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## The History of Education

### Pedagogical Foundations of Effective Reading Instruction Older Students in Russia in the late XIX – Early XX Centuries

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#### Abstract

Topical issues of development of reader's activity of school students are considered on the basis of the comparative analysis of the situation characterizing a technique of formation of communicative competence of the system of gymnasia formation of the Kursk province of the end XIX – the beginning of the XX centuries. The comparative-historical and theoretical analysis of the sources characterizing features of statement and a solution of the problem of training in reading in domestic pedagogics at a boundary of XIX – the XX centuries, are the main methods of work. Generalization, systematization and classification of material are methods also. The main types of reading characterized by methodologists of the specified period as "serious" and "easy", private and obligatory are allocated. Differences of a modern and historical methodical thought in the relation to reading in the system of training of school students are traced. The key principles of effective training in reading the school student (nature conformity, activity approach, presentation, communication of training with life, anthropocentricity) are distinguished. Article can be useful to teachers-language and literature teachers, methodologists, students concerning training in conscious productive reading school students.

**Keywords:** productive reading, school students, education, the end of XIX – the beginning of the XX centuries.

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### **1. Introduction**

Identification of factors of successful training in conscious productive reading modern school students is one of key problems of modern pedagogical science.

Works of outstanding scientists of the end of the XIX beginning of the 20th centuries (the historical period, similar in economic, political, sociocultural indicators), articles of the periodicals which were so actively developing in the specified time period and also archival materials show the high level of reader's activity of all segments of the population, enormous work of the conceiving part of society in formation of the competent, thinking, well-behaved reader.

Therefore the appeal to the above-stated sources, their comprehensive analysis will promote the solution of problems of formation of the active reader, functional literacy and increase in the general cultural and educational level of the modern school student.

### **2. Materials and methods**

The historical principle of a research of material is the cornerstone of work. It assumes consideration of the pedagogical facts and phenomena in specific historical conditions, that is taking into account the economic, cultural and political level of development of society. Thus, culturological material allows to cover rather fully the sociocultural phenomena and to draw the generalizing conclusions. System approach demands studying of social and educational structures in their interaction and interference.

The interdisciplinarity provides the addressing concepts of interdisciplinary sciences.

The comparative-historical and theoretical analysis of the sources characterizing features of statement and a solution of the problem of training in reading in national pedagogics at a boundary of XIX – the XX centuries are the main methods of work. Generalization, systematization and classification of material are methods also.

Publications of the famous scientists and public figures in periodicals of the considered period, their scientific works and also the archival materials consisting of circulars of the Ministry of national education, orders of trustees of educational districts, protocols of faculty meetings and reports of teacher's congresses make source study base of article.

### **3. Discussion**

The problem of reader's activity is closely connected with questions of functional literacy. Reading qualitative literature is complicated without sufficient level of proficiency in language (this fact is obvious to all in a case with a foreign language). Therefore interest in reading is small or is absent at poor knowledge of language.

The role of the native language in education of the personality was also emphasized by teachers of the end of the XIX beginning of the 20th centuries. Each advanced work of that time reflected K.D. Ushinsky's thought: "The child does not understand sense of a word and its true value, will always suffer from this radical shortcoming when studying any other subject if it does not understand it" (Ushinsky, 1954). Therefore "... the school has to attach to the native language significance of the central subject. Each lesson has to be a lesson of the native language" (Bunakov, 1906).

The same ideas are consistently reflected in I.I. Sreznevsky's works (Sreznevsky, 1899), V.Y. Stoyunin (Stoyunin, 1986), V.I. Vodovozov (1958), circulars of the Ministry of National Education and decisions of faculty meetings of educational institutions.

Thus, key position of the put methodical base in teaching literature at a turn of the 19–20th centuries this attention to the native language, its high-quality studying, its priority over all other sciences in which train younger generation.

N.F. Bunakov's remark is also for us an important conclusion. "Studying of literature brings up and develops the pedagogical strength of workers of teaching and educational business, gives it necessary coloring of nationality, but in the meantime gives to these workers and important material for the bringing-up impact on younger generation" (Bunakov, 1906). The sense of reading and training in reading seems in it.

