

IFTE 2019**5th International Forum on Teacher Education****VALUE PRIORITIES FOR STUDYING HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTION'S COURSE "CHILDREN'S LITERATURE"**

Galina N. Taranosova (a)*, Marina G. Lelyavskaya (b), Tatiana S. Yakusheva (c)

*Corresponding author

(a) Togliatti State University, Belorusskaya Street, 14, Togliatti, Russia, taranosova@mail.ru

(b) Togliatti State University, Belorusskaya Street, 14, Togliatti, Russia

(c) Togliatti State University, Belorusskaya Street, 14, Togliatti, Russia

Abstract

Nowadays the spiritual and moral growth of students and their self-identification through comprehension and mastering of traditional cultural values is very much in demand. Therefore, this article is focused on the theoretical substantiation and the development of the axiological approach in order to achieve the following goal: to ensure that the future elementary school teachers, while studying the higher education institution's course of children's literature, form a text competency that includes the strong orientation towards their self-identification and spiritual and moral growth with the perspective of this vector being taken into consideration in their future school work. Our leading method was the experimental method. The article reveals principles and criteria which dictate the selection of study material for the course "Children's Literature" and actualizes traditional spiritual and moral values during the educational process. The authors validate the dominant emphasis on spiritual and moral components being inserted into the text competency while studying literature. The efficiency of the proposed approach is proven through the use of the concrete examples. The materials presented in this article aimed at solving the tasks outlined by the Strategy for development of upbringing in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025. Also, the text competency technology developed by the authors may be recommended for the widespread application in order to increase the level of the students' spiritual and moral growth.

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1. Introduction

Modern pedagogical education in the Russian higher education institutions is undergoing a significant modernization. The social multicultural environment dictates that both the ultimate goal of the students' professional training and the content of the disciplines they study (including the children's literature course for the future elementary school teachers) are to be revised. Primarily, this revision is connected with the transition to the competency-based approach to the training of future teachers. Also, innovations are facilitated by the accentuation of certain tasks in the Russian higher education institutions: not only the theoretical ones, but also the task to form the students' value system while they study educational subjects and later to transmit it to their own school practice.

In accordance with the current concept of the spiritual and moral growth and upbringing of a Russian citizen's personality (Danilyuk, Kondakov, & Tishkov, 2009), and also with the Strategy of development of upbringing in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025 (The Government of Russia, 2015), when students of the elementary school and, consequently, their future literature teachers studying at a higher education institution study the texts of the children's literature, the following personal values should be recognized as the primary ones: their self-identification and spiritual and moral growth. This defines the relevance of the present research, the dominant ideas of the content of the course "Children's Literature" and the research problem: what working with the texts within the framework of the course "Children's literature" should be like so that it serves as an efficient means of forming the students' professional competency.

The timeliness of this problem was confirmed by the performed analysis of the scientific pedagogical literature on the studied subject. The theoretical and methodological validation of this study is based on the results of works by Aliev (2011), Baker (2008), Zhurakovsky and Sazonova (2010), Bezdukhov and Mishina (2009), Kraevsky (1980), Krivonogova and Tsyplakova (2017) and others.

Based on the theoretical justification of the topic under study, the authors developed the argumentation for the selection of texts for the course "Children's literature" compliant with the contemporary educational goals and aimed at solving the stated problem. With the help of the concrete examples of the selected texts the authors show how the text competency is introduced and implemented in the approbation process while using the technology of linguistic and literary commentation of a literary text (see our article about the text competency (Taranosova, Lelyavskaya, & Yakusheva, 2018).

From the very beginning of the research it was necessary to define the key concepts. For the context under development, these are such essential concepts as the competency and axiological approaches, spiritual and moral values and the self-identification of a student's personality.

