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Published in the USA

European Journal of Contemporary Education

E-ISSN 2305-6746

2023. 12(2): 352-364

DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2023.2.352

<https://ejce.cherkasgu.press>

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**European Journal of
Contemporary Education**



ELECTRONIC JOURNAL

Methods and Techniques for the Formation of Reading Literacy among Students in the Process of Studying Historical Disciplines

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Abstract

The relevance of this research is connected with the need to improve the quality of Russian education, the growth of its competitiveness in the conditions of the XXI century, which is impossible without the development of functional literacy, of which reader literacy is an integral part. When analyzing the methodological methods of teaching students of pedagogical universities, attention is focused on the training of future teachers who are able to further develop reading literacy among secondary school students. The development of reading literacy is a complex and lengthy process implemented during the study of various disciplines, including historical ones. The formation of reading literacy involves the use of various types of text: continuous, discontinuous, mixed, composite, as well as various tasks aimed at developing such skills as finding and extracting information from the text, the ability to integrate and interpret the text, the ability to comprehend and evaluate the text and use the knowledge obtained from the texts for practical purposes. The development of reader literacy is carried out using such techniques and methods as the analysis of historical sources, the use of infographics, working with cases, and more. The study was practically tested in the course of the author's work with control and experimental groups of students. In the context of modern teaching methods, reader's literacy acquires a universal or supra-objective character. At the same time, this issue is a new, little-studied and promising technology not only within the framework of secondary, but also higher education.

Keywords: reading literacy, reading skills, text, sources of information, cases.

1. Introduction

At the turn of the XX-XXI centuries, UNESCO developed a series of documents focused on qualitative changes in approaches to the development of education. They note that the purpose of education is to develop and educate people who are able to think critically, be able to analyze current problems, look for ways to solve problems, and be able to take responsibility. This requires

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the development of national education systems and an objective assessment of learning outcomes ([Vsemirnaya deklaratsiya...](#)). In the context of evaluating learning outcomes, the results of practical experience are contained in international comparative studies of the quality of education (PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS, etc.) ([Aleksashkina i dr., 2020](#)). These studies are focused on the general education system, but they can also be taken into account when analyzing the problems of higher education, since the unpreparedness of high school graduates affects the inefficiency of their studies at the university. The data of the above-mentioned studies were used to set tasks for the development of the competitiveness of domestic education. In order to steadily increase the quality of education, the Decree of the President of Russia Vladimir Putin on July 21, 2020 defined the key national goals and objectives for the development of the domestic education system. The Government has been instructed to ensure the global competitiveness of Russian education, the entry of the Russian Federation into the top 10 countries in the world in terms of the quality of general education ([Ukaz Prezidenta..., 2020](#)). To do this, it is necessary to use new educational technologies aimed at developing a variety of competencies of students, including reading literacy. At the same time, on the one hand, an increase in the level of basic general and secondary general education should contribute to the influx of competent applicants to universities who will master the higher education program more effectively, and on the other hand, the development of reading literacy among students of pedagogical universities will contribute to the formation of competent specialists, future teachers who will continue to work in general education institutions. It is impossible not to agree with the position that “to teach the skills of the XXI century, you need to have a teacher of the XXI century” ([Saavedra, Opfer, 2012](#)).

In accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard, the main activities of students of higher educational institutions include project and research activities, which are based on the competence of professional reading.

Reader literacy refers to the definition proposed in the PISA international study. “Reading literacy is a person's ability to understand, use, evaluate texts, reflect on them and engage in reading in order to achieve their goals, expand their knowledge and capabilities, and participate in social life” ([PISA, 2018](#)). Conventionally, reading skills are divided into several groups:

1. The ability to find and extract information from the text;
2. Ability to integrate and interpret text;
3. The ability to comprehend and evaluate the text ([Tsukerman, 2010](#)).
4. The ability to use the knowledge gained from the text for practical purposes ([Strelova, 2021b](#)). Drawing on the experience of PISA allows us to carry out research on the formation of meta-cognitive competencies, which include reading literacy ([Depren, Depren, 2022](#)).