Modern researchers do not lose this important idea. "Importance of early reading becomes obvious at the appeal to intertek-stualnost problems for formation of collective cultural memory. Program school texts act as implications much more often than other layers of classics" (Leybov, 2013). It would seem, such judgment is contrary to data of sociological polls. After school people do

not address program works (52 % of respondents). But basic works and authors (symbols of the Russian literature) were strongly included into consciousness interviewed that becomes visible from other researches of public opinion.

#### 4. Results

Search of an ideal, relevance, support on modern samples, careful sampling are the main directions of implementation of development of reading teachers at the end of XIX – the beginning of the 20th centuries, provided not only interest in literature, but also development of the reader, his education in the spirit of civil patriotism.

Documents of the Kursk men's gymnasium of the end of XIX – the beginning of the 20th centuries were analysed by us.

The character of the studied materials (circulars of the Ministry of national education, the Trustee of the Kharkiv district, the reference to Decrees of the Emperor, the approved training programs and plans) allows to draw the generalizing conclusions about importance of the considered problem.

Exclusive concern of government officials and teachers in extent of assimilation and understanding of data by pupils pays on itself special attention. Personally focused approach is obvious. The attention of the teacher not only is concentrated on educational opportunities of training, but also turned to the identity of the school student with his emotional and creative features and opportunities of development.

Success of personally focused training is put into direct dependence on quality of reading educational and additional grants. Linguistic disciplines gained paramount value in the Kursk men's gymnasium at the end of XIX – the beginning of the 20th centuries. The key ideas of documents of different level (from circulars of the Ministry to reports) this development of comprehensiveness of the identity of the pupil when training in language; compliance to age and level of development of materials of lessons (any cycle). So, for example, the Circular of the Ministry of National Education to the Trustee of the Kharkiv educational district of June 8, 1877 says that the best results on classic languages can be achieved by means of the various reading and a serious explanation read" ([The Circular, 1877](#)). Masterpieces of the Russian literature are ready material for exercises on language.

The trustee of the Kharkiv district in the Circular of December 10, 1899 points to positive impact of reading on thinking and also counteraction to "the superficial reading characteristic of youthful age" ([The Circular, 1877](#)).

The same judgment is reflected also in the Circular No. 17458 of September 1, 1905. The analysis of the contents read needs to be carried out at Russian lessons besides performance of grammatical tasks: "to note and transfer the main thoughts, to establish connection between them, etc." ([The Circular, 1905](#)).

Changes in programs for Russian and literature were carried out according to indications of the Ministry of national education. The quantity of lessons of these objects increased, their theoretical and practical base changed for the purpose of all-round development of pupils ([The Circular, 1877](#)).

The teacher of Russian of the Kursk men's gymnasium P. Shandybin noted in the report that the taken measures gave the chance to find more time for explanatory reading articles not only from the textbook, but also from the periodic children's press (In the same place).

Archival documents of the Kursk men's gymnasium convincingly prove learning efficiency of children by means of educational books K. Ushinsky, N. Bunakov, V. Vakhterov, V. Vodovozov, N. Korf, D. Tikhomirov.

The questionnaire of "A measure for development in pupils of interest in out-of-school reading" pays on itself special attention. Answers to it are kept in archive both in draft, and in the corrected option that can testify to importance of data according to this questionnaire. This questionnaire gives information on a condition of reader's activity of grammar-school boys. Public services are more anxious with the "correct" orientation of reader's activity. So, need of drawing up "preliminary lists of books for reading", plans of "literary soirees" and also maintaining protocols of literary conversations and scientific readings especially makes a reservation. Cool written works; literary conversations on subjects, "chosen as pupils voluntarily, but under the leadership of the teacher"; self-education circles (mathematicians, historians, fans of classical antiquity,

estestvennik); literary holidays "with demonstration of light pictures and experiences"; excursions were called fixed assets for development of interest in "out-of-school reading, self-education and amateur performance" ([The Circular, 1892](#)). Thus, we are convinced that it is about the organization of interest in reading.

