

**IFTE 2018**  
**4th International Forum on Teacher Education**

**FICTION AS A SOURCE OF PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE**

Elena O. Galitskih (a)\*, Larisa N. Ponomarenko (b)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Vyatka State University, Kirov, Russia, galitskiheo@rambler.ru

(b) Vyatka State University, Kirov, Russia, vsu\_pon-ko@mail.ru

*Abstract*

The relevance of the fiction study as a source of pedagogical knowledge is conditioned by the new requirements to the professional and personal formation of the teacher in the information society. The article justifies necessity of mastering modern contemporary literature about the school and the teacher as a source of new pedagogical knowledge about the profession, the children of the 21st century, and the issues of upbringing. In the course of this study the following methods have been used: hermeneutic and personality-oriented methods. The method of humanitarian expertise makes it possible to evaluate the results of the study and to present them as a significant reading pedagogical experience. The results of the research include the developed lists of fiction works about the school for teachers and students, technologies of reading activity, models of objectification of the reader's experience. In addition, there are methodological and teaching aids, readers' projects which prove the existence of new significant pedagogical knowledge. The materials of the article are of practical value for the system of professional development of teachers, for the content and organization of the educational process at universities when training teachers for activities in a modern school.

© 2018 Published by Future Academy [www.FutureAcademy.org.UK](http://www.FutureAcademy.org.UK)

**Keywords:** Pedagogical knowledge, experience and technology, reader's activities, self-educational reading.



## 1. Introduction

The issue of professional and personal formation of the future teacher is based on the needs of the society in the teachers of the new century. The society needs teachers who know the achievements of the pedagogical science, who are ready to the changes in educational practice and who focus on the meta-subject content and personally-significant results. Communicative and technological competences of a teacher cannot be stable. They constantly respond to the challenges of the time and modern requirements of science and practice to the qualifications of the teacher.

Generation Z is children of the digital age, feeling themselves in the information flow like a fish in the water. To understand students, to respond to their problems and topical issues, the teacher cannot stop at what has been achieved, he must constantly reflect on the problems of life and the issues of his pedagogical experience. The source of teacher's "living" pedagogical knowledge can be modern fiction about school and children, reflecting and exploring the inner world of young people, adolescents and children. The teacher should become a thoughtful reader of such works that form his "penetrating attention" to the inner spiritual world of a child, to his issues of growing up and "educating the soul". Literature about the school, the teacher and the student, parents and the problems of upbringing can be called "pedagogy of the heart".

Inclusion of fiction in the field of view of modern pedagogical science is extremely relevant in connection with the approval of the National Program for the Support of Children's and Youth Reading in 2017. Regarding the issue of the professional and personal formation of the teacher, the self-educational reading of the future teacher is a leading resource of his professional and personal development. In addition, the integration of professional pedagogical and classical university education in the training of a new type of teacher requires the search for modern methods and strategies of activity.

Two tendencies in the solution of this problem can be traced:

1) organizing scientific and practical conferences on the issues of reading and reading activities of the teacher and the student: "Pedagogy of the text" (Russian State Pedagogical University, Leningrad State University, St. Petersburg); "Reading Children and Adults" (Academy of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education, St. Petersburg); "Reading at Eurasian Crossroads" (Chelyabinsk State Institute of Culture, Chelyabinsk); "Reading as an art: the hermeneutic aspect" (Vyatka State University, Kirov); "Arkady Gaidar and the circle of children's and youthful reading" (Arzamas State Pedagogical Institute, Arzamas), etc.; 2) an integrative approach to solving the problem of the reading activity organization, to which sociologists, teachers, librarians, psychologists, specialists in the field of information technologies, publishers, writers, book trade entrepreneurs are oriented. However, the issue of selection and systematization of the list of books that contributes to the expansion of pedagogical knowledge of students is hardly studied.

Academic and methodological literature related to this issue does not offer the evaluation criteria of self-educational meaningful reading of students and teachers.

The majority of all available methods related to reading activity are designed to promote general students and teachers' reading activity without specifically focusing on their professional pedagogical knowledge – that is much needed in the current context of education.