The purpose of this article is a comprehensive description of methods and techniques for the formation of reading literacy among university students as an important component of functional literacy. Of course, achieving this goal is impossible without an empirical basis, which, firstly, was pedagogical diagnostics (in the form of input and output control of students' skills and abilities), and secondly, the inclusion of effective technologies in the teaching methodology of a specific historical discipline, which will be discussed below. In general, this study includes an analysis of the works of modern authors devoted to the reading competence and reading skills of students, the implementation of experimental work on the basis of a specific university and a description of methodological recommendations for the development of reading skills.

2. Literature review

This study includes an analysis of the works of modern foreign and domestic authors devoted to the reading competence and reading skills of students. It seems appropriate to focus on the most fundamental studies.

In 1956, the American educator, President of the International Literacy Association William Gray formulated the general characteristic of literacy as “a set of skills, including reading and writing, applied in a social context” ([Gray, 1969](#)). In fact, he laid the foundations of the theory of literacy, which is still developing dynamically and continues to be relevant in the XXI century.

More than thirty years ago, Tatiana Serova, one of the leading experts in the field of linguistics and methods of teaching foreign languages, focused on the problem of professionally-oriented reading, describing it as “a complex speech activity conditioned by professional needs and representing a form of active indirect verbal communication that allows overcoming spatial and temporal barriers in people's social activities ...” ([Serova, 1989](#)). This definition can in many ways

be considered universal and applicable to social disciplines, including competencies formed in the study of historical disciplines.

B. Oskarsson, J. Halazh, I.A. Zimnaya, A.V. Khutorskoy studied the issues of professionally-oriented reading within the competence approach, calling reading skills “basic skills” or “key competencies” of a person (Mazaeva, 2013). It is noteworthy that the content of concepts gradually began to change. Increasingly, instead of the concept of “reading”, the concept of “literacy” has been used as combining the processes of both writing and reading. At the same time, the concepts of “reading literacy” and “reading literacy” should be separated. The first concept emphasizes the characteristics of the reading process itself, the second – the qualities of the reader developed during reading (Smetannikova, 2017). We can also talk about the synonymy (in general) of two terms – reader competence and reader literacy (Kadyrova, Arzieva, 2019).

German scientists Mario Handel et al. Teacher literacy is defined as a complex of metacognitive knowledge (Händel et al., 2013).

As Professor Andrey Sokolov notes: “over the past fifteen years or so, attention has been paid to reader literacy not only in Russia, but also in foreign didactics... At the same time, in relation to historical disciplines, reader literacy can be called historical literacy or disciplinary literacy” (Sokolov, 2021).

In the context of a decline in reading competence among modern students, domestic authors, following their Western colleagues, began to turn their attention to the formulation of basic concepts and problems related to the development of reading activity. President of the Russian Reading Association, Professor Nina Smetannikova defines reading competence as “the quality of preservation of what has been read, formed on the basis of a person's general culture, providing the opportunity to solve emerging educational, academic, social and professional tasks adequately to situations in broad social interaction and educational and professional activities” (Smetannikova, 2007). Reading skills are characterized not as mechanical reproduction, but as a deeply personal and valuable assessment of the reader. In turn, reading historical texts provides ample opportunities both for the development of intellectual abilities and for the adoption of value norms (including citizenship, a sense of historical responsibility, belonging, etc.).

A well-known specialist in the field of social and cultural anthropology, Professor Elena Orlova characterizes reader competence as “the ability to select and understand written texts containing information presented in different socio-cultural codes; skills of working with written texts” (Orlova, 2009). Tatiana Pletyago characterizes reader competence as “a personality quality manifested in the readiness and ability to actualize and transform personal and professional experience in the process of interpreting, understanding and personal comprehension of the text through the use of information retrieval strategies, operating with cultural codes, an effective combination of discursive-analytical and imaginative-emotional ways of mastering cultural experience, traditional and electronic forms readings. Having a meta-subject character, reader's competence at the stage of general education becomes the basis for the development of general cultural competence of the individual, and in the process of university education, in addition to this, stimulates the development of professional competence of the student” (Pletyago, 2013).

In the conditions of digitalization of modern society and education, a number of other problems arise. Focusing only on some of them, it can be noted that this is an increase in the role of the Internet in comparison with traditional literature in general and electronic texts in particular. American researcher Donald Lew points out that the Internet is a leading technological tool for teaching, including reading literacy (Leu et al., 2014). At the same time, it is necessary to carry out work at the university to prepare students to search for information on the Internet, evaluate it and synthesize it. Taiwanese researcher Su Yen Chen also draws attention to the fact that the widespread introduction of digital technologies has changed the format of interaction in modern society, which certainly affects the educational contacts of teachers and students (Chen, 2018).