We learn from this questionnaire that the studying gymnasiums actively participated in literary conversations, they showed most of all interest in questions of literature and history and also modern events" ([The Circular, 1892](#)).

At a boundary of the XIX–XX centuries teachers spoke about orientation of reader's activity (the "serious" and "frivolous" reading, obligatory, recommended and additional, program and private) and even its restriction. "The correct statement of reading will render to the person service for the rest of life", - L. Ilyinsky claimed in the report at a meeting of the Faculty meeting of the Kazan Kseninsky female gymnasium. The teacher was sure that it is an easy problem as the school "deals with youth which feeds special love for the book ... looks for in the book of a response to completeness of the spiritual life ... the pupil spends all power of sincere emotions for the book" ([Ilyinsky, 1913](#)).

The reader's activity of grammar-school boys was so high that the enthusiasm for additional reading had negative effect on success in other objects" (In the same place).

The same assessment meets and graduates have gymnasiums. So, one of examined, Ivan Samotoy, 1878 of year of birth, wrote in the autobiography: "In the third class I so was fond of reading that I was even wanted to be dismissed from school". And further: "I read on vacation everything that could get houses owing to what spoiled sight" ([The Circular, 1892](#)).

Curriculum vitae of other graduate A. Ostenberg, 1880 of year of birth, also demonstrates his erudition. Each paragraph of the story about itself contained the quote from the Russian and foreign classics reproduced on memory.

The biography of the school student M. Pozhidayev, the miller's son, contains the next lines: "The teacher gave a taste me for reading, this only means for the rural boy from surrounding darkness to escape to light". And further: "Reading was for me at night the only joy as was once in the afternoon or this luxury was not allowed us" ([The Circular, 1892](#)).

The teaching staff of the Kursk men's gymnasium sought to control a circle of reading the pupils, to order lists of references, to distribute them according to age and educational qualification, following an official position of the state.

The minutes of the Faculty meeting of the Kursk men's gymnasium sometimes devoted only to reading are of great value for consideration of a subject of this article.

So, the meeting of the Faculty meeting of October 13, 1893 is completely devoted to "a question of the expedient organization of student's libraries and the correct statement of house reading pupils". The director indicates the need "to expand tasks of library, having assigned to it a duty to direct reading pupils as school students read too much and irregularly. It negatively affects education and development of pupils according to teachers of a gymnasium ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

The direct instruction on an exception of the studying 1–2 classes (age of 9–12 years) from among using student's library is available in the minutes of September 27, 1891 as:

- first, the library has no books satisfying needs of children;
- secondly, libraries are not prepared for independent reading,
- thirdly, reading "not on age" does this reading "unproductive and ... harmful, installing in reading self-conceit, arrogance" ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

The decision on drawing up the list of books by "exemplary writers" on classes is approved by a faculty meeting of October 13, 1893. This list will become a basis of the created cool catalogs. Three lists of books are created: 1) books at the free choice of pupils, 2) books in which separate articles are recommended for reading; 3) reference books. A recommendatory, but not binding character of these lists especially made a reservation. "Any coercion will be dangerous as it will be felt at once by pupils and will send them to private libraries". Private libraries are not controlled therefore it cannot be allowed ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

Thus, anthropocentricity of methodical system of teachers of the Kursk men's gymnasium of a boundary of the XIX–XX centuries is available.

Need of inclusion in the specified catalogs of serious books is defined. For example, teachers recommended to pupils historical and critical sketches of Strakhov, capital work of Belyaev "Peasants in Russia" and others ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

In general, reasonings on "serious" and "frivolous" reading are very relevant for the Kursk men's gymnasium from the point of view of methodical, educational and from a position guarding, political at the turn of the century (especially in documents from 1905 to 1916 that logically is explained by the known historical events).

