Literary Development of Schoolchildren as an Important Issue of Modern Educational Curriculum

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Abstract

The paper considers the questions associated with the opportunities of teaching literature at school using variable models of methodological system of schoolchildren's literary development. Literature teaching packages for grades 5 to 11 currently used in Russian schools – the ones edited by Belenkiy (2006), Korovina (2009), Kutuzov (2007, 2010) and Marantsman (2005) – have been analyzed. For the analysis, 13 author criteria were singled out that allow characterizing the variability extent of the teaching models employed for ensuring successful literary development of schoolchildren within the educational curriculum of contemporary school. The results of the research presented give convincing evidence about the necessity of upgrading the current teaching packages in literature for grades 5 to 11 in relation to their variability, which will allow enhancing the quality of school social and humanitarian education.

Keywords: literary development of schoolchildren, variable model, conceptual model, teaching package, educational curriculum, secondary education

Introduction

By the beginning of the 21st century, the Russian methodological science had amassed an experience of studying the problem of schoolchildren's literary development for various stages of its being stated and solved. The statement of the problem of schoolchildren's literary development dates back to the point of emergence of literature teaching methodology as a science in the works of outstanding scientists and methodologists of the 19th century (Ostrogorskiy, 1885; Stoyunin, 1862). In the late 19th – early 20th centuries, an important contribution to its working out and solving was made by I. F. Annenskiy (1890), A. D. Alferov (1911), Z. P. Baltalon (1910), V. V. Danilov (1917), A.M. Lebedev (1923), I. P. Plotnikov (1921), V. M. Fisher (1914), and other teachers of the Russian language and literature. Literary development of schoolchildren as a scientific problem was finally established in both theory and

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practice of teaching and studying literature at school in the 1920-1950s owing to the methodological explorations of Kudryashev (1948), Sokolov (1928) and their followers. Broad scientific and research activity of Belenkiy (1973), Kudryashev (1970), Marantsman (1974), Moldavskaya (1968), Rez (1979), Rotkovich (1974) and other scientists and methodologists furthered working out of theoretical bases of the problem of schoolchildren's literary development in literature teaching methods of the 1960-1970s. The problem of literary development of schoolchildren becomes the priority one in literature teaching methods of the 1980-2000s (Buslaev, 1992; Rybnikova, 1985). The efforts of scientists and methodologists representing the schools of thought created on the bases of chairs in literature teaching methods of Herzen Russian State Pedagogical University of Russia (led by Marantsman), Moscow State Pedagogical University (led by Bogdanova), and the laboratory of literary education of the Institute of General Secondary Education at the Russian Academy of Education (led by Belenkiy) are aimed at making the research of the problem of the 21st century school-aged readers’ development more extensive and profound.

Evidently, the historical and methodological literature has not reflected the experience of stating and solving the problem of schoolchildren's literary development in the methodological science comprehensively. The schoolchildren literary development problem remains quite a bulky one according to the quantity of its aspects under study. Their expansion is due to the scientists and methodologists and teachers of the Russian language and literature using the scientific systemic and variable approaches to solving the problem. The emergence of diverse variable concepts, curricula, literature teaching technologies has rendered the idea about the problem of schoolchildren's literary development (which has turned patchwork enough as it is) yet more complicated; it is characterized by chaotic arrangement of theoretical and practical experience fragments in stating and solving the problem as well as its association with functional literacy (Chigisheva, 2018). Educational theorists all around the world also focus on the necessity of methodical and pedagogical training of modern school teachers (Anisimova and Sharafeeva, 2018; Aydin et al., 2017; Umami, 2018; Soboleva et al., 2018) as well as writing and reading capabilities of students (Lacerda & Farbierz, 2016; Fields, 2016).

The "fragments" of author (personal) "local" experience coming to the foreground, as a rule, obscure the panorama of historical experience in stating and solving this important problem in teaching methodology of the early 21st century.
Conceptual, Theoretical and Methodological Framework of the Study

Certain conceptual and theoretical significance for this study have the notions of "conceptual model" and "variable model". Their essence in relation to the system of literary development of schoolchildren is described by two aspects:

1) the "conceptual model" of the system of schoolchildren's literary development reflects historical experience of solving the schoolchildren literary development problem; the "variable models" of the system of schoolchildren's literary development reflect the (personal) "local" experience of the research authors;

2) the "conceptual model" of the system of schoolchildren's literary development can be constructed in literature teaching methodology of the 2000s after completing the study of the processes characterizing the formation of the schoolchildren literary development system (the 1960-1970s), its evolution (the 1980-1990s) and improvement (the 2000s); while the teachers and methodologists construct the "variable models" of the schoolchildren literary development system before creating the system of work on implementing these models in literature teaching practice.