We are offering original reading technologies of contemporary fiction about school, teacher and children aimed at professional development of students and teachers: technology of reading and writing for the development of critical thinking, the technology of generalization and systematization of knowledge named "The List", technology of life creation workshops.

We have determined interdependence of the professional formation and self-educational reading activity of teachers and students in the course of their professional development.

We have created and tested the self-educational meaningful reading program of the teacher in the course of qualification rising.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Analysis of the literature proves the scientific interest to the integration of artistic and scientific knowledge of the development of the child's soul, his mind and heart. Scholars prove the existence of integrative tendencies in the study of various aspects of reading that affect the professional worldview of the teacher throughout his life. The results of the study prove the relevance of reading fiction as a source of pedagogical knowledge. Thus, the studies on pedagogical artistic communication are presented in the works of Gavrilina (2006), Ponomarenko (2008), Morozova (2001) and Ovchenkova (2009) studied the issue of pedagogical situations in fiction. Robotova (2008) has proved significance of the humanitarian texts in pedagogical knowledge. Modern pedagogical technologies of the organization of reading activity are presented in the works of Galitskikh, & Davlyatshina (2017), Yadrovskaya (2011). Strategies and tactics of reading activity have been developed in the works of Prantsova, & Romanicheva (2011). But the experience of implementing innovative reading technologies in the educational practice of teachers training remains an urgent task for the near future.

## **3. Research Questions**

In the course of this study we were predominantly focused on the following items: 1) to theoretically justify the content and technology of reading of contemporary fiction for teachers and students of pedagogical specialties; 2) to develop technologies of reading activity in different modes; 3) to form an experience of integration of reader's experience and practical pedagogical activity; 4) to identify involvement of teachers and students in meaningful reading of fiction about the school and the teacher and to draw conclusions.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to develop a set of reading technologies of contemporary fiction about school, teacher and children aimed at professional development of students and teachers. The following aims were determined as the most crucial for this research project: to include teachers and students of pedagogical specialties in the literary flow of contemporary fiction about the school and teacher; to make list of fiction works, revealing the theme of childhood, school, communication of the teacher and students in the context of the new time; to select fiction works to identify their pedagogical potential for students and teachers.

## 5. Research Methods

In order to test our hypothesis we have used a range of methods that complement each other:

- theoretical – the analysis of the works of scientists who developed/are developing this issue; the analysis of methodological and educational literature; the hermeneutic approach which allowed to extract from the texts pedagogical meanings, interpret them as sources of professional knowledge; the personal-oriented approach that ensured the consideration of individual motives and opportunities of the professional formation of each participant of the experiment.

- empirical – participant observation, reporting, formative pedagogical experiment, surveys, simulation modeling, humanitarian expertise, the analysis of the findings.

The research involved 140 students of Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (Vyatka State University). 230 teachers of the comprehensive schools took part in our research project.

Our research project was conducted in three stages.

The first stage involved designing experimental platform at Vyatka State University where we observed the circle of self-educational reading of students and teachers; where we conducted the surveys, assessed students and teachers' reading activity. At the second stage we were working on forming the conceptual framework, organizing educational experiment among the students of Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences and the teachers of comprehensive schools. The third stage involved the analysis and systematization of findings.

In the course of the study the leading method was humanitarian expertise (Bratchenko, 2001), which is considered an innovative method for the research in humanities. Criteria of humanitarian expertise:

- motivational criterion: the creation of your own "bookshelf" - the number of books read about the school, the pupils and the teacher, the meaningfulness of the choice of books for study (list of books);

- hermeneutical criterion: the interpretation of pedagogical issues, subtracted from the content of the reading (the mind map of pedagogical situations and issues);

- integrative criterion: the integration of the reader's experience with personally significant issues of his pedagogical activity which is important for professional-personal development (essay).

