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DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' READING EXPERIENCE IN DOMESTIC PEDAGOGICS

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Abstract

Information technologies, modern gadgets, computer games more and more take our children away from reading. It is supposed that these factors decrease the cultural prestige of reading as a necessary source of important information. Perhaps, the problem of downward decline of reading motivation among students and hence the deficiency of knowledge, information, lack of reading experience that is much needed in life of every person became ever more relevant. This problem cannot be solved by one person; this is a mutual task. This phenomenon is studied within social sciences, by pedagogics and is generalized at the philosophical level. Reading is considered as the basic training technology. The ability to read thoughtfully and to analyze the text undoubtedly helps at school, in future life. This skill helps to orient students in a flow of information that a modern person is facing every day. The basics of reading experience of a modern student are formed in early childhood, at the initial stage of education and throughout the entire life and depend on the ability to understand and further work with obtained information. A potential reader and a creative person is developed in every child as soon as he has interest in reading. The study analyzes the problem of poor development of reading skills among Russian students alongside with the main problems of their reading experience. The purpose of the study is to consider the problem of downward motivation of students to reading books and the development of their reading experience.

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1. Introduction

The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature showed that the pedagogics defines reading as the process of reproduction of a sound form of words and phrases in full accordance with their graphic (alphabetic) symbol. Reading as an activity is aimed to transform the experience of the author coded in a text into his personal reading experience. Thus, reading activity implies the realized reader's competence, which is a potential reading activity (Sarsekeeva & Shelest, 2017).

Throughout a long time, the pedagogical community was interested in the development of reading skills. Ushinsky (1968) is rightfully considered the founder of the main reading practice. For him the piece of art is not a mere text, he compared it to a window, through which teachers show children various aspects of life. Ushinsky (1968) noted that it is not enough that children only understood the meaning of the work of literature. It is necessary to create conditions so that they are able to feel it.

Facing the need to solve the same problems in the field of education and development of the younger generation for the benefit of the society at large, the majority of the leading countries in the world entered upon the path of intensive modernization of educational systems at schools. For example, the Republic of Kazakhstan refers to new educational objectives to be solved by the elementary school teachers. The priority objective is personal development of students through the acquisition of universal actions. We shall understand the importance of introducing activities that develop semantic reading skills into the educational process (KZGov, 2010).

Today the traditional transfer of knowledge by a teacher to students lost its relevance. Any educational institution shall provide a student with an opportunity of independent study of the surrounding world. Reading contributes to the development of skills and abilities to cope with the flow of information from various sources. According to modern educational methods, the reading skills are not a mere ability to read a printed text aloud, but also the ability to think through its meaning, to draw conclusions, to form personal opinion on the read piece of work. Such skill of "thoughtful reading" implies the reflection over the text before understanding its content during and after reading. When a student reads trying to think through the meaning, he gets closer to culture, centers around the world of literature and, undoubtedly, develops as a personality.

"In the conditions of the growing amount of students' independent work with texts from various fields of knowledge the reading skills are mainly acquired through literary works. As a result, students lack sufficiently developed skills to process large volumes of specialized information. In general, the existing system of general compulsory education is not able to provide the level of reading competence required today, and additional education cannot compensate its disadvantages. Hence, the considerable percentage of Russian students graduating from a comprehensive school is not ready for efficient development of ever complicated and increasing flows of information and knowledge" (MCBS, 2019).

2. Problem Statement

Reading has always played an important role in the history of human development. It is one of the main ways of socialization of a person, his development, upbringing and education (Sarsekeeva & Shelest, 2017). The problem of downward decline of reading motivation among students has become ever more

relevant in our country. The understanding of the fact that today we need to increase the prestige of reading leads to new solutions to the existing problem.

The percentage of systematically reading youth in Russia decreased from 48% (1991) to 28% (2005). In fact, the country approached “a critical limit of neglecting reading”. Speaking at the 4th All-Russian Conference *The national program on support and development of reading: results and prospects* in Moscow. It is notable that the efforts aimed to overcome the reading crisis are insufficient or ineffective. One of the reasons preventing proper promotion of reading is the lack of professional staff. E.I. Kuzmin considers it necessary to ensure professional development of employees of all institutes that support and develop reading (MCBS, 2010).

The advent of innovative technologies and remote education introduces a new image of a reader, which is absolutely different from the past. Now a reader is a confident young and active generation seeking to achieve new heights. Such reader requires modern methods of work meeting his new requirements. Unfortunately, teachers are focused on traditional approaches to reading – to teach reading. However, there is a need for completely different approach in this current situation to solve the problems of low reading literacy of students.

It is obvious that if modern students are able to work with information deeper and more thoughtful then they will quicker develop their reading experience. Once the teaching staff talks about the problem of students’ reading experience, the main claims are addressed to teachers of the Russian language and literature. However, in reality this problem is not only concentrated on the above disciplines, but concerns each school subject. Only joint efforts of subject-matter teachers will create the necessary conditions for the development of students’ reading experience.

Undoubtedly, all these problems shall be carefully focused on and solved by both teachers, librarians, and parents.

3. Research Questions

Sociologists believe that in recent years the number of reading fans in Russia decreased by 23%. This demonstrates the existence of the problem of declining interest in reading.

The national program on support and development of reading was proposed by the Russian Book Union. It is designed for 14 years until 2020. The main objective of the program is to increase the cultural competence of the Russians to the level comparable to developed and actively developing countries.

