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Teacher evaluation documents and procedures in high-performing apr-countries: hong kong and singapore

Natalya. L Korshunova, Elena F. Matveeva¹

Far Eastern Federal University, Vladivostok, Russia
Training College, Spassk-Dalny, Russia

Abstract: The article highlights the issue of teacher's professional competence assessment and standardization in teacher professional activity as essential for improving teaching quality. The author refers to the best-world experience in teacher evaluation and accountability in two top-performing educational systems in the world – those of Hong Kong and Singapore. This paper is an in-depth case study that aims to describe and compare the competency-based tools used there for teacher performance evaluation. The following aspects of the documents are paid attention to in the article: the purpose of the standards/document, the target groups and, the structure. In the course of the research, some theoretical methods, including a comparative analysis, the method of evaluation and systematization of the used materials on the selected theme were used. The analysis of the professional standards for teachers in Hong Kong and Singapore has shown that, along with the differences in certain aspects, there are some features which are likely to make them effective in practice. It was assumed that using these documents contribute to holding these countries' senior positions in performing teacher assessment systems and in the sphere of world education as well. The paper concludes by suggesting its contribution to the discussion of the problem of the development and implementation of a proper unified national teacher evaluation and accountability system based on competency-oriented teacher standards in Russia. It is also expected that the findings could be useful in the development of the Unified Federal Evaluation Materials for teacher assessment and accountability in the country.

Keywords: teacher effectiveness, teacher competence evaluation and accountability, teaching competency standards.

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Introduction

Now the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia is going to introduce new standards for teacher competence (particularly in 2019) to improve the quality of teaching in Russia so that it could meet the requirements of the world education in the 21-st century (Professional standard. Pedagogue, 2013). A new model of teacher certification and a new set of Unified Federal Evaluation Materials are being developed in the country. Obviously, these initiatives seem to be challenging and not so simple. In this case it could be important to analyze the top-performing education systems' experience in teacher competency assessment.

The above-mentioned statements open

the actuality of the research.

A contribution that this study might make is therefore the provision of useful information on teacher competency evaluation, while furthering the intellectual debate on teacher professional standards and the teacher effectiveness.

The object of the study is teacher professional standards in Hong Kong and Singapore.

The purpose of the research is an analysis of the documents that spell out the competencies required from teachers in Hong Kong and Singapore. A number of

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² TIMSS 2019 International Results in Mathematics and Science. – URL: <https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/timss2019/international-results/> (дата обращения 17.01.2021); PISA-2018 results. OECD. – URL: <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/pisa-2018-results.htm> (дата обращения 17.01.2021).

studies have been conducted in teacher selection and training systems and teacher competence in Hong Kong and Singapore, but few efforts have been made to provide more detailed information about the teacher evaluation and accountability documents used in these countries.

Thus, this research has theoretical and practical value for the development and implementation of the new teacher competency standards and the national teacher evaluation system, and therefore, for improving teaching quality in Russia.

Materials and Methods

In the process of the research the authors referred to the results of international research of school achievements: PIRLS-2011 International Results in Reading; TIMSS 2011 International Results in Mathematics and Science Study and national research done in Hong Kong and Singapore. Some scientific articles and official sites' materials on the theme were also studied to understand and systemize the data and views concerning the problem under the study.

The methods used in the research are of a theoretical character and include a comparative analysis, the method of evaluation and systematization of the used materials on the selected theme.

The research for this study was conducted in two phases. Firstly, the selected materials were systematized which allowed analyzing the teacher competency evaluation tools and procedures in the selected countries. Afterwards, the teacher competency assessment documents (the EPMS and the TCF) were compared based on the following aspects: the purpose of the document, the target groups and the structure.

Literature Review

Some recent research shows that teachers are the single most important factor in student learning in schools. Students who have access to highly qualified teachers achieve higher results in education, regardless of other factors. While analyzing the best-world school systems, the consultant company "McKinsey" concluded

that the key factor for education quality was the quality of teacher training and the quality of teacher's professional work (Barber and Murshed, 2008. P.13). V. P. Borisenkov, after V. Barber and M. Murshed, states that "... what matters most is not how much teachers earn (of course, their hard work must be paid as it deserves), but what kind of teachers they are, how they are trained and how they work" (Borisenkov, 2015. P.15).

