to separate personal life from professional life" are important for their psychological health (Khusainova, 2020, p. 227). A general measure of teacher satisfaction explores their quality of life as a multi-dimensional construct, one that only has recently been included in teacher education research in this part of the world. This research is based on the WHOQOL 100 questionnaire and the AVEM questionnaire, as engaged by teachers in the field from 0 to 7 years from 14 schools in 7 municipal districts in the Republic of Tatarstan. This group consists of 74 women and 8 men (p. 231). The dimensions of the research instruments address various domains including the physical, psychological, independence, social, environmental, and spiritual (pp. 230-231). The first group are teachers with lower levels of experience (0 – 3 years) and the latter group with 4 – 7 years. The author writes:

> Teachers with 0 – 3 years' experience were characterized by high significance of the profession, the desire to fulfill their professional duties with quality and on time, and their optimistic attitude to emerging professional problems. These teachers were mentally resistant to professional problems and satisfied with life. The mean value of the indicator of their ability to maintain a distance is significant. This is their ability to share work and personal life and be able to relax after work. The teachers in group 2 were ready for significant loss of energy, they strived to do their work perfectly, and bring an active and positive attitude to solving professional problems. However, the low DF (maintaining a distance) indicator shows that work was increasingly filling their life and they could no longer distance themselves from it. (Khusainova, 2020, pp. 233-234; the variable references were removed from the prior quote for easier readability)

The researcher also found the following:

> For both groups, the 'environment' area had an 'average' value for quality of life in sub-areas F18 (financial resources), F19 (medical and social assistance), and F23 (transport). These sub-areas describe the external conditions of the teacher's life. Respondents indicated low satisfaction with financial security, sense of security, medical and social assistance. The need for their own housing, the availability of high-quality medical care, and opportunities for recreation and entertainment all explain the lack of satisfaction with their material living conditions. The sub-area F8 (negative emotions) refers to dissatisfaction with the quality of life. This sub-area explores the strength of an individual's negative experiences and their influence on his/her day-to-day functioning. Teachers indicated their existing negative emotions which undoubtedly affect their psychological well-being. At the same time, the sub-area F4 (positive emotions) for both groups of teachers fell into the interpretation interval of 'good LQ.' (Khusainova, 2020, p. 234)

Both groups also had a shared sense of "low satisfaction with financial security, sense of security, medical and social assistance" (Khusainova, 2020, p. 234). By contrast, there is general satisfaction with the work even in the material living conditions could be more satisfying.

The efficient use of energy also differed: "The only statistically significant difference in teachers' quality of life between the two groups as determined by the Student's t-test was in the sub-area F12 (performance) ($t=2.636$ with $p = 0.010$). This scale explores the individual's use of their own energy for work. Teachers in group 2 are significantly less efficient than teachers in group 1. However, as noted above, these more experienced teachers are ready to devote all their strength to the fulfillment of professional tasks" (Khusainova, 2020, p. 235). (This last turn of phrase read to this reviewer like a bit of political cover.)

Preventing Early Emotional Burnout

Lera A. Kamalova and Galina P. Zhirkova's "Risks of Early Emotional Burnout in Young Teachers: Causes and Prevention" (Ch. 13) examines the risks of burnout and leaving the profession for teachers with fewer than five years of teaching and for those with more experience. Which novice teachers are at risk of burnout? This study involves engaging 32 elementary school teachers in Russia in the context of the implementation of the Federal State Educational Standards. The teaching profession involves "enormous intellectual, psychophysical, emotional…costs" especially in a context of changing educational policies and professional standards (p. 245). The researchers share some topline findings:

> The personal risk factors for burnout include a propensity for introversion; the individual's reaction as a characteristic of temperament which appears in the strength and speed of their emotional response; low or excessively high empathy; rigidity and authoritarianism toward others; and low self-esteem. The status-role risk factors include: role conflict; dissatisfaction with professional and personal growth; low social status; role behavioral stereotypes; and rejection by the reference group. (Kamalova & Zhirkova, 2020, p. 244)

Emotional burnout occurs sooner than first thought: "An analysis (of) the indicators of different phases shows that in the 'stress' phase, teachers with 0 to 1 year's work experience have the highest rates, while rates are lower for teachers with 4 to 5 years' experience" (Kamalova & Zhirkova, 2020, p. 256). The researchers also found that "young primary school teachers with ½-1 year's teaching…experience the highest level of emotional exhaustion – 20.96%" (p. 256). Burnout may be seen in various behavioral changes, such as a dulling of creativity applied to problem solving, "bad moods, detachment," withdrawal, impaired health, and other challenges (p. 247). "Burnout occurs when the internal and external requirements constantly prevail over internal and external resources, leaving the teacher in a state of non-equilibrium" (p. 262).

This chapter offers a variety of interventions to address burnout: various interventions like a "bag of wishes" or a "pleasure" exercise (in reference to "passions and hobbies") (Kamalova & Zhirkova, 2020, p. 260). Also, for the teacher direction, there are three main important interventions: working to better handle stress, developing verbal and nonverbal communications skills, and working to resolve conflict and arrive at "constructive solutions" (p. 263).