To date, the traditional reading of books in paper form has actually been replaced by screen (digital) reading. As Nina Smetannikova notes, “reading an electronic text makes it difficult to perform all those tasks that we traditionally perform after reading a linear text”. This in turn leads to a reduction in the volume of reading (up to 25-30 pages per week) and the volume of text being read (students try to choose a text of 2-3 pages). And there is also the problem of “False understanding – a phenomenon when a reader connects words the way he thinks a writer could connect them, but not at all the way it is actually written in the text ... since a modern student almost does not read the author's text from the screen, he searches for an answer to the question

posed, selects keywords in the text, scans only sentences containing them, and combines them into its text (text scanning, viewing reading)” (Smetannikova, 2019).

In the works of Chinese authors, the idea also appears that reader literacy allows solving a number of difficulties, namely, finding the main idea of the text, understanding unfamiliar terms and words, and drawing conclusions (Kao et al., 2022).

American educators also focus on the development of reader literacy: “teachers now rely less on textbooks and more on primary sources, recognize the advantage of critical thinking over mechanical memorization. They are more concerned with disciplinary literacy, that is, so that students read with understanding, construct texts and realize the interpretive nature of history” (Downy et al., 2016).

A significant contribution to the formulation of practical recommendations for the development of reading literacy among schoolchildren in the study of the subject “History” was made by Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor Olga Strelova. She is the author of a series of articles on the potential of international comparative research tools for assessing the quality of education and on the preparation of teachers for the use of PISA-tools in teaching history. In his research, Olga Strelova introduces the concept of “Tasks on reading literacy”, which means not a mechanical combination of several texts and tasks, but a complex pedagogical construction (Strelova, 2021a). The significance of this pedagogical construction will be discussed below.

In conclusion, it should be noted that foreign and domestic researchers agree on the importance and expediency of the formation of reading literacy as part of the functional literacy of a modern student and focus on definitions, specifics of methods and techniques and the complexity of this technology.

3. Materials and methods

Various methods were used in the study, but the main ones were observation, pedagogical diagnostics, and reflection. As a focus group, students of 2-5 courses of the Faculty of History and Philology of the Blagoveshchensk State Pedagogical University, studying in the field of training 44.03.05 Pedagogical Education, profiles “History” and “Social Studies” were selected, who were familiarized with the purpose, objectives, and progress of the upcoming research, which was carried out from January to May 2023. The study was conducted within the framework of contact types of work in the classroom on the discipline “History of Asian and African countries” (further in the article examples of tasks from the program of this academic discipline will be given); 130 students took part in the work. In each course, the students were divided into two groups. In the control groups, classes were conducted according to traditional materials, forms and methods of work. The experimental groups used project-based tasks, interactive teaching methods and, in particular, tasks aimed at developing reading literacy skills.