The schoolchildren's quality of reading and interpretation ability development level depend on the effectiveness extent of the variable model of the methodological system of schoolchildren's literary development that is rooted in the curriculum and literature teaching package (TP). The distinction in the effectiveness extent of each of the variable models of methodological system of schoolchildren's literary development consists in availability of completely or partially represented variable models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for the schoolchildren literary development process to go on successfully.

The purpose of the research was to analyze the curricula and TP in literature for grades 5 through 11 approved by the RF Ministry of education (ones ed. by Belenkiy, 2006; Korovina, 2009; Kutuzov, 2007, 2010; and Marantsman, 2005) and currently used in the school educational process, with a focus on their variability, and to identify the most appropriate TP for teaching contemporary schoolchildren.

The authors proceed from the problem existing in modern general education that in the contemporary curricula and TP the variable models of schoolchildren literary development methodological system are included, and their effectiveness extent (ability to influence, capacity)
varies. However, this means that school teachers wishing to use more resources providing quicker and more qualitative literary development of schoolchildren need at least some evaluation mechanism to make a right choice at the beginning of the school year when deciding for one or another complex TP in literature for the whole year.

The authors of the paper have developed their own criteria for assessing the effectiveness extent of each of the variable models of schoolchildren literary development methodological system included in the contemporary curricula and TP in literature was the availability of the following completely or partially represented variable models for shaping the structural constituents of the conditions for a successful process of schoolchildren's literary development:

- variable model of the methodological system of connection between class-based and out-of-school lessons in literature;
- variable model of the methodological system of using the forms of class-based and out-of-school work in literature;
- variable model of the methodological system for shaping the reader's abilities in schoolchildren;
- variable model of the methodological system of methods and techniques of schoolchildren's literary development;
- variable model of consistency of literary development stages for schoolchildren;
- variable model of the methodological system of school analysis of literary works;
- variable model of the methodological system for bringing into life the intersubject communications at literature classes;
- variable model of the methodological system of creative works, assignments and exercises in literature;
- variable model of the methodological system of criteria of schoolchildren's literary development;
- variable model of the methodological system of methods for studying the schoolchildren's literary development;
- variable model of the methodological system of bringing into life of the connection of literature with other arts;
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- variable model of the methodological system for bringing into life the integration communications at literature classes;
- variable model of the methodological system for bringing into life the intrasubject communications at literature classes (Benkovskaya & Maydangalieva, 2017).

Evaluation on the basis of each criterion was followed by the comparison of the results and generalization of the obtained data. Thus, this research has both theoretical and practical value for literature methodology development and may be applied both in Russian and Kazakhstan schools.

Results and Discussion

In literature curricula and TP (ed. By Belenkiy, 2006; Korovina, 2009; Kutuzov, 2007, 2010; Marantsman, 2005) analyzed by the authors, the variable model of the methodological system of connection between class-based and out-of-school lessons in literature is provided by the compilers by choosing the works for class-based and out-of-school reading in line with the structural principles of the curricula and the age-related reader's interests of schoolchildren.

The curricula either have no recommendations in any form for holding a class-based and out-of-school lesson in literature (the curriculum ed. by Belenkiy, 2006) or they contain ones but the recommendations are inconsistent in nature (the curricula ed. by Korovina, 2009; Kutuzov, 2007, 2010; Marantsman, 2005). Notably, in the curriculum edited by Kutuzov (2007, 2010) the system provides for the final readers' conference as a form of out-of-school work in literature from grades 5 through 11. On the whole, the variable model of the methodological system of using the forms of class-based and out-of-school work in literature is not represented in the curricula analyzed.