Encouraging Well-Being Activities for Those in the Profession

Natalia L. Selivanova's "Professional Maintenance of Wellbeing Activities for Novice Teachers: Theoretical and Methodical Considerations" (Ch. 14) offers a range of ideas for teacher self-care. The author writes:

> These include: diagnostics of their professional difficulties; developing their personal attitude in dialogues with colleagues, as a bearer of knowledge and ignorance in the professional sphere; equipping the novice teacher with new knowledge and technologies for social and emotional welfare; affiliation with a professional community; interaction with various professional communities to experience different types of social practice; involvement in real innovative practice, initially in the context of their own educational organization; developing their own roadmap for professional improvement; reflecting on their professional activity, including social and emotional wellbeing as a specific direction; and the need to take a positive position in social and emotional wellbeing activity. (Selivanova, 2020, p. 274)

She offers various suggestions to connect teachers to the broader professional community as well as make plans for professional improvement and to elicit the support of a "teacher-mentor" (Selivanova, 2020, p. 277). There may be benefits to reflect on their own work, sometimes in the company of others who also understand. In the toolkit may include such techniques as "organizing conversations and discussions; pedagogical support of children's project activities; communicative games; children's performances and concerts; collective creative events; hiking trips" (Selivanova, 2020, p. 281).

Building Support Systems

Novice teachers would do well to build their respective support systems, particularly in a time of "shifting educational paradigms," in Anvar N. Khuziakhmetov's "Developing an Effective Support System for Novice Teachers in Modern Schools" (Ch. 15). There are efforts to support teachers to be "mobile, flexible, able to adapt to social changes, and prepared for constant development and innovative challenges" (p. 285). Given a national priority of building a pool of teacher candidates, the state is focused on individuals who are "achievement-oriented and demanding of their own reflective, intellectual, ICT and communication competencies" (pp. 285-286). There are expected idealisms, such as that teachers have to be "free and independent, humanitarian, spiritual, creative and practical" for their personal characteristics (p. 289). This research explores the "pedagogical conditions for effective professional adaptation" and this adaptive process (p. 287). A teacher's career is conceptualized as comprised of three macro-view stages: "professional induction and adaptation…self-realization… professional mastery" (p. 288).

The research is comprised of a multi-methods study including "surveys, observations, and interviews with teachers" among others (Khuziakhmetov, 2020, p. 291). New teachers bring with them positive influences, such as quick adaptation to new technologies, "a higher teaching quality and a higher status" (Sinclair & Aho, 2018, as cited in p. 294). Key factors affecting professional adaptation of new teachers include "the composition of teaching staff, the organization and content of work, motivation and attitudes towards the teaching profession, the work of the department responsible for the development of teaching methods" (p. 291). Professional socialization is important for new teacher success.

Some important management prerequisites include the following: "development of mentoring tools; provision of professional development through cooperation and collaboration with other teachers which contributes to their success in the first years of work; encouraging novice teachers to participate in competitions that provide reward results; promoting self-education and career development by creating conditions for improving the financial status of novice teachers; promoting access to higher education (Master's and PhD programs) for novice teachers, so as to develop expertise and improve the quality of teaching" (Khuziakhmetov, 2020, pp. 295 - 296). In other words, the organization has to invest in the teachers.

Facing Changes

Nadezhda P. Yachina, Indira M. Salpykova, and Rezeda K. Khurmatullina's "The Teacher's Role in the Student's Adaptation Process with Changing School Environments" (Ch. 16) shows that changing school environments for students can be stressful and may have negative effects on children's mental health and well-being. In the abstract, the co-authors write: "Neuropsychiatric and functional disorders are more prevalent among children, requiring extensive preventive measures in the educational system" (p. 305). The school environment is an institution of socialization, among others, and there are various potential stressors there, with various demands on the child to perform or respond on certain ways (p. 305). Teachers are in a position to mitigate student stress so as to avoid some of its detrimental effects such as fatigue or aggression or low academic performance (p. 310). For a student to feel ignored by the

teacher can be particularly negative and anxiety-inducing. The co-authors write:

> The law of a teacher is to love a child, understand the child and be filled with optimism towards the child. The teacher's principles center around humanization of the child's environment, respect for their personality and patience in their development process. The teacher is commanded to believe in the infinity of children and in their own pedagogical abilities by virtue of a humane approach to them. (Yachina, Salpykova, & Khurmatullina, 2020, p. 313)

Those are powerful words to live by.

Conclusion

Developing Teacher Competences: Key Issues and Values, co-edited by Ilshat Gafurov, Aydar Kalimullin, Roza Valeeva, and Nick Rushby, offers a sense of the teacher's need to subsume the self (and self-interests) to the child and the profession, to a degree that may be somewhat foreign in the U.S. Universally, teaching is a giving profession, but the well-being of the teacher is important, too, for the system to work. These works differentiate between "foreign" research and the implied "domestic," which is an interesting differentiation given the international aspects of education (and research that suggests skepticism of the ideas not developed locally, wherever "local" may be).

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