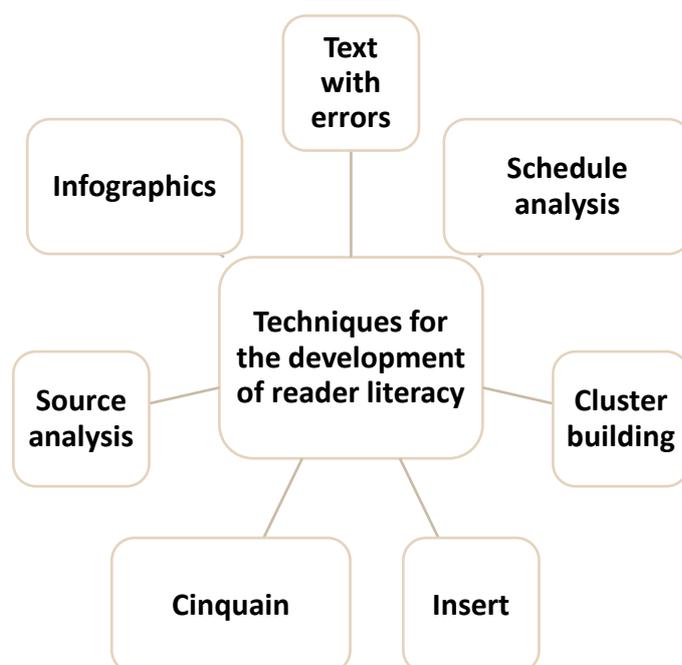


Fig. 1. Basic techniques for the development of reader literacy

In January 2023, an initial knowledge check was carried out in the form of an input control, and in May – a final check (output control). As a result, the initial hypothesis was confirmed: for the studied skill groups, higher indicators were observed in the experimental groups than in the control groups. Depending on the skill groups and academic groups of students, the difference in indicators ranged from 2-3 to 18-40 points on a one-point scale.

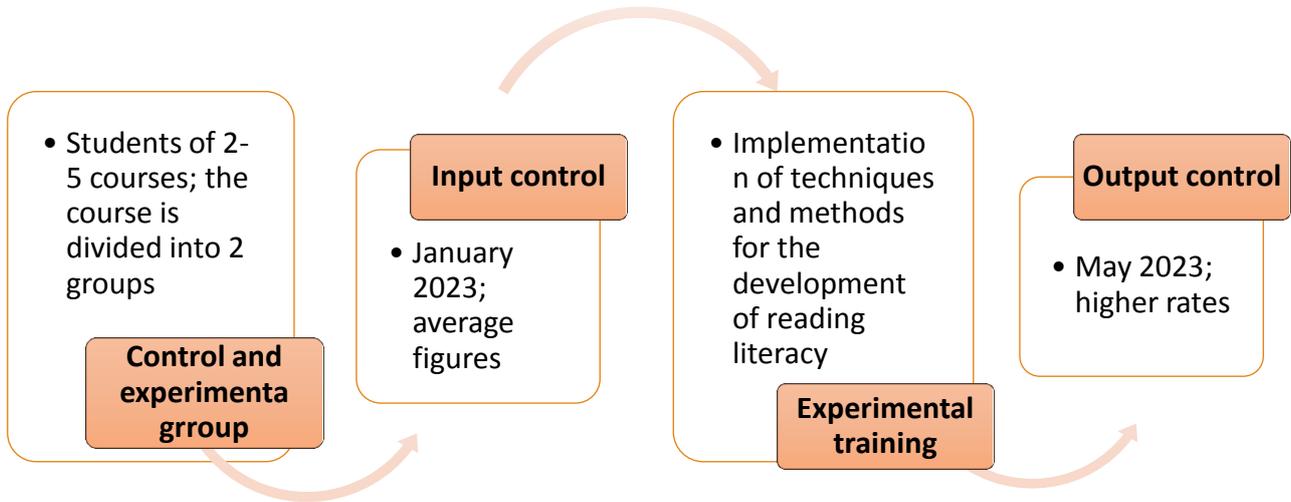


Fig. 2. Study methodology plan

The procedure for conducting the input control involved performing 7 tasks: text with errors, table analysis, map assignment, graph analysis, cluster compilation, work with an insert, and cinquain compilation. The time allotted for this event was 90 minutes (2 academic hours). Students in two groups (control and experimental) were offered the same tasks of the same type and level, which they had to complete during the specified time. The division into groups was conditional, on a formal basis (2, 3, 4, 5 courses). At the time specified by the schedule, the tasks were performed by a specific group, without contacts with other groups. At the end of the control time, students handed over printed forms with completed tasks. After checking the tasks of all groups, the results were brought to the students. The input control materials were subsequently used to analyze the results that formed the basis of this study.

During the study (during the semester), classes were conducted in control groups using traditional methods, and in experimental groups using techniques for the development of reading literacy (Figure 1). At the end of the semester, the exit control was carried out. The same parameters (time, number of tasks, groups) were used for the output control procedure. At the same time, the content of the tasks was subjected to some correlation taking into account the studied academic discipline and the results of the entrance control.

4. Results

The results of the study presented in this paper can be divided into two groups. The first group includes the analysis of changes in the quality of students' knowledge as a result of the application of methods and techniques for the development of reading literacy. The second group includes the analysis of the methods and techniques themselves, which were used in the course of experimental educational work and can be considered in many ways universal in the methodology of teaching social disciplines at the university.