The variable model of the methodological system for shaping the reader's abilities in schoolchildren is unfolded consistently from grade to grade by the curriculum and TP in literature edited by Marantsman (2005). Meanwhile, in other literature curricula and TP, it is only a list of reader's abilities that can be found in the "Requirements for the graduates' training level" section (ed. by Korovina, 2009), the "Requirements for the training level of students of the 9th grade" and in the "Requirements for the training level of secondary school graduates" section (ed. by Belenkiy, 2006). The main reader's abilities of schoolchildren are merely listed by the compilers of the curriculum for grades 5-11 edited by Kutuzov (2007, 2010) in the explanatory note.
It should be pointed out that the variable model of the methodological system for shaping the reader's abilities in schoolchildren provided in the literature curriculum and TP edited by Marantsman (2005) seems to be the most appropriate one because it details a greater correlation with the structural constituents of the process of schoolchildren's literary development and conditions for it to be successful.

It is in the curriculum edited by Marantsman (2005) of all those under analysis that the variable model of the methodological system of methods and techniques of schoolchildren's literary development finds clear expression. According to the way methods and techniques for shaping the structural constituents of the process of schoolchildren's literary development and conditions for it to take place are described, other curricula lose to it because they are limited to nominative sentences in this or that section that characterize the content of methods and techniques for shaping the structural constituents of the process of schoolchildren's literary development and conditions for it to be successful.

Moreover, the curriculum edited by Kutuzov (2007, 2010) uses for teaching literature the same methods as for teaching natural sciences. This points to the fact that directly transferring methods not only from the adjacent sciences (didactics, literature studies) but from other subject teaching methods too is fraught with negative consequences for literary development and upbringing of school-aged readers.

The variable model of consistency of literary development stages for schoolchildren is considered by the authors from the standpoint of its being ensured both from the first through the final year and from grade 5 through 11.

On the one hand, none of the curricula and TP in literature edited by Korovina (2009); Kutuzov (2007, 2010) and Marantsman (2005) is a guarantee of consistency for schoolchildren's literary development at the primary (grades 1-4) and the main stages (grades 5-11) being fulfilled, because they are not a curriculum ensuring a seamless course of literary education (grades 1-11). This idea is indirectly confirmed by analysis results of the contemporary concepts of literary education for the primary stage and the secondary school grades given in I. V. Sosnovskaya's thesis research "Literary development of learners during analysis of a literary work" (2005): "It is difficult to identify if a secondary stage literary education concept is a continuation of a certain primary school concept. Each of them is independent, although the principal ideas of the curricula resonate to some extent" (Sosnovskaya, 2005, p. 49).
With regard to this, it should be pointed out that the curricula edited by Marantsman (2005) that are designed for a certain stage of education feature the united conceptual framework in shaping the key structural components of the schoolchildren literary development system. It is this "unity" that ensures a "smoother, more organic transition to mastering the grade 5 curriculum edited by Marantsman" (Benkovskaya, 2007, P. 329), or, more broadly speaking, the consistency of the primary and basic stage of schoolchildren's literary development.

The principle of consistency being provided for and observed "on the outside", for example, in learning the theory of literature, in performing the literary creative assignments, is far from guaranteeing the consistency of schoolchildren literary development stages. It is no mere chance that a theoretical notion may become a barrier preventing one from perceiving the literary text directly (especially if its introduction is mistimed – e.g. the notion of kind and genre at grades 5-6 in the curriculum edited by Kutuzov (2007), too, and quite an impressive part of questions and assignments may be aimed at reproducing literature theory knowledge items (Benkovskaya, 2007, p. 367).

The situation when the "seeming" consistency of schoolchildren's literary development is ensured remains for the primary school as well, when the authors of curricula in literary reading tend to combine the objectives of shaping the skill of reading and of schoolchildren's literary development. However, in this case it can hardly be spoken about a system existing or the principles of gradual approach and more profound literary development from grade to grade being observed.

In general, of all the literature curricula and TP designed for a certain stage of education (from grade 5 through 11) analyzed by the authors, it is in the curriculum edited by Marantsman (2005) that the consistency of shaping the prevailing quantity of structural constituents of the process of schoolchildren's literary development and conditions for it to be successful in their proportion is observed.