Competency is connected with the unity of the theoretical and practical readiness for the professional activity that characterizes a specialist in the necessary aspects of their professionalism. In the described case the text competency in the structure of the integrated professional competence of the future elementary school teacher or, in other words, the linguistic and literary competency is characterized not only by the knowledge about a literary text, but also by the command of educational technologies of studying this text, given a certain dominant direction of the study. In the context of the elementary school, these are the technologies of dramatic, commented and selectively aimed reading, which makes it compulsory for the students to master them within the framework of the children's literature course.

2. Problem Statement

The urgency of the discussed problems is increased by the fact that, as many researchers note, the contemporary society underestimates the traditional spiritual and moral values which have had the monumental influence on the world order of the society and the personality's development in it since the ancient times (Goncharov & Popova, 2015). And that all while both moral and aesthetic values are naturally recognized as the highest ones, determining a person's behavior in all value systems.

The general meanings of a person's life recognized and accepted by them are seen as a personality's values. According to Bratus (1981), it is the general semantic formations (personal values in the case they are recognized) that are the personality's fundamental formative units directly determining the main and relatively permanent attitudes of a person towards the main areas of life: towards the world, towards other people, towards themselves.

Spiritual and moral values are based on moral consciousness with moral categories, moral feelings, and moral ideals forming a person's behavior being especially significant within its structure (Kuznetsov, Kuznetsova, Mironov, & Momdzhah, 1999).

It becomes all the more important that with the axiological approach as the methodological basis of the teachers' training at a university, the entire educational process, including that for the elementary school teachers, acquires the value-based orientation. This approach has the axiological, culturological and humanistic principles duly become its fundamental philosophical and methodological principles.

The axiological approach implies that the educational process in a higher education institution is capable to form spiritual and moral values as the dominant factor of forming a personality and the value system of a student's personality aimed at both the enrichment of their inner world and the development of their future professional activities.

In this aspect under study it is necessary to determine the preferred list of traditional spiritual and moral values for their subsequent actualization during the academic work with literary texts. The Strategy of development of upbringing in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025 (The Government of Russia, 2015) may serve for compiling this list.

The key concepts for the formation of students' traditional spiritual and moral values are these: love of mankind, justice, honor, conscience, will, personal dignity, faith in goodness, aspiration to carry out the ethical duty to oneself, one's family and one's Motherland.

The fact that during the training process the emphasis is placed on the values that are particularly traditional for our Motherland, since it creates the anti-spiritual and anti-traditional structures within itself, those structures being only the external reflection of the time-honored spiritual and moral values (Goncharov & Popova, 2015). The spiritual and moral tradition as a core value is the means of preserving the cultural continuity, the spiritual bond of generations of people.

The presented theoretical substantiation of the axiological approach preference for the modern educational purposes also leads to the necessity of the actualization of the personality's self-identification work in the practical work with literary texts in the children's literature course, which is linked naturally with the tasks of the students' spiritual and moral development.

The authors see self-identification of a student's personality as the interpenetrating process of comprehension and transformation of both the social environment and the inner world (Rukovitsyn,

2013). The necessity of including the fulfillment of a student's self-identification tasks into the described training process along with its focus on the students' spiritual and moral development are primarily due to the fact that both of them have the national specificity and the connection to the traditional values preservation and development.

The result of self-identification in the above interpretation is the acquisition of identity, meaning the conscious sense of self-identity and the recognition of this state by other people. Identification appears as the process of the identity formation, including social and cultural aspects, and self-identification appears as the process of personal identification, accompanied by the need for spiritual development.

Let us emphasize that the role of a cultural phenomenon as fiction literature (the most important phenomenon for the Russian historical tradition) in the aforementioned processes can hardly be overestimated. Its examples of positive characters as a way of looking to another person, spiritual communication with them and its behavioral examples serve as the most powerful contribution to the students' self-identification, or, in other words, to the acquisition and development of their ability to obtain cultural experience (Shemanov, 2007). The course "Children's Literature" holds a prominent place in the teachers' training.