As it was mentioned in the report "Key competencies in Europe: opening doors for lifelong learning" delivered by CASE Network (Centre for Social and Economic Research) in Warsaw in 2009, the most important condition for effective development of pupil competences is the development of appropriate teacher competences. The document underlines that "only teachers who are equipped with the necessary pedagogical tools and who can use them effectively in their daily practice can be successful in developing the key competences of their pupils" (Gordon, 2009. P. 211).

H. Jusuf claims that nowadays to improve the quality of education facing global challenges "all teachers have to fulfill the standards of professional teacher. For this purpose, it is necessary to have standards with international scope..." (Jusuf, 2005. P. 33).

Thus, the quality of teaching and teacher education are regulated through state-directed measures such as the setting of standards and the evaluation of teacher performance, organizational and curricular reforms in teacher education institutions, proposals for alternative routes to becoming a teacher, etc. B. Avalos states that teacher education is viewed as a main target for educational reform in developing countries and "... numerous initiatives, sponsored by the government and non-governmental organizations, focus on the professional development of serving teachers" (Avalos, 2002).

Concerning his point of view, among other issues of the reform in education, the development and implementation of

new standards of teacher preparation and certification is viewed as one of the most acute and challenging in many countries.

The development of professional teaching standards has proceeded with remarkable speed within a number of countries. Many of these developments have occurred just recently and Russia is not an exception (Professional standard. Pedagogue, 2013).

Standardization (“development and implementation of standards”) is an objective need that systematizes practice as required by the historically changing needs of society. According to the Russian scholars V.S. Lednyov, M.V. Ryzhakov and S. E. Shishov, the term “education standards” means a system of core parameters accepted as the state level/norm of literacy reflecting the ideal of the society and accounting for a real person and the ability of the education system to achieve this ideal. The terms “education standards” or “standards of education” used in Russia and many other countries are “actual when the question of education quality appears as it is necessary to compare quality with a certain model or standard or with the quality level in other countries” (Lednev et al, 2002).

Thus, V. M. Polonsky, discussing different methods and forms of knowledge system monitoring in his book “Assessment of students’ achievements”, refers to the issue of international studies and experience in education quality evaluation. According to the author, “Russia’s active participation in international research lets scientists and practitioners make reasoned decisions on education content reforming and creating Russian education standards (GEF) in view of other countries’ experience” (Polonsky, 2018. P.73).

V. M. Polonsky notes that “along with individual achievements assessment, there exists a comparative assessment of the teacher education system and the quality of teacher preparation, as well as new measurement forms and procedures of individual and collective education achievements” (Polonsky, 2018. P.73).

Teacher standards can be used as a tool of teacher evaluation and accountability, though in some countries, for example, in Hong Kong (China) and Singapore, the role of standards is played by other documents, substituting teacher competency standards and seem to be quite effective in practice (Towards a learning profession. Teacher competencies framework and the continuing professional development of teachers, 2003; The Enhanced Performance Management System in Singapore, 2005).

The teacher quality systems in Hong Kong and Singapore are thoroughly examined by T.L. Choo, L. Darling-Hammond (2013), A. Hunter, B. Jensen, K. Roberts-Hull and J. Sonnemman (2016). They explain the key benefits of these top performing countries, analyzing the processes of recruitment, training, certification and evaluation as well.

The documents used to evaluate teacher performance in Singapore are studied by W.M. Liew (2012), E. Lim, S. Sclafani (2008), and L. Steiner (2010); in Hong Kong – by M.R. Ingersoll and T.E. Quang (2016). They give a detailed description of the teacher accountability forms and the Performance Evaluation programs of these countries.

Results

Phase 1. In high-performing educational systems, such as Hong Kong and Singapore, evaluation and accountability is an important part of teacher professional learning and development. In both countries competencies are viewed as key concepts of teacher evaluation instruments. Teachers in these countries have an established set of teacher competencies that are determined to be minimal standards for the profession.

As B. Jensen, J. Sonnemann, et al note in their report, evaluation and accountability mechanisms for in-service teachers range from quality-control measures for external courses and workshops to broader performance management programs and focus on: student performance, the quality of instruction and the quality of professional learning (Jensen et al, 2016. P. 17-18).