**Variable models of the methodological system of school analysis of literary works**

that are implemented via literature curricula and TP, in particular, ones edited by Belenkiy (2006), Kutuzov (2007, 2010) and Marantsman (2005) can be analyzed based on the criteria that are clearly outlined in Sosnovskaya's thesis research "Literary development of learners during analysis of a literary work" (2005). 17 aspects according to the total of which it has become possible to evaluate how much the compilers of each of the curricula pay attention to the imagery
and expressive world of the literary work were the basis for singling out these models, in particular:

1) sympathy with what one has read;
2) topic, idea, and problems;
3) plot and composition;
4) motive;
5) artistic image;
6) a character’s image;
7) deed;
8) artistic feature;
9) detail;
10) portrait, landscape;
11) implied sense;
12) circumlocution;
13) symbolism, symbol;
14) metaphorization;
15) sound image, color image;
16) phenomena of psychologism;
17) the author of the literary work.


The analysis of the curriculum edited by Korovina conducted by the authors according to the same structure has shown that the variable model of the literary work school analysis system implemented in it comprises 10 components – introduced from grade 5, and 3 more – later than grade 5 (topic, idea, problem; circumlocution; phenomena of psychologism).

However, with regard to this, it is not every literary work analysis system represented as a variable model that can be a structural constituent of conditions for a successful process of
schoolchildren's literary development. Isachenkova's conclusion (2007) on ensuring the consistent approach to pursuing one of the literary work analysis ways is a particular confirmation of the advantage of the literature curriculum edited by Marantsman and described by Sosnovskaya (2005): "It is in the curriculum in literature compiled by a team of authors led by Marantsman that the comparative analysis system is represented in the most consistent way" (Isachenkova, 2007, p. 23).

In all curricula and TP in literature edited by Belenkiy (2006), Korovina (2009); Kutuzov (2007, 2010) and Marantsman (2005), variable models of the methodological system for bringing into life the intersubject communications at literature classes are represented at the level of groups of two humanities cycle subjects (literature and the Russian language). Establishing these communications in order to shape such structural constituent of the schoolchildren literary development process as the system for developing the speech in schoolchildren is evident.

Alongside with that, the variable model of the methodological system for bringing into life the intersubject communications at literature classes included into the literature curriculum and TP edited by Marantsman (2005) finds its implementation at the level of esthetic cycle subjects too (literature, arts, and music) while the communications with history and the Russian language are especially clearly pronounced in textbook edited by Korovina (2009).

In many literature curricula and TP, the variable model of the methodological system of creative works, assignments and exercises in literature is compromised.

The results of analyzing the curricula in literature (ed. by Belenkiy, 2006; Korovina, 2009; Kutuzov, 2007, 2010; and Marantsman, 2005) have allowed making the following conclusions: the objectives for which a certain assignment is applied are not traced clearly enough within the framework of the most curricula; the majority of the curricula make poor use of the capacity of creative assignments for organizing the team work; the percentage ratio of oral and written assignments is unbalanced.

Although a number of textbooks feature quite diverse and interesting comparative assignments, nevertheless, they frequently point at the accompanying nature of the comparison technique. This gives evidence about the comparative analysis having failed to win its deserved place within the system of literary analysis of artistic works.
An unhappy yet reassuring conclusion is contained in Kochetova's thesis research (2009) "Figurative generalizations as the basis of methodology for studying Yu. Trifonov's works at grades 10 and 11". The analysis of current TP in literature (Korovina (2009), Belenkiy (2006), Kutuzov (2007)) has shown that assignments for comparing and matching are represented in all TP but they are of a split up and fragmentary nature. The assignments for comparing and matching are first given as a system in the TP edited by Marantsman. A clearly organized structure of this system has its regularities and allows teaching the techniques of comparison and matching.

When evaluating the way literature curricula and TP solve the problem of correlation of the scientific manner and accessible presentation, the choice of ways for mastering the historical and theoretical notions of literature, Benkovskaya (2007) came to the conclusion that this assessment criteria was not met by the curricula in literature edited by Kutuzov (2007) because their literary creative assignments were first and foremost aimed at consolidating the theory of literature notions (Benkovskaya, 2007).