3. Research Questions

The following research tasks were formulated:

1. To analyze the contemporary scientific and pedagogical works and the practice of studying children's literature in a higher education institution's environment in order to confirm the significance of the study under development, which is carried out in order to achieve not just the educational goals, but also the pedagogic ones in the higher education institution's education;
2. To provide the theoretical foundation, to develop and to provide the experimental verification of the efficiency of this innovative study of literary texts within the higher education institution's course "Children's Literature" that is aimed not just at the achievement of the educational goals, but also at the students' self-identification and spiritual and moral growth with the following application of this approach in the school practice of the future elementary school teachers;
3. To define the principles of selecting the works for the "Children's Literature" course and the list of the traditional spiritual and moral values to be actualized during the educational process involving literary texts;
4. To develop the axiological approach in order to achieve the following goal: to ensure that the future elementary school teachers, while studying the higher education institution's course of children's literature, form a text competency that includes the strong orientation towards their self-identification and spiritual and moral growth with the perspective of this vector being taken into consideration in their future school work;
5. To use specific examples in order to illustrate the efficiency of the offered approach in solving the problem under study.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of our study is to ensure that the future elementary school teachers, while studying the higher education institution's course of children's literature, form a text competency that includes the strong orientation towards their self-identification, spiritual and moral growth and with the perspective of implementing this competence into their future school work.

5. Research Methods

The leading research methods were the theoretical research methods (analysis, including the scientific literature analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, abstraction, generalization), the experimental method (ascertaining, formative and control experiments), the sociological-pedagogical method (analysis of programs, learning and teaching guides; conversations with students and philology teachers; generalization of the experience with the problem under study, the expert evaluation method); the statistical method (analysis and generalization of the results obtained during the experiment).

The applied methods have a number of particularities (such as the conceptual construct consistency, the concepts and basic provisions interrelation, ensuring the interrelation between the functional theoretical provisions of the professional education pedagogy) and the empiric methods (the pedagogical experiment, observation, measurement) (Krivonogova & Tsyplakova, 2017).

FGBOU VO (Federal State Budget Educational Institution of Higher Education) "Togliatti State University" became the study's experimental base, and the results were implemented at the Povolzhsky Orthodox Institute named after Saint Aleksiy, Metropolitan of Moscow, and at the Togliatti Social Pedagogical College.

The study was carried out in three stages:

At the first stage the authors researched the main sources on the topic of the study, determined its methodological foundation, made the experimental work plan, clarified the study's purpose, tasks and basic concepts, carried out the ascertaining experiment and analyzed its results.

At the second stage the authors provided the theoretical justification of the formative experiment, carried out the said experiment and analyzed the obtained experimental data.

At the third stage the authors, using the expert evaluation method, carried out the control experiment, during which they compared the experimental training final results, systematized and summarized the study results.

6. Findings

At the stage of the ascertaining experiment, the authors studied the history of teaching children's literature in higher education institutions, analyzed the selection of works included into the course programs and the approaches to the development of content and the technologies of it being mastered by students. It was discovered that the issues of self-identification and a personality's spiritual and moral growth, made acutely relevant by time, remain on the periphery of studying. And the Russian culture important constants and fundamental values get into the field of vision of those studying the program

texts at a higher education institution in a disorganized and random way. The course under study is presented to the students beyond the framework of time and contemporary historical space.

The ascertaining experiment's purpose was to discover the formation level of students' self-identification and their spiritual and moral development. The fact that students have these traits formed at the insufficient level makes it difficult for them to accentuate these traits in the characters of the studied fiction texts and, therefore, to engage in the process of interpreting them.

One of the short stories by Gaidar (2006) was offered in order to reveal how students actualize the traditional spiritual and moral values during the process of the text competency implementation. The analysis of the performed works showed that these values were either omitted or mentioned superficially.

Therefore, the performed experiment confirmed not only the relevance of the described study, but also its high pedagogical expediency under observance of such pedagogical conditions as revealing the spiritual and moral values, which are especially relevant nowadays, in the studied children's literature texts and later including them into the analysis performed during classes with the projection into the future school practice that involves such technologies as dramatic reading, selectively aimed reading, commented reading with the introduction of linguistic and literary commentary.