As already mentioned above, an entrance check was carried out at the beginning of 2023, in which all 130 students took part. They had to demonstrate the “primary” knowledge and skills of working with certain tasks. Some of the tasks presented were well known to students, for example, working with text with errors, analyzing tables, performing tasks on historical maps, and it is quite natural that they demonstrated fairly good indicators. Some tasks were quite new and naturally caused more difficulties. Then, during the semester, the students were divided into control and experimental groups. In the control group, classes were conducted mainly using traditional technologies, and in the experimental group, the emphasis was on the development of reading literacy, including using non-traditional techniques and tasks. At the end of the semester, an exit

control was carried out, which confirmed the initial hypothesis. Indeed, the reading literacy skills of students in academic groups began to vary from 2-3 to 40 and 18-20 points. The diagram below also serves as a confirmation.

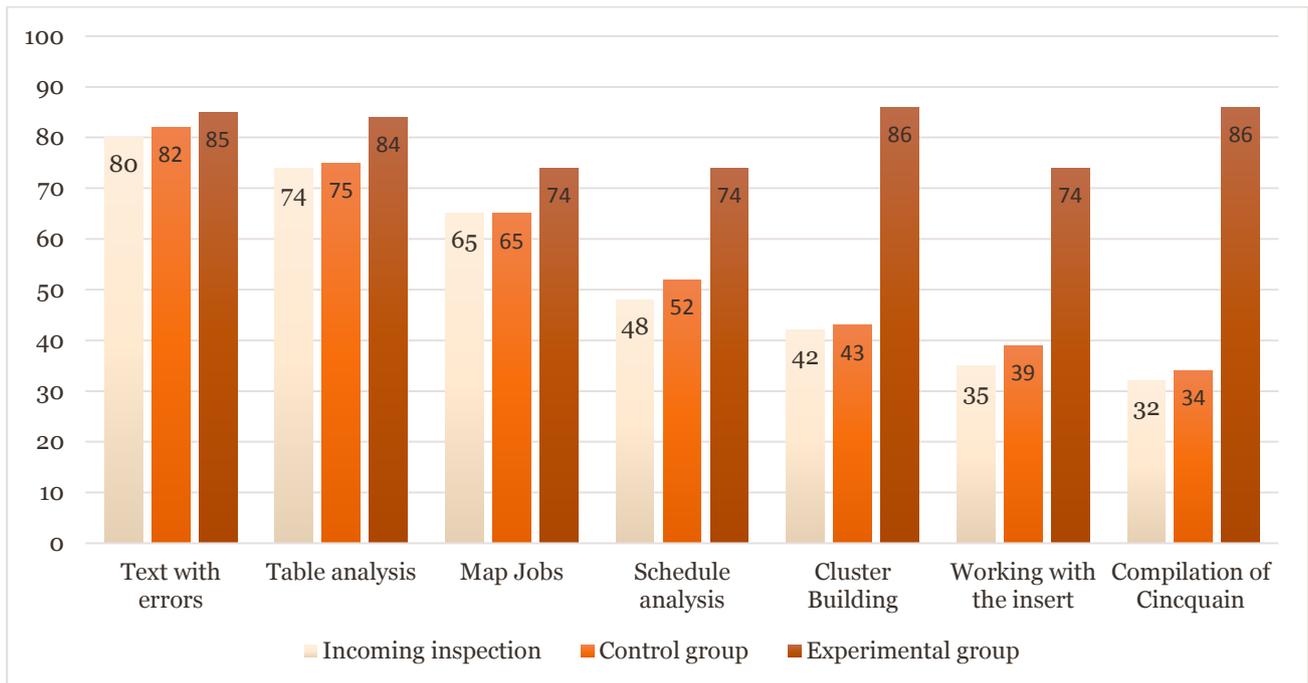


Fig. 3. Comparative results of input and output control for some methods of reader literacy development