Within the aspect of shaping another structural constituent of the schoolchildren literary development process – the system of their emotional development – the curriculum edited by Kutuzov (2007, 2010) loses to the one edited by Marantsman (2005) too. Questions and assignments targeting the emotional and sensitive spheres of students, their imagination that seem so important for them to develop as readers are represented in the curriculum and textbooks edited by Kutuzov (2007) for secondary school grades only. Meanwhile, in the TP edited by Marantsman (2005), the questions addressing emotions, reproducing and creative imagination when studying literary works accompany the learners in all years of schooling, grades 9-11 included.

Thus, the results of studies give evidence about the curriculum and TP in literature edited by Marantsman (2005) demonstrating the systemic approach to the development of creative assignments to the full extent. The approach consists in the focus on shaping as many structural constituents of the process of schoolchildren's literary development as possible. As Yadrovskaya (2009) summed up the analysis of the literature TP edited by Marantsman (2005), "the nature of assignments allows boosting the work of all perception spheres – emotions, imagination, and thinking…" (Yadrovskaya, 2009, p. 68).
The system of creative works in literature has only been developed by the compilers of the curricula edited by Kutuzov (2007) and by Marantsman (2005) from grades 5 through 11 of all the literature curricula and TP analyzed by the authors. This is also confirmed by Yadrovskaya's paper "The problem of creative works in school literature education" (2009): "Meanwhile, the greater attention was paid to creative works in the curriculum ed. by Kutuzov and the one ed. by Marantsman; they had the relevant special sections singled out – "Creative workshop", "Creative practice session" (the curriculum ed. by Kutuzov) and "Literary creativity" (the curriculum ed. by Marantsman). Other curricula contained the creative works but the latter were not a structure-forming component" (Yadrovskaya, 2009, p. 67). For instance, in the curriculum edited by Korovina (2009), it is only a list of oral and written assignments in literature for grades 5-9 and 10-11 that is suggested. Yet, it is the curriculum and TP in literature edited by Marantsman (2005) that meet the creative works system assessment criteria most.

The variable model of the methodological system of criteria of schoolchildren's literary development is only represented in the curriculum and TP in literature edited by Marantsman (2005).

As a consequence, the other curricula and TP in literature (ed. by Belenkiy, 2006; Korovina, 2009; Kutuzov, 2007, 2010) lack the variable model of the methodological system of methods for studying the schoolchildren's literary development, too. The only difference is the fact that in the literature curricula edited by Belenkiy (2006) and Kutuzov (2007, 2010) the compilers do not specify the quantity of hours for the teacher to conduct this or that activity. As for the curriculum edited by Korovina (2009), in its course scheduling, they specify both the hours for identifying the learners' literary development level (however, it is not always at the beginning and at the end of the academic year) and the survey method – testing – but no assignments for it are given.

The variable model of the methodological system of methods for studying the schoolchildren's literary development is represented in the literature curriculum edited by Marantsman (2005) as a program for studying the learners' literary development level that is provided in each literature course section of grades 5-11.

Variable models of the methodological system of bringing into life the connection of literature with other arts are only featured by the literature curricula edited by Belenkiy (2006) and Marantsman (2005).
According to the first two kinds of integration communications singled out in 2000 by Domanskiy as applied to the courses of literature, the curricula edited by Belenkiy (2006), Korovina (2009), Kutuzov (2007, 2010), Marantsman (2005) are not designed for implementing the variable model of the methodological system for bringing into life the integration communications at literature classes. In fact, these curricula are no integrative courses and they do not imply establishing the relationships with other humanitarian subjects (the Russian language, history, world culture of art, and philosophy) by means of ideas, knowledge nodes while at the same time maintaining the autonomy of each subject.

Thus, the curriculum edited by Marantsman (2005) carries out the third type of integration communications at literature classes, as "the literary topics are presented as accompanied by various phenomena of artistic life that allow setting the correlation of arts: literature, painting, architecture, sculpture, music, theatre, and cinema; in their synthesis, they give the learners an idea about different ways of depicting the man and the world in art and expand their knowledge of the artistic schools and trends" (Domanskiy, 2000, p. 176).

The authors also judge about the variable model of the methodological system for bringing into life the intrasubject communications at literature classes being represented in the literature curricula and TP (ed. by Belenkiy, 2006; Korovina, 2009; Kutuzov, 2007, 2010; and Marantsman, 2005) and its elaboration and implementation extent by the intrasubject communications existing in it. They reflect various extent of attention of its authors to it as well as various implementation forms of the communications itself both in the "vertical" and "horizontal" dimensions of the course. As the authors' analysis has shown, it is far not all curricula and textbooks that use these communications consistently and in many aspects.