These programs are considered

a competency-based tool. Thus, in Singapore in-service teachers (education officers) performance is evaluated through a competency-based performance-management process using the Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS), introduced in 2003. As S. Sclafani and E. Lim note, it spells out the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes expected at each stage of the career and within each of three career tracks: the teaching track (which extends through levels of senior, lead, and master teachers); the specialist track (which includes roles like curriculum specialist, educational psychologist, and guidance counselor); and the leadership track (which progresses through roles like department head to vice-principal, principal, superintendent, and divisional heads and directors). These opportunities bring recognition, extra compensation, and new challenges that keep teaching exciting (Darling-Hammond and Choo, 2013).

Furthermore, comprehensive performance management programs, mentioned above, are viewed by B. Jensen, J. Sonnemann, et al as a most effective instrument for supporting career tracks. Thus, the Enhanced Performance Management System in Singapore means teachers and school leaders are appraised by the person directly supervising them (Jensen et al, 2016, P. 21).

Through the EPMS process, teachers are encouraged to expand their teaching repertoire, select a career track, and take those developmental actions that lead to greater competence and higher levels on the career ladder.

Teachers are involved in a three-stage process which ensures self-assessment, coaching and collaboration in schools even before any targeted professional learning is introduced. B. Jensen, J. Sonnemann, et al describe these stages in their report:

1. Performance planning at the beginning of the school year requires teachers to evaluate their teaching and set goals for the year in teaching, instructional innovation and

improvements, and professional learning.

2. Performance coaching from the supervisor throughout the year helps teachers achieve their goals. There is a formal interview mid-year to assess progress towards these goals.

3. A performance evaluation at the end of the year requires supervisors to conduct an interview and compare planned goals against actual performance. Professional learning opportunities targeted at areas for improvement are identified (Jensen et al, 2016. P. 21).

Commenting on the Performance Evaluation process, W. M. Liew notes that central to the Performance Evaluation process is the Performance Appraisal Interview at the end of the year, which invites teachers to reflect on their goals, strengths and “areas for improvement” as part of a participatory process of self-assessment (Liew, 2012. P. 5). Thus, a very important stage of self-assessment – the reflection stage - takes place.

The EPMS document is a narrative that summarizes at midyear and at the end of year the activities engaged in, progress toward the goals set, and data on the performance benchmarks. It adds summaries of relevant discussions between the teacher and the reporting officer, as well as evaluative narratives from both the teacher and the reporting officer. These evaluations are pegged to the experience level of the teacher, since the level of competence expected of a new teacher is much lower than expectations for senior teachers.

Staff appraisal is conducted on an annual basis. Officers are appraised for current performance and future potential. Current performance is assessed based on the officer's total contributions. This encompasses how well he/she has achieved his work targets (i.e. teaching duties, cocurricula activities, other duties, projects and tasks done during the year) and demonstrated the required competencies.

Performance assessment is given in terms of A, B, C, D or E grading. When assessing

performance, an officer at a higher grade will most likely perform better than an officer at a lower grade due to more knowledge and experience.

The teacher's future potential ("current estimated potential") evaluation is made based on evidence in the teacher's portfolio and the supervisor's judgment of the teacher's contributions to the school and community, in consultation with the senior teachers who have worked with the teacher, the department and grade chairs, the reporting officer, the vice-principal, and the principal. The goal is to support teacher growth and identify those who can advantage the school (Sclafani and Lim, 2008).

Career Tracks for Teachers Annual evaluations are used to establish a performance bonus, set by the principal for each teacher, as well as to flag out struggling teachers for additional assistance or potential dismissal (a very tiny number), and to flag successful teachers for potential promotions. In considering teachers for promotion or progression along each of the three career tracks their performance evaluations in the last three years are taken into consideration. There is flexibility of lateral movements across the three career tracks (Darling-Hammond and Choo, 2013. P. 53).

As W.M. Liew explains, "there are currently three customized versions of the Work Review Form which correspond to the three career tracks or "fields of excellence" identified by the MOE..." (Liew, 2012. P. 8).

The work review form and its use in the Performance Management Process are thoroughly examined by S. Sclafani and E. Lim in their work "Rethinking human capital in education: Singapore as a model for teacher development" (Sclafani and Lim, 2008. P.16). They note that the work review for teachers is divided into five sections.