In this regard the national program implies the following:

- change of educational programs and development of new educational methods at schools and higher educational institutions with the focus on reading, increase the level of reading competence and information competence of a personality.

- development of special projects and programs for educational institutions aimed to increase the level of reading activity (MCBS, 2019).

Currently reading becomes more practical, less emotional, with the application of various devices. The literary critic Frank Kermode distinguishes two types of reading – “carnal, material reading” and “spiritual, sublime reading”. We shall avoid the situation when our children consider “dry, restrained” reading a standard. We deprive them of many things by letting them read this way in childhood: tremendous

emotions, surprise and admiration from reading, it becomes more difficult for them to express their thoughts, to enrich their knowledge.

However, “progressive” teachers and “soft” parents maintain the position that regardless of the fact that children are in continuous relation with different information technologies, they shall “be accepted such as they are” and the education shall be organized taking into account their “adherence” to gadgets. But there is also another side of this, which students have to be aware of: we shall show them the world they have not seen yet – the world they can only get to by learning to read usual books carefully and thoughtfully (Kermode, 1991).

4. Purpose of the Study

The information space (gadgets, computers, phones) “absorbed” Russian students without leaving them time for reading books and enriching their inner world, expanding their knowledge. This decreases the interest in reading. For several years not only teachers, librarians, but also parents have been concerned with this problem. The purpose of the study is to consider the problem of downward motivation of students to reading books and the development of their reading experience.

5. Research Methods

The following general scientific methods were used in the study: analysis of theoretical sources, comparison, generalization and special research methods: collection of scientific sources, collection of information.

6. Findings

According to the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and others, Russian younger school students read much more often than their foreign age-mates. Besides, reading attracts them more as a hobby. However, this does not indicate the quality of reading yet (despite the fact that school students have high level of reading technique, this does not mean at all that they will be able to solve unusual, non-standard problems and analyze the behavior). Moreover, the interest in reading books disappears with age. Therefore, it seems inappropriate to talk about the quality of reading, education, and leisure.

The PIRLS study (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Hooper, 2017) included the international monitoring where the graduates of elementary school proved high quality of domestic education: Russian fourth-graders are ranked top among industrialized countries reaching high reading indicators. The fourth year of education is the main aspect in the development of students’ ability to study. This period is beneficial for high-quality transition from teaching reading (reading technique) to reading for education – use of written texts as the main resource of self-education.

During their teenage age students face a lot of problems. The main of them is sharp drop of interest in reading. The study conducted within PISA (15-year-old graduates of the junior school) and PIRLS (10-year-old graduates of the elementary school) emphasize a particular bottleneck of the Russian education. This phenomenon can partly be explained by the fact that this is the time of spontaneous migration of teenagers in the Internet and social networks. The main motive for reading for teenagers is obligatory

acquaintance with written texts within the educational program and unwillingness to be punished with low grades for insufficient reading.

The PISA international program, which assesses educational achievements of students, pays attention to each case separately. The objective of the PISA program is to assess 15-year-old students in their ability to utilize knowledge and experience, which they gain at school, in many life situations, in various spheres of human activity (reading literacy, mathematical literacy and natural-science literacy is assessed) (PISA, 2010). PISA has a huge impact on educational development of countries participating in the program. According to the study, the member states understand their weak and strong points in the course of education, compare their results with the results of other participants, define vectors of further development in the field of education thus improving the educational process.

Upon the transition from elementary to general school there is a need to create such pedagogical conditions, which turn the students' readiness to read for education into the reading ability that ensures self-training of young people outside an educational institution.

The State Compulsory Standard of Primary Education specifies the importance of teaching reading and states that reading within modern information space is "metadisciplinary" or "super subject" and that the reading abilities belong to universal educational actions. Thus, it is obvious that the reading experience shall be developed not only at classes in the Russian language and literature, but also in all school disciplines. Only systematic development of reading literacy at all steps of education and within each discipline is able to solve the problem of developing a competent reader.

Besides, the society has almost lost or forgotten its traditions of family and independent reading. We cannot but agree with Ushinsky (1968): "To read still means nothing. What and how to read is important" (p. 409). Systematic and conscious efforts on development and improvement of semantic reading skills not only at school, but also in the family fosters cognitive development of students, their educational independence, increases the motivation of children and raises a competent reader capable to use reading activity for self-education with further need for continuous reading.

Parents, close relations with them, exchange of reading experience will help children to keep and maintain the interest in books and reading in general. They become reliable assistants to their children in diverse literary world since the unity of book environment and book interests of children and parents is the main condition of successful development of a child as a reader in a family.

It is proved that unlike non-readers, the readers are able to think in terms of problems, have large memory span and active creative imagination, they also demonstrate better speaking skills.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the "development of students' reading experience is a long and complex process that goes back to childhood when a growing person meets a book and starts reading. Such experience helps to express the opinion, to learn to understand yourself and to communicate with people" (Inozemtseva & Ryndak, 2018, p. 34).

At the initial stage of education there is a need to develop reading and writing skills (literacy), but further work on the development of a skilled reader shall be closely connected to their development in other disciplines, which implies the use of different approaches and strategies of textual activity (Smetannikova,

2005) with multiple training material, various and different genres of texts that will intensify cognitive, creative, critical and communicative activity of students and ensure the development of their reading experience.

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