The formative experiment was carried out as the implementation of the stated pedagogical conditions, with the students being previously made aware that the high pedagogical significance of the course "Children's Literature" determines the selection of works included into its curriculum, when it is necessary not only to get acquainted with the masterpieces of the Russian and foreign children's literature, but also with the history of the childhood reading development. The moral component of the children's literature texts must be taken into account both during the selection of the works for compulsory study and, consequently, during the learning process.

The historical principle was used during the argumentation of the proposed approach to the planning of the described experimentally developed innovative course; in accordance with this principle the texts of the Old Russian literature become the initial stage of the study.

In accordance with the historical principle, the texts of the Old Russian literature were selected for the initial stage of the study. So, Buneev and Buneeva (2001), the authors of the elementary school educational complex, the authors of this article selected "The Testament of Vladimir Monomakh", a monument of the Russian literature of the 12th century, as the start of this course.

The bright figurative language of the ancient literature masterpiece, the fascinating stories about the author's childhood, the confidential tone of the conversation between the benevolent wise mentor and the people becoming adults allow to reckon the work written by the great political figure of the Ancient Russia among the true samples of literary art. Special attention should be paid to the moral component of this work not least because it provides valuable and still relevant advice to the young people. For example:

"My children, or anyone else listening to this humble missive, do not laugh at it, but take it into your heart; and do not be lazy but work zealously".

"Beware of lies and insobriety. Soul and body perish from that" (From the works of Vladimir Monomakh. Tales of the primordial Russian chronicles, 1991).

The wise advice of Vladimir Monomakh determined the ways of the children's literature development as well. In the following eras the authors of the literary works for children paid special attention to nurturing “kindly feelings”, respect for elders, the reverent attitude towards knowledge and books. As a proof of that, the authors cite the first poetical works addressed to children and written in the first half of the 17th century; they are also included into the described experimental curriculum of the course “Children's Literature”. They were written by Savvatiy (as cited in Sheptaev, 1965), the Moscow Print Yard corrector. His verses were included into one of the first printed primers.

The argumentation in favor of including the verses by Savvatiy into the course curriculum was the fact that they contained not only the hymn to books and knowledge, but also the advice on mastering knowledge, which is so necessary for the thorough development of a moral personality (as cited in Burtsev, 1885):

“Nothing is brighter than the sunshine,
Nothing is sweeter than the book knowledge.
For the sunshine illuminates the universe.
And the book knowledge enlightens the soul.
The sun warms the earthly fruits,
And the book knowledge leads to virtuous thoughts”.

Savvatiy recommends to start learning at an early age, because “the seal leaves a clear imprint on the soft wax, likewise, the teaching takes stronger root at a young age, For this, learn hard from the tender nail, and put aside all the childish mischief” (as cited in Burtsev, 1885, p. 55). It is no coincidence that he compares an uneducated person to an “empty vessel” with nothing left but bitterness:

“His only custom is to admonish the wise ones.
And to annoy their heart,
And to soothe his madness,
And so that no one knows anything” (Burtsev, 1885).

Also, it is emphasized that even in the beginning of the development of children's reading in Russia the authors of books for the young readers paid special attention to the moral priorities and that the books played a significant role in the formation of these value dominants.

The further selection of works for the course “Children's Literature” was performed taking into account the traditions established at the very beginning of the literary education, and the dominant values of the process of these works being studied by students still remained the same: the nurturing of moral traits (this value is present in the children's books written in later times, too), but most of all respect for the elderly.

For instance, the book called “The Honest Mirror of Youth” that is included into the course curriculum and that was created for the young noblemen by the decree of Peter I, started with the advice to, first of all, “respect one's parents”, to respect the elderly: “In the first instance, children must honor greatly their father and mother... without their parents' order children must not berate anyone, or admonish them with slanderous words, and if it is indeed necessary, even that must be done politely and courteously” (The Honest Mirror of Youth, 2010, p. 21).