In section one (Key Result Areas), there are the key result areas used by the education officer and the RO (Reporting Officer) to identify and state the targets for the midyear and year end. The achievements and progress for the midyear and year end will be

stated and reviewed in the two accompanying columns beside the targets column. The next section (Teaching Competencies) focuses on the teaching competencies or underlying characteristics that drive outstanding performance for teachers. Section three delves on the training and development plan for the period under review. Section four involves a report on innovations and improvements made by the teachers in the school, cluster, zonal or national levels. Section five is for reviews and comments by the teacher and reporting officer regarding work performance, work competencies and other points, such as the officer's strengths, unique skills, areas of improvement, and work-related challenges in the middle of the year and at the end of the year. The final section is for the countersigning officer to state her or his review and comments. The concluding one-page annex consists of definitions of teaching competencies.

Section two which forms the bedrock of Singapore's Enhanced Performance Management System is to be studied more closely. It spells out the teaching competency model for Singapore teachers. It consists of one core competency, "Nurturing the Whole Child", and four other broad competency clusters: "Cultivating Knowledge", "Winning Hearts and Minds", "Working with Others" and "Knowing Self and Others". The competencies displayed in this section can help teacher to perform well in their roles and achieve their goals in the key results areas in section one (Sclafani and Lim, 2008. P.16).

The structure of the teacher competency model can be better understood via L. Steiner's description. She explains that each cluster within the model has two to four competencies and gives an example of the "Cultivating Knowledge" cluster, which has four key competencies: subject mastery, analytical thinking, initiative, and teaching creativity. The competencies are broken down further into progressive levels of more effective behaviors based on the high-performer interviews, and those are used at rating scales. Each level includes

descriptions of the specific behaviors a teacher should demonstrate at a particular level of mastery (Steiner, 2010. P.10).

The reporting officer will give a rating of the teacher's performance in the rating scale for the different competencies. There are four points on rating scale, ranging from "Not Observed" and "Developing" to "Competent" and "Exceeding".

As it is explained by S. Sclafani and E. Lim, section two of work review forms for the education officers in the three mentioned above tracks can be different for the education officers in the teacher, leadership and curriculum specialist tracks because varying competencies are being examined, cultivated and evaluated. The structure of the remaining sections three, four, five and six of the work review are similar for education officers on each of the tracks, though the content in the sections may vary significantly from one education officer to another (Sclafani and Lim, 2008. P. 17-21).

The competency-based performance evaluation document used for teacher appraisal in Hong Kong is the Teacher Competency Framework (TCF) developed in 2003. The TCF is considered to be an instrument aimed at supporting teachers in their professional development and growth. It is also used for annual teacher competency evaluation.

It is necessary to note that this document is generic. Schools are encouraged and expected to make their own modifications and build a set of references that identify the way ahead and lead to school improvement through professional development.

The TCF takes into account the complex nature of teacher's work which is reflected in the structure of the document. Professional competencies include the abilities, skills, knowledge and attitudes required to achieve professional goals efficiently. To accommodate a wide range of attributes, the TCF has a multi-dimensional hierarchy of domains, dimensions, strands and stage descriptors. The document is built around four core domains: Teaching and Learning,

Student Development, School Development, Professional Relationships and Services. The domains are interconnected with each other and cover the following aspects: the major responsibilities typical of a classroom teacher; a wide range of responsibilities essential to the whole-person development of students - including extra-curricular activities, moral/social/civic education, guidance and counseling; responsibilities of teachers as members of the school community and their contribution to the growth of the whole profession .

Each of the domains is broken down into four dimensions reflecting different aspects of teacher's work. Each dimension includes a number of strands with stage descriptors linking typical competencies with particular stages of teachers' professional maturity. To accommodate individual capabilities, the stages of professional maturity are not differentiated by arbitrarily selected years of teaching experience (Towards a learning profession. Teacher competencies framework ... , 2003).