## 6. Findings

### 6.1. The results of the reporting stage

The first stage was organized involving 140 students of the university and 230 teachers of the comprehensive schools in September 2014. The aim of this stage was to assess the circle of self-educational reading of students and teachers and to assess students and teachers reading activity. There were no control groups since the method of humanitarian expertise implies comparison of the group's results before and after the experiment.

In the questionnaires students stressed that they mainly read books that are the subject of study in the history of Russian and foreign literature. The results of the humanitarian expertise indicate the number of students and teachers distributed according to the three criteria.

**Table 01.** Involvement of teachers and students in meaningful reading of fiction about the school and the teacher (the reporting stage)

Participants	Motivational criterion	Hermeneutical criterion	Integrative criterion
Students	82 people 58,5%	63 people 45%	41 people 29%
Teachers	167 people 73%	144 people 63%	83 people 36%

The results show that the most of students and teachers had a motive to read fiction to extract pedagogical meaning. This index is higher in teachers than in students. Moreover, humanitarian expertise revealed that almost half of the students and slightly more than half of the teachers can interpret pedagogical issues, subtracted from the content of reading. In addition, only 29% of students and 36% of teachers can integrate their experience with significant issues of their pedagogical activity.

## 6.2. The results of the formative stage

The formative stage took place over the period from September 2014 till June 2017 (three academic years).

The main objective of the formative stage is to design and test a methodology that aims to promote meaningful reading among teachers of comprehensive schools and students Philology faculty, as well as future teachers of Russian language and Literature.

In order to achieve the goal readers' seminars, workshops and quests were included in the content of educational disciplines "Children's literature", "Methods of teaching literature," "Actual issues of teaching literature". This gave us the opportunity to organize students' reading activities on the following topics:

- an artistic image of a teacher in school of the 21st century;
- modern student as the subject of cognitive activity;
- mastery of the teacher;
- problems of different generations dialogue (teachers, pupils and their parents).

For interpretation of fiction texts we used the hermeneutical method of dialogic reflective understanding of texts: pedagogical text commenting, dialogue-debating with the author of the text (support and refutation of the main ideas), interpretation of the pedagogical text from the position of the various subjects of the pedagogical process, search for universal common cultural meanings of the text, compilation of terminological and metaphorical structure of pedagogical texts of different genres and styles (Ponomarenko, Zlobina, Galitskih, & Rublyova, 2017).

The following activities were developed for teachers:

- navigation in the modern literary stream;
- studying manuals to promote reading in the modern information space and designing of individual routes for self-educational reading;
- immersion in the reader's activity by means of modern pedagogical technologies;
- the analysis of the received reader's experience and its integration with issues of educational practice;
- conducting a humanitarian expertise of the essays and presenting projects promoting reading;

- development of methodical manuals and educational presentations, popularization of innovative experience of pedagogical activity at seminars, conferences, festivals of philological projects.

In 5 comprehensive schools the seminars were held on meaningful reading, pedagogical readings on contemporary fiction, and reading seminars on situational tasks from fiction texts, workshops and quests for organizing reading activity in various interactive formats. The results are reflected in the publications summarizing the innovative experience.

In the course of the formative experiment students and teachers have mastered such strategies and forms of reading activity:

- reading seminar in the mode of developing education;
- technology of generalization and systematization of knowledge called "List";
- technology of reading and writing for the development of critical thinking;
- technology of life creation workshops;
- portfolio technology of self-education reading;
- literary salons of self-educational reading;
- reader's quest "Read or not read?".

The questionnaire showed that the most creative and productive sources of pedagogical knowledge, from the point of view of future teachers and teachers, were the following works of fiction in the new century:

1. Aromshtam, M. *When Angels Rest* (2010) – a polylogue of the teacher's pedagogical diary and the student's diary with the pedagogical heritage of Janusz Korczak.
2. Bunimovich, E. *The Ninth Grade. Second school* (2015) – teachers artistic portraits of the physics and mathematics school, the experience of living a school life in the context of the era.
3. Vyazemskiy, U. *The fool* (2010) – the world view and experience of growing up of a socially gifted teenager.
4. Gavalda, A. *95 Pounds of Hope* (2007) - dialectics of the inner world of the student, parents and teachers; ways of understanding children and adults.
5. Dal, R. *Matilde* (2013) - a unique pedagogical experience of the teacher's communication with the smart reading student and her parents.
6. Zhvalevsky, E., Pasternak, E. *I want to go to school!* (2013) – a pedagogical precedent of creating a unique school of development and its contrast with the conservative system of education.
7. Pennac, D. *Comme un roman* (2009) - pedagogical experience of upbringing through children and parents reading.
8. Kabysh, I. *The awkward age* (2008) - experience of pedagogical activity comprehending by the teacher who is a grammarian and a poet.
9. Kamaeva, O. *The spruce. From school with love, or the teacher's diary* (2013) - the way of becoming a teacher in the profession; reflexive experience of understanding of pedagogical issues.
10. Kauffmann, B. *Up the Stairs Running Down*. (2016) – a search for the ways to develop a teacher in the flow of educational practice; paradoxes of pedagogical issues.

These books received the maximum number of elections and high assessments of humanitarian expertise. Here are examples from readers' diaries: "Marina Aromshtam's book" *When Angels Rest* "opens

wide space for teachers to reflect on the meaning of their profession, the issues of educating modern children, the need to read and reread the books of Janusz Korczak. Two diaries - first-grader's and her teacher - give an opportunity to look at the process of life in school from different positions: child, parent, pedagogical. The book provides a broad pedagogical context for the problems of the modern school and helps to see the prospects for the development of a teacher in his profession”.

“Anna Gavalda looked into the soul of child with the indifferent eye of a person who can understand the troubles of the student having difficulties with learning. My class simply “swallowed” this story, there was no need to force anyone to read it, we read it all together and discussed hotly and vigorously. The author left hope to everyone who read this book”.

“The rights of the reader, formulated by D. Pennak, help me understand contemporary children, stop demanding obedience and impeccable adherence to my rules, give freedom of choice and awareness of the motives of their behavior. I will definitely meet with my parents, taking into account the contents of this book. An affair with a book cannot be replaced by anything”.

In the course of study we have revealed typological features of the readers:

1. The first group (96 people) - read books on the list and actively discuss all the proposed books.
2. The second group (26 people) - read, keep a record in the readers' diary and constantly expand the reading experience with new books.
3. The third group (108 people) - listen, read selectively, do not go beyond compulsory reading.

All students, without exception, wrote essays on contemporary literature. They stressed that books about the school and the teacher significantly expanded their pedagogical ideas about the school, profession and children, that they consider literature to be a necessary source of pedagogical knowledge.

The following pedagogical situations were the most demanded, reflecting such issues of family and school: situations of poor children's progress, conflicts between pupil and teacher or between parents and teachers, misunderstanding of the motives of children's behavior by parents and teachers, search for your calling, self-realization in communication, the issue of the teacher's disappointment in his professional choice, creation of a professional style of activity.

The process of the forming experiment was accompanied by the development of pedagogical models that objectify the results of understanding the texts, their personally significant result. The technology of generalization and systematization of knowledge named "The List" has been widely introduced into the educational process of students and in the system of professional development of teachers (Galitskih, 2016).

### 6.3. The control stage of the experiment

The control stage of the experiment took place in June 2017. The main aim at this stage was to reassess students and teachers reading activity. In order to determine students and teachers involvement in meaningful reading of fiction works we used the same criteria of humanitarian expertise.