The need to point out the ideas about family values which the authors of children's books presented to the young readers from the very early age was taken into account during the learning of this course. For example, "the family idea", which is very important in the famous novels by Lev Tolstoy, can also be found in Tolstoy's (2011) short stories included into "Azбуka" and intended for the primary independent reading. It is proved by the miniature "Grandmother and granddaughter" (Tolstoy, 2011).

It is also noted that the educational goal of reinforcing reading skills, which is facilitated by the repetition of the outlined words, is obvious in the presented example as well. It is easy to notice the circular composition in the structure of the text, confirming the way a human life goes in a circle: the description of a grandmother taking care of her young granddaughter, and then the grown-up granddaughter taking care of her elderly grandmother. In accordance with the authors' goals they would like to note that even the texts for the primary independent reading contribute to nurturing of kindly feelings in a person.

"The family idea" is continued in the children's books written in the 20th century, for example, "Grandmother", a short story by Oseeva (2016). The authors believe that the inclusion of this short story into the course curriculum can be validated by the example of referring to its text and by the indication of the value coordinates identified during the practical class of the "Children's Literature" course in the process of the experimental training.

Here it is worth noting that during the selection of fictional texts for this course the topic of grandparents was recognized as the extremely important one both for students' self-identification and for their spiritual and moral growth. The works of modern children's literature have very relevant characters of the elderly people, and communication with them becomes the basis for children's learning at the school of life and understanding the world of human connections.

As an example, the authors would like to present the argumentation for the inclusion of the poem "Old Man" by Plesheev (1964) into the curriculum of the described course. This particular poem picturing an old man was selected due to the author's fame, the poem itself being outstanding, and also because it accentuates the above-mentioned value dominants. The authors would like to show how during a specific practical class aimed at studying the poem the formation of the students' text competence takes place, with the dominant emphasis placed on the spiritual and moral values.

The character from the poem "Old Man" not only knows every trail and every bush in the woods. He is also capable of seeing and hearing the beautiful things, of appreciating beauty, he is able to have a poetic view of life.

The young readers see a similar character in another short story included into the curriculum of the course "Children's Literature": "Fosterling" by Mamin-Sibiriyak (1979). Old man named Taras rescues an orphaned cygnet. The caretaker tells the story of his fosterling: "...Some noblemen came for a hunt, well, and shot down the swan and its' swan lady" (Mamin-Sibiriyak, 1979, p. 42). He sees a nestling as a human baby, the adult birds got killed, "and this one remained. Sitting quiet in the rushes. Well, it's a baby, so it hid" (Mamin-Sibiriyak, 1979, p.42). The character from this story uses the simplest words to describe his merciful deed: "It would be lost alone, aye; the hawks would eat him up, as there is no real sense in it yet. It got orphaned. So I brought him over and keep him" (Mamin-Sibiriyak, 1979, p. 43).

The authors would like to note that in the books by the children's writers the elderly people resemble fairy-tale characters who help the leading characters by giving a good advice and set them on the right path, but at the same time they are real people, and sometimes it is not easy to notice and to see them and to appreciate their outstanding traits.

The mentioned characteristics apply to the older generation characters from the children's literature of the 20th century. Communication with the older generation representatives in the children's books written by the contemporary authors is also connected with the historical memory preservation, which is particularly emphasized during the experimental training. One of the schoolchildren's books written in the second half of the century was included into the described curriculum of the course "Children's Literature": "My General", a novella by Likhanov (1990). It is congruent with the dominant values actualization, and the work with its text shows that a schoolchild Antoshka, a novella's main character, learned the lessons of kindness, justice and generosity thanks to his grandfather, a retired combat general. Communication with this amazing person helped the boy to learn to be a good judge of character, to overcome the difficulties of growing up, so typical for the teen years.