The document identifies some stages in teacher achievements, characterized by the adjectives Threshold, Competent and Accomplished. It is reflected in the generic TCF competency descriptor chart in a left-to-right sequence, which is open-ended. This is not meant to imply a rigid, linear, stage by-stage progression. Nor is it intended that the right-hand end of the chart represents a finite limit. Rather, the TCF sequence is designed to be open-ended: there will be infinite progression all through their careers as teachers refocus their professional commitment to accommodate the needs of an ever-changing society. In this context, the descriptors provide goals to aim for at particular stages of professional maturity (Towards a learning profession. Teacher competencies framework ... , 2003).

The basic competencies expected of

³ In Hong Kong there exists a special document spelling out norms of teachers' ethical behaviour and social responsibility towards society – « Code for the education profession in Hong Kong », approved in 1995.

teachers in Hong Kong are spelt out by the stage descriptors under the Threshold column, at the left-hand end of the generic TCF. The threshold requirements for the Teaching and Learning domain seems to be more sophisticated than those for the others as teaching and learning are considered as the most important in teacher's work.

The TCF is used by teachers as a reference tool for defining their own stages of professional maturity and planning their competency profiles.

The document stresses that a teacher's professional experience must be evaluated as a whole and it is important 'not to be overly fussy about individual components'. Teacher competency is assessed based on lesson-planning documents, design of student assignments, samples of student work, observation in the classroom, student assessment methodologies. The self-evaluation and career aspiration of individual teachers are also taken into account.

The same high level of competency in all domains for all teachers is not viewed as obligatory. On the contrary, the document encourages diverse talents and strengths. As the TCF explains, for the wider benefit of the education community, it is important to encourage diversity of expertise - individual teachers may have their own strengths in specific areas of practice. In this context, the TCF becomes a developmental framework revealing areas in which individual teachers might specialise or excel (Towards a learning profession. Teacher competencies framework ..., 2003).

It should be noted that teachers in Hong Kong must be registered with the Teacher Registration Team before working in any formal school setting. Teacher registration is a rigorous process, and deregistration is a disciplinary option (Quang, 2016).

Thus all intended teachers in Hong Kong have to apply for registration as Permitted Teachers (PT) or Registered Teachers (RT). To qualify for registration as a registered teacher, a person will have obtained "qualified teacher" status through completion of an

approved teacher education program offered by a recognized institution. This program may be a subdegree-level Certificate in Education, a Bachelor's Degree in Education, or a Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma in Education. In this regard, a registered teacher is equivalent to full licensure in the United States. The "permitted teacher" status in Hong Kong is similar to emergency certification or emergency permit in the United States in the sense that permitted teachers have not met the minimum requirements for full registration (Ingersoll, p.31).

The minimum academic qualification required of a PT teaching in a school providing primary, secondary or post-secondary education is an associate degree, a higher diploma or equivalent. The higher level a teacher is required to teach at, the higher qualifications he/she has to possess. The teacher has to produce documentary proof that he/she is capable of teaching the subject(s) he/she is required to teach. In fact, schools should seek advice from the Education Bureau before appointing non-subject-trained persons to teach subjects with safety concerns, e.g. science subjects at senior secondary levels (Teacher Registration. Education Bureau).

To become a RT a person who holds teacher qualification (e.g. a local Teacher's Certificate or Post-graduate Diploma/Certificate in Education) and is a Hong Kong permanent resident may apply for registration as a teacher by filing the required form to the Teacher Registration Team of the Education Bureau (Teacher Registration. Education Bureau).

Promotion is used to support teachers in their performance improvement. Teachers' career prospects depend on which pathway into teaching they take. For example, a teacher who holds a teacher's certificate or the status of a qualified teacher based on their performance on the Non-Graduate Teacher Qualifications Assessment may be promoted to the level of Assistant Principal and a teacher with a post-graduate diploma in education may ultimately be promoted to

the position of Headmaster or Headmistress following appropriate job experience and training (Centre of International Education and Benchmarking....).

Phase 2. The teacher evaluation documents described in the article were compared based on the following aspects: the purpose of standards, the target groups and the arrangement of the standards.

Purpose of the standards. One of the goals of introducing educational standards usually is to improve the quality of education, often out of a qualitatively problematic situation. With respect to the fact that Hong Kong and Singapore are considered as developed countries, the implementation of the teacher evaluation and accountability documents in these countries have more sophisticated aims: Hong Kong and Singapore has a longtime experience in developing, applying and updating teacher competency documents used in their evaluation systems. Otherwise, even in their case the improvement of education is definitely a goal to strive for.