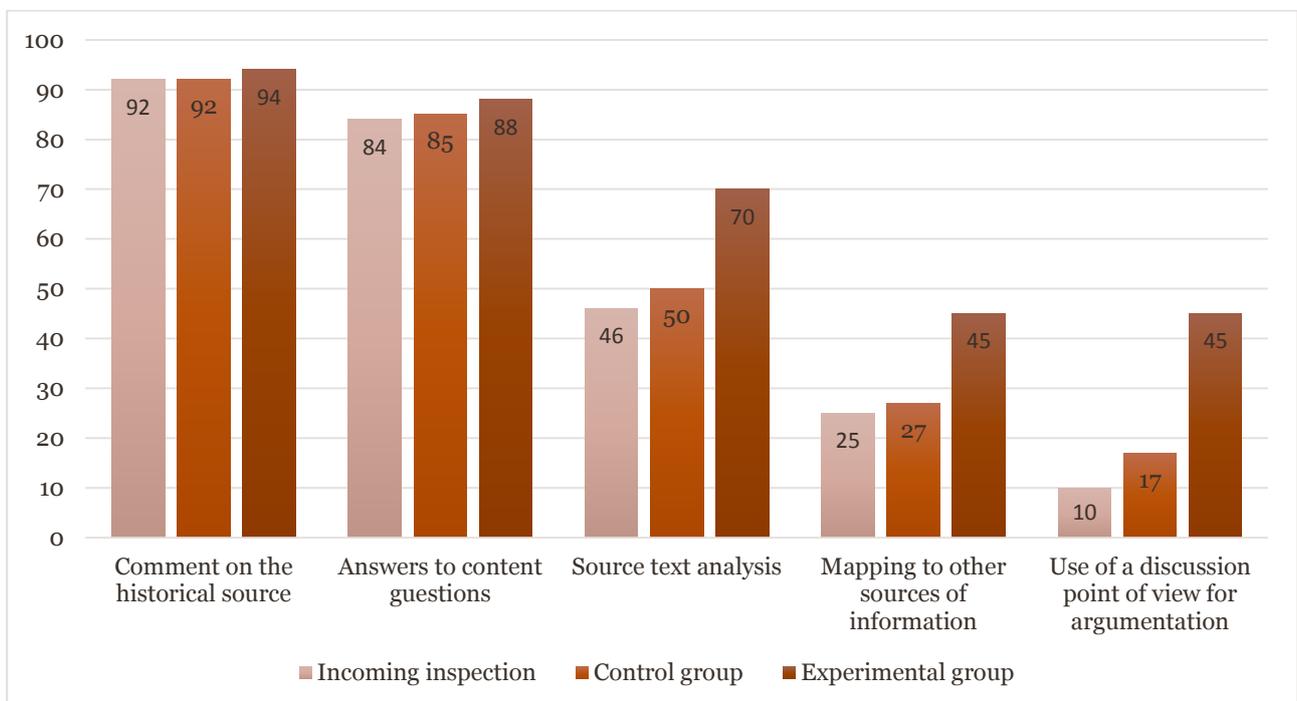


Fig. 4. Comparative results of incoming and outgoing inspection of historical source skills

The first groups of tasks, such as a general comment on a historical document, answers to questions on the content of the document are more traditional and less time-consuming for students, therefore, higher results were initially demonstrated for them. In turn, the development of reading literacy allows students to form new competencies in the ability to analyze the text more

deeply, the ability to correlate with other sources of information and use the knowledge gained to argue their position.

Next, we should proceed to the analysis of the second group of research results – namely, the techniques and methods for the development of reader literacy.

Common knowledge testing tools are texts in all their diversity, and this becomes especially relevant in the context of an increase in the volume of independent work of students at the university. The study of historical disciplines involves the use of various texts. It is necessary to focus on the conditional classification of texts in the context of the formation of reader literacy. In the classroom, students work with different types of text:

1. Continuous or continuous texts (without images, for example, historical sources, reference literature, literary texts).

2. Incomplete or discontinuous texts (graphs, charts, tables, maps, photographs, etc.). They include both printed and visual texts, arranged in a certain order, for example, in chronological or other sequence (first official, and then unofficial sources). Incomplete texts, or infographic texts, are called texts of the future; they reflect social, business, personal, educational situations that a person faces in real life (Filippova, 2022).

3. Mixed texts (which include elements of continuous and discontinuous texts). These are various texts, also called multiple texts, which differ in their format and structure; they assume a combination of printed text with electronic text, the presence of hyperlinks. The diversity of such texts is that they can represent different approaches to a specific historical problem. It is important that texts about the same historical fact, phenomenon can relate to