The grandfather taught the patriotism lessons not in the sermonic manner, not only with the help of the war memories (there were almost none of them in the novella), but through the special sacred attitude to the native land and the ancestral memory. It is significant that on his way to a friend's jubilee the grandfather, along with his grandson, came to his home village to pay homage to his parents' graves, to talk to his home people, to hear the song that his mother used to love so much. The trip to the home grounds became important for the grandson, too. When they were about leave the village, the boy confessed, "I felt sad, there was a lump in my throat. As if I have lived my whole life in this village, and now I leave it behind forever" (Likhanov, 1990, p. 114).

The study of the history of children's reading in Russia should lead students to the notion of the special importance and "the family idea" in a book, and of the significant role of a wise adult in the development of the moral personality of a growing-up person. This is what should become one of the most important criteria for the selection of works and for the children's reading reference lists.

The control experiment

The expert evaluation method was used at this stage of the experiment in order to define the reasonableness and validity of the performed selection of the texts for the course "Children's Literature". Twelve teachers from the higher education institutions of Togliatti and Samara acted as the experts, in their reviews approving and supporting the chosen attitude towards forming the children's literature list to be studied obligatorily by the university students.

Also, it was suggested to the students to carry out their own analysis of "Chuk and Gek", a short story by Gaidar (2006), with the projection on the aspects they would emphasize while teaching it at school. The statistical processing of works according to the criterion t [$t = 0.14$ with $Sd = 1.5$] of the initial and final data (Bespalko, 1970) on the students' own identification and interpretation of the spiritual and moral dominants in the suggested literary texts showed the obvious positive dynamics, thus allowing to confirm the efficiency of the proposed solution to the stated problem in order to achieve the set goal.

The performed analysis of the psychological pedagogical literature gave the authors a chance to determine that there are no studies on the problem of the formation of spiritual and moral values and a personality's self-identification through the actualization of the specifically as it was actualized by the Strategy for development of upbringing in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025 and during the process of studying the course "Children's Literature". In the meanwhile, the problems of the content of the contemporary university education and upbringing have recently become the subject of close attention and are explored in the works by Dziov (2011), Okhremenko (2019), Simanovsky (2019) and others.

Among the values researchers, the works by Voronkova (2011), Vyzhletsov (1996), Desfonteynes (1994), Kambarova (2016) and others are in accord with the topic under study. The scientists describe the similar problems: the problems of the content of higher professional education in the context of the transition to innovative development, of the psychology of education and upbringing, of the formation of the value areas in the process of professional education, etc.

Meanwhile, both the studied scientific sources and the experience of giving a university education to the young people show that their professional training is going through the overall modernization stage. That is why both the education contents and goals are being revised. The attention towards the upbringing component of education, including the one being present in the learning process, was significantly increased. The value approach in the sphere of education was actualized, and this approach cannot be successful without bringing such presently fundamental traits as a personality's self-identification and the level of its spiritual and moral development to the dominant positions. This study shows the process of their formation through the example of the course "Children's Literature"; however, the whole process of a student's entire educational route within a higher education institution needs to be thoroughly scrutinized.

7. Conclusion

The efficiency of the developed approach to the studying of the children's literature texts was theoretically substantiated and confirmed by the experiments, which makes it possible to recommend this approach to be applied widely both at higher education institutions and at schools. It was established that nowadays the spiritual and moral growth of students and their self-identification through comprehension and mastering of traditional cultural values is in demand.

The authors developed the axiological approach in order to achieve the following goal: to ensure that the future elementary school teachers, while studying the higher education institution's course of children's literature, form such a text competency that includes the strong orientation towards their self-identification and spiritual and moral growth with the perspective of this vector being taken into consideration in their future school work.

The authors discovered that the selection of material to be studied within the course "Children's Literature" is defined by the historicism principle; and when the students work with these texts, the studying process is dominated by the traditional spiritual and moral values enlisted in the Strategy of development of upbringing in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025 for actualization: love of

mankind, justice, honor, conscience, will, personal dignity, faith in goodness, aspiration to carry out the ethical duty to oneself, one's family and one's Motherland.

The authors used the concrete examples to demonstrate the efficiency of the suggested approach to solve the problem under study.

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