Target groups. The term “target group”

means the kind of a teacher, the standards apply for and the level of experience/ accomplishment, addressed by the standards.

Most currently used standards in different countries are for general teachers without considering the characteristics of vocational education for certain categories of teachers or their career stage. So, they are developed for teachers in general.

The Singaporean standards are also being designed for teachers/pedagogues in general. The EMPS spells out the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes expected at each stage of the career and within each of the mentioned above three career tracks: the teaching track, the specialist track and the leadership track. In Hong Kong the document used for teacher competency assessment is for teachers in general as well. It indicates the abilities, skills, knowledge and attitudes required to achieve professional goals efficiently.

Although the teacher evaluation documents in both countries need some kind

Table №1. Arrangement of the Standards

Country/ Document	1. Stage	2. Stage	3. Stage	Total number of Indicators/ Numbers
Hong Kong/ the TCF	<i>Domains</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Strands with stage descriptions</i>	46
	A. Teaching and Learning	4 Dimensions	13 Strands	
	B. Student Development	4 Dimensions	10 Strands	
	C. School Development	4 Dimensions	13 Strands	
	D. Professional Relationships and Services	4 Dimensions	10 Strands	
Singapore/the EPMS	<i>Broad Competency Clusters</i>	<i>Major Competencies</i>	<i>Sub-competencies/Sub-categories</i>	45
	A. Nurturing the Whole Child	1 Core Competency	5 Sub-categories	
	B. Cultivating Knowledge	4 Key Competencies	20 Sub-categories	
	C. Winning Hearts and Minds	2 Key Competencies	10 Sub-categories	
	D. Working with others	2 Key Competencies	10 Sub-categories	
	E. Knowing self and others	4 Key Competencies	—	

of instruction that tells how the standards have to be handled, they help to define different career stages and distinguish between different stages of experience and professionalism as well. Thus, the TCF in Hong Kong includes a number of strands with stage descriptors linking typical competencies with particular stages of teachers' professional maturity.

Arrangement of the standards. As it turned out, both documents (the EPMS and the TCF) have a multi-stage structure consisting of three stages (Table №1. Arrangement of the Standards). A structure subdivided into more than two stages specifies the first stage (dimensions, major competencies, strands, sub-categories) in a meaningful way, is easier to read and to give the user orientation where to look for the appropriate formulation.

As the table shows, though the numbers of indicators do not coincide in any of the stage, the total number of indicators in both documents is nearly the same: the TCF (Hong Kong) has 46 indicators and the EPMS (Singapore) has 45.

On the other hand, both the EPMS and the TCF have quite a big number of characteristics and indicators which gives completeness of teacher competency structure. Hence, being oriented on qualifications or capacities, required from the teacher, the teacher competency evaluation documents of Hong Kong and Singapore are viewed quite comprehensible. It is necessary to note that both standards spell out aspects of ethical behavior.

Before turning to the next part of the article and giving a review of the work carried out, it is necessary to briefly highlight some issues related to the implementation of the teacher standard "Pedagogue" into the operating practices of educational organizations in Russia. It can help to best identify some perspectives of improving the document which drawbacks have been paid attention to by Russian teachers community since its first publication.

The Russian teacher standard

"Pedagogue" is a set of requirements defining teacher qualifications needed to achieve high performance. The new requirements are addressed to professional knowledge, skills, and work experience. The document includes five parts: teaching, childrearing, development of children (personal qualities and professional competencies necessary for teacher qualitative performance of development oriented activity), professional competences required to work in elementary general education establishments, professional competences required to work in pre-school educational establishments. Each part is specified by a wide range of skills. Some of them are only found in the Russian standard, for example, mastering the methods of museum pedagogy or excursions, expeditions, walking tours organization methods, etc. (Professional standard. Pedagogue, 2013).

According to the authors of the standard, Russian teachers must meet the following highest requirements: they must speak at least one foreign language, feel confident in modern IT technologies, be able to work in all types of classes, with different categories of pupils: children with special educational needs and gifted children. It is also noteworthy that the standard requirements refer to all teachers, regardless of their education level: a specialist, a bachelor or a master. Thus, some experts fairly notice that not all teachers will be able to meet the requirements of the Russian teacher standard (Nesterenko and Makarova, 2015).