**Table 02.** Involvement of teachers and students in meaningful reading of fiction about the school and the teacher (the control stage)

Participants	Motivational criterion	Hermeneutical criterion	Integrative criterion
Students	119 people 85%	117 people 84%	79 people 56%
Teachers	221 people 96%	184 people 80%	145 people 63%

**Table 03.** Comparative characteristics of the involvement of teachers and students in meaningful reading

Criteria	Students		Teachers	
	Reported experiment	Control experiment	Reported experiment	Control experiment
Motivational criterion	58,5%	85%	73%	96%
Hermeneutical criterion	45%	84%	63%	80%
Integrative criterion	29%	56%	36%	63%

All in all, the results of the control experiment showed that there was a significant increase in all indicators. The number of students on motivational criteria increased by 26.5%, on hermeneutic criterion – by 39%, on integrative criterion – by 27%. The number of teachers on motivational criteria increased by 23%, on hermeneutic criterion – by 17%, on integrative criterion – by 27%. After having analyzed all of the results we can conclude that the largest increase occurred among students on hermeneutic criteria (39%). It means that students became able to interpret pedagogical issues, subtracted from the content of the reading. Motivational and integrative criteria indicators are almost at the same level.

At the same time the group of teachers demonstrated other results. The largest increase occurred among teachers on integrative criteria (27%). It means that teachers demonstrated the ability to integrate reader's experience with significant issues of their pedagogical activity. In addition, data on motivational and integrative criteria do not differ much. Finally, the results of the experiment showed that the teachers have a great teaching practice unlike students.

An important result of the experimental stage was the study of books about the process of reading by teachers and students. This knowledge and reader's experience stimulated motivation for self-educational reading. This list of books on reading activity, its strategies and practices includes the following methodical and teaching aids:

1. Mortimer, A. How to read books
2. Galitskih, E. Reading with enthusiasm
3. Yadrovskaya, E. Interpretation of cultural texts: dialogues with art
4. Tikhomirova, I. From reading to creativity of life.
5. Prantsova, G., Romanicheva, E. Modern strategies for reading and understanding the text, etc.

The humanitarian expertise of these books showed that teachers appreciated the help of these books in organizing their readership. These books expanded their understanding of the forms and models of fixing the read and understood, enriched their methodical toolkit. Seminars were held with students on these books, where each student demonstrated his educational presentation on the book studied. The material was presented in a strict algorithm:

- portrait of the book and its author;
- lessons of the book;
- the main page of the book (episode, situation);
- methodical findings;
- pedagogical "highlights";
- new ideas, thoughts of the author;
- aphorisms of the book;
- council or message to readers.



As personally significant results future teachers named: presentations about the read books, experience of live workshops, bank of individual research projects: "Typology of modern teachers", "Workshop of creative ups", "From the reading teacher to the reading children", "Atlas of readership projects", portfolios of perspective self-educational reading. Students exchanged their presentations and didactic materials and collected portfolio of perspective self-educational reading.

In the course of experimental work literary salons were developed and tested on Anna Gavalda's books "95 Pounds of Hope" and Bel Kaufman's novel "Up the Stairs Running Down". The content of these books provoked a heated pedagogical discussion about the issues of the modern school. The materials of these salons were published in journals and teaching aids (Galitskih, & Davlyatshina, 2017). Teachers offered to include pedagogical journalism in reading seminars, in particular, the section "Humanist" in "Literaturnaya gazeta". This section of the newspaper discusses the most pressing problems of school life. Thus, the context of the experiment was expanded.

Teachers of all experimental schools wrote reflexive essays in which they integrated their reader experience with their actual tasks of professional activity.

The book "Exam for Parents" by Murashova (2014) unexpectedly became the subject of discussions during the experiment and was included in the reading list. In this book conflicting pedagogical situations of mutual relations of children and adults were selected from fiction works of modern literature.

We also established that certain technologies of reading contemporary fiction about the school, the teacher and children are very effective in promoting meaningful reading. It is important to talk to students about the value of fiction works, to give them opportunities to experience a range of emotional reactions that are related to their professional formation. What is more, it is necessary to encourage them to strive towards constant spiritual development through getting them engaged in meaningful reading.

## **7. Conclusion**

We have developed certain technologies of reading contemporary fiction about school, teacher and children aimed at professional development of students and teachers. In the course of experiment the participants have mastered modern pedagogical technologies: technology of reading and writing for the development of critical thinking, the technology of generalization and systematization of knowledge named "The List", technologies of life creation workshops, reflexive and interactive technologies.

The use of meaningful reading technologies proved that modern fiction is a magnificent source of pedagogical knowledge and the factor of their professional and personal formation.