Conservative remarks of teachers of the language and literature teachers supporting reading classical samples instead of novels meet ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

The history record of the Faculty meeting of November 17, 1893 is also completely devoted to reading school students. It most fully characterizes a methodical position of a gymnasium on the specified question. "The director specified that reading the last sort, kind of it was desirable, nevertheless cannot be made officially obligatory" ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

The reservation on "not compulsory" character of the measures undertaken for the direction of reader's interests to the desirable course several times became. However reading "insistently necessary" articles was approved by the teacher in a class as methodical reception. A task of the language and literature teacher it to draw the attention of wards to books, "more useful" for pupils. A certain compulsory character can be seen only in it ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

Need to divide reading on "private" and "obligatory under the leadership of the teacher" arose at methodologists of the Kursk men's gymnasium. They tried to define measures for regulation of this process, paying attention to the casual choice of the books demanded from libraries. Pupils ask this or that book according to instructions of relatives, acquaintances. Often, according to teachers-language and literature teachers, required literature does not correspond to either extent of development of pupils, or requirements of their age. Pupils take "serious" literature a little. Teachers connect it with restriction of their opportunity to influence the choice of pupils (the Circular, 1893). That is why the application for textbooks and additional literature (art, informative and periodic) becomes so important action that demands several meetings of faculty meetings.

Much attention by drawing up applications is paid to quality of books (font clearness, a condition of paper, lack of mistakes and typos) and convenience of pupils (numbering and execution of sections, numbers of tasks has to remain and also the obligatory instruction on the made changes in the republished books).

The main issue of one of meetings of the Faculty meeting of the Kursk men's gymnasium is improbable for today's education system. Decides whether all students can use library or this privilege will remain only for excellent students. Serious decision. The right of use of library and an opportunity to read at will are left only for in the time school students. Arguments were adduced the following. First, reading distracts from study. Secondly, excessively developed imagination of certain pupils suffers from reading novels. Thirdly, families of problem pupils do not support teachers in respect of control. Therefore, reading will be uncontrolled. Pupils will not be diligent in the doctrine.

However an opportunity to return the right of use of library is present at the protocol provided that "the teacher of literature in coordination with the cool mentor can petition for permission" if increase in level of the general development of the student is observed ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

Teachers-language and literature teachers were sure that the pupils who were not differing in educational abilities were not absolutely bad. Besides, they hoped that reading will develop in them and "some inquisitiveness" ([The Circular, 1893](#)). The management of a gymnasium reminded employees what the Ministry of national education demanded not to allow from teachers of literature of criticism and unnecessary literary and historical details at a lesson, "but did not wish to limit all knowledge of pupils to a close framework of the textbook at all" ([The Circular, 1893](#)).

Thus, the thoughtful, competent, methodically verified position is presented before us once again. She observes respect for the pupil and the teacher. Such bases allowed to maintain reader's activity of grammar-school boys, to achieve good results in development of the program of humanitarian objects. Even state regulation of the above-stated processes had not negative effect on formation of communicative competence of students and allowed to release competent, erudite, esthetically and spiritually developed young men with an active civic stand.

## **5. Conclusions**

The Russian bibliologist N.A. Rubakin claimed: "... nothing so characterizes extent of social development, degree of public culture as level of the reading public at this historical moment" ([Rubakin, 1975](#)).

Level of the reading public is defined by its valuable reference points. The turn of the 19-20th centuries is characterized by leveling of ideals, habitual for educated public, and also need clear and close to the new reader (from the people) ideals. Well-known thesis "Orthodoxy. Autocracy. The nationality" demands new meanings, and even other concepts. Search of new ideals is followed by the addressing the printed word, and more (if to speak about the formed or studying public) – to a word art. Art text assumes more wide range of values, meanings, treatments. The figurativeness of the art text allows to see, realize also what was represented, endured by the reader at the level of subconsciousness, to determine own opinion by the presented problem. In such context concern of government, teaching, parental, student's circles the about maintenance of the published literature becomes clear.

Summing up the result, we mark out once again the key principles of effective training in reading the school student at the turn of the century:

- nature conformity,
- activity approach,
- presentation,
- communication of training with life,
- anthropocentricity.

Any of these provisions is not new to today's methodologists, however their practical application at the end of XIX – the beginning of the XX centuries was based on the most powerful ideological and cultural basis. The active civic stand, the highest level of cultural and esthetic development of society predetermines formation of high moral ideals which singers are classics of the world literature.

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