Higher education reforms, as well as higher teacher education reforms in Russia, can not and must not be implemented without paying into consideration other countries' experiences in this sphere. These experiences have become subject to Russian researchers' scrutiny. Thus, comparing the Russian teacher standard with the similar documents of Austria, Great Britain and the USA, V. G. Nesterenko (2015) pays special attention to the fact that the professional standards of these countries take into account teachers' career levels and define

their professional characteristics at every stage of his/her professional development. The teacher certification in Austria, Great Britain and the USA, as well as in Hong Kong and Singapore, therefore, aims to the creation of the system of professional development which allows every graduate to navigate in the professional "hierarchy" since the very beginning of his/her professional career up to the highest level of mastery. This can be viewed as an important advantage of the teacher professional standards of the mentioned above countries while the lack of this feature is the main drawback of the Russian teacher standard. Another drawback of the teacher standard of the Russian Federation is that unlike the competency-based teacher standards of the countries under the study (Hong Kong and Singapore), it defines the labor functions required of teachers. What is more, the comparable big number of them makes the document less comprehensible.

Discussion

To conclude, it should be noted that though the selected standards are different in certain aspects (for instance, all of them have their own structure, which reflect their understanding of what good teaching should look like in their country), teacher evaluation documents in Hong Kong and Singapore have some common features which allow them to contribute to the development of the best performing teacher assessment systems in the world:

— Being competency-based they are designed for the improvement of teacher quality and, therefore, education quality in general.

— The teacher competency evaluation documents used in Hong Kong and Singapore are both used for teachers in general.

— The multi-staged structure of both documents, the EPMS and the TCF, take into account a complex character of teacher competency.

— Their structure subdivided into three stages is quite comprehensible and easy to

use.

— Both the EPMS and the TCF are used to help in distinguishing between different stages of experience and professionalism and in supporting teachers in their career development as well.

— According to these documents, teachers are assessed based on their contributions to the holistic development of students, their contributions to school community and to the growth of the whole profession and society as well.

— Both standards spell out some aspects of ethical behavior.

Conclusions

Taking into consideration all of the above, it should be noted that though it is impossible to adopt any of the teacher competency assessment standards analyzed in the paper for teacher evaluation and accountability in Russia, considering Hong Kong and Singapore's experience could reveal the best way to move to in developing new professional standards for teachers in Russia - to use the best ideas of the high-performing APR countries to avoid errors, to participate in experiences and to stay up-to-date. It is viewed especially actual when the Unified Federal Evaluation Materials for teacher assessment and accountability are being developed in the country. Going this approach, the achieved results can be used if possible in the procedure of the development of a proper unified national teacher evaluation and accountability system based on competency-oriented teacher standards in Russia, of course under thorough consideration of specific conditions and requirements, Russia is asking for - ethnic originality, compliance with conditions of social and cultural context of the country. This would, in turn, assist in teacher effectiveness and education quality in Russia.

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Сведения об авторах

Наталья Леонидовна Коршунова,

кандидат педагогических наук, доцент кафедры педагогики и психологии развития Дальневосточного федерального университета (690922, Россия, Владивосток, остров Русский, залив Аякс, 10, Кампус ДВФУ), nlkor@mail.ru

Елена Федоровна Матвеева, Преподаватель английского языка, кандидат педагогических наук, ищет соискателя, Спасский педагогический колледж, (ул. Комсомольская, 108, Спасск-Дальний, 692211, Россия), Matveeva_ef@mail.ru

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Information about the author

Natalya L. Korshunova,

Ph.D. of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor at the Chair of Pedagogics and Developmental Psychology, Far Eastern Federal University (10 Ajax Bay, Russky Island, Vladivostok, FEFU Campus, 690922, Russia), nlkor@mail.ru

Elena F. Matveeva, Teacher of English, Ph.D. in Pedagogical Sciences seeking applicant, Spassky Teachers' Training College, (108 Komsomolskaya Street, Spassk-Dalny, 692211, Russia), Matveeva_ef@mail.ru

Contribution of the authors

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