The compiled lists of fiction works, revealing the theme of childhood, school, communication between the teacher and students in the context of new time are in demand and relevant for self-educational reading.

Humanitarian pedagogical expertise of fiction works made it possible to master the following genres: reviews, essays, reader's impressions, and reviews on postcards, entries in reading diaries as well as implement ideas - from the reader's diary to the pedagogical diary, from the reading teacher to the reading student.

The experiment allowed to develop and implement models of the results of the self-educational reading activity of the future teacher (pedagogical portfolio, readers' diary, reading promotion sites, readers' presentations).

The generated experience of working in different interactive modes in workshops, quests, readers' seminars, literary salons was actively and efficiently transferred to other educational organizations and regions thanks to the Internet, festivals of philological projects, scientific and practical conferences, and a system for improving teacher's skills of the region and city.

The analysis of questionnaires, reflexive essays, readers' projects and pedagogical initiatives proved that fiction about the school enriches significantly the representation of educators about Z generation, extends their experience of pedagogical activity through reading experience and understanding of professional issues.

## References

- Aromshtam, M. (2010). *When Angels Rest*. Moscow: Litres.
- Bratchenko, S. (2001). *Humanitarian expertise of education: the conditions for the holding*. Moscow: School technology.
- Bunimovich, E. (2015). *The Ninth Grade. Second school*. Moscow: Prosveshcheniye.
- Dal, R. (2013). *Matilde*. Moscow: Samokat.
- Galitskih, E., & Davlyatshina, O. (2017). Scientific and methodological support to teachers in general education organizations when implementing teacher's professional standard. *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods*, 7, 125-140.
- Galitskih, E. (2016). Educational Technology "List" as a Resource for the Organization of Children's Literature Reading. *The European Proceedings of Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 12, 44-49.
- Galitskih, E., & Davlyatshina, O. (2017). Scientific and methodological support to teachers in general education organizations when implementing teacher's professional standard. *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods*, 7(2), 125-140.
- Gavalda, A. (2007). *95 Pounds of Hope*. Moscow: FreeFly.
- Gavrilina, L. (2006). *Pedagogical artistic communication: theoretical bases and practical application*, Syktyvkar: Publishing House of Syktyvkar University.
- Kabysh, I. (2008). *The awkward age*. Moscow: Litres.
- Kamaeva, O. (2013). *The spruce. From school with love, or the teacher's diary*. SPb: AST Astrel.
- Kauffmann, B. (2016). *Up the Stairs Running Down*. Moscow: Prosveshcheniye.
- Morozova, O. (2001). *Pedagogical situations in fiction*. Moscow: Publishing Center Akademiya.
- Murashova, E. (2014). *Exam for Parents*. Moscow: Samokat.
- Ovchenkova, O. (2009). *Pedagogical situations in fiction*. Glazov: GSPI.
- Pennac, D. (2009). *Comme un roman. Suite, 1(4)*, 12-31.
- Ponomarenko, L. (2008). *Formation of discursive competence among students of pedagogical specialties in the process of intercultural dialogue: author's abstract* (Doctoral dissertation). Kirov: Vyatka State University.
- Ponomarenko, L. N., Zlobina, I. S., Galitskih, E. O. & Rublyova, O. S. (2017). Formation of the Foreign Language Discursive Competence of Pedagogical Faculties Students in the Process of Intercultural Dialogue. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, 6(1), 89-99.
- Prantsova, G., & Romanicheva, E. (2011). *Modern strategies for reading and understanding the text*. Moscow: Moscow State Pedagogical University.
- Robotova, A. (2008). *Humanitarian text in the pedagogical knowledge and teaching of pedagogy*. SPb: Book House.
- Vyazemskiy, U. (2010). *The fool*. Moscow: AST Astrel.
- Yadrovskaya, E. (2011). *Reading as a dialogue*. SPb: Book House.
- Zhvalevsky, E., & Pasternak, E. (2013). *I want to go to school!* Moscow: Labirint.