The results of the comparative analysis of the contemporary curricula and TP in literature (ed. by Belenkiy, 2006; Korovina, 2009; Kutuzov, 2007, 2010; and Marantsman, 2005) have allowed identifying the effectiveness extent for the variable model of the methodological system of schoolchildren's literary development included in each of them (see Table 1).
Table 1.

Literature curriculum and teaching package as an indicator of the effectiveness extent of the variable model of the methodological system of schoolchildren's literary development

| Variative models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for a successful process of schoolchildren's literary development | Curriculum edited by |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variable model of the system of connection between class-based and out-of-school lessons in literature | + | + | + | + |
| Variable model of the system of using the forms of class-based and out-of-school work in literature | - | - | - | - |
| Variable model of the system for shaping the reader's abilities in schoolchildren | ± | ± | ± | + |
| Variable model of the system of methods and techniques of literary development of schoolchildren | ± | ± | ± | + |
| Variable model of consistency of literary development stages for schoolchildren | + | ± | ± | + |
| Variable model of the system of school analysis of literary works | + | ± | - | + |
| Variable model of the system of bringing into life the intersubject communications at literature classes | ± | ± | ± | + |
| Variable model of the system of creative works, assignments and exercises in literature | ± | ± | ± | + |
| Variable model of the system of criteria of schoolchildren's literary development | - | - | - | + |
| Variable model of the system of methods for studying the schoolchildren's literary development | - | - | - | + |
| Variable model of the system of bringing into life the connection of literature with other arts | + | - | - | + |
| Variable model of the system of bringing into life the integration communications at literature classes | - | - | - | ± |
| Variable model of the system of bringing into life the intrasubject communications at literature classes | ± | ± | ± | ± |

| "+" | 4 | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| "±" | 5 | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| TOTAL ("+" and "±") | 9 | 8 | 8 | 12 |

"." | 4 | 5 | 5 | 1 |

Note: "+" - present, "±" - partially present, "." - not available. Source: authors.

The data given in Table 1 give evidence about the fact that the distinction in the effectiveness extent of each of the analyzed curricula consists in the quantity of variable models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for a successful process of schoolchildren's literary development that are completely or partially represented in the curricula.
Conclusion

It is evident that the total quantity of completely and partially represented variable models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for a successful process of schoolchildren's literary development in the literature curriculum edited by A. G. Kutuzov (2007, 2010) and in the one edited by V. Ya. Korovina (2009) is the same. In this case, the similarity has a "quantitative" distinction: the curriculum edited by A. G. Kutuzov (2007, 2010) has a slight advantage in the quantity of the completely represented variable models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for the successful process of schoolchildren's literary development. For this case, it is of no little interest to note also that the curriculum edited by A. G. Kutuzov (2007, 2010) has another advantage over the curriculum edited by Korovina (2009) when comparing the variable models of the system of creative works, assignments and exercises in literature that got the same score ("±" – partially present). The advantage consists in the fact that in the curriculum edited by Kutuzov (2007, 2010) the system of creative works in literature developed by the compilers with variable approach taken into account is the "structure-forming" component, unlike in the curriculum edited by Korovina (2009).

This fact points at the necessity to consider another criterion of assessing the effectiveness extent of each of the variable models of the methodological system of schoolchildren's literary development included in the contemporary curricula and TP in literature – the quality of the partially represented in them variable models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for the successful process of schoolchildren's literary development. Taking into account this criterion is appropriate in the case when the quantity of the completely or partially represented variable models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for a successful process of schoolchildren's literary development coincides in the two literature curricula.

As it can be observed, the curriculum and TP in literature edited by Marantsman (2005) has the quantitative advantage in its containing the completely represented variable models for shaping the structural constituents of conditions for a successful process of schoolchildren's literary development. Thus, the literature curriculum and TP edited by Marantsman (2005) feature a more reliable indicator of the effectiveness extent of the variable model of the methodological system of schoolchildren's literary development. They can be recommended for
use in order to ensure a full-fledged development of students within the system of the contemporary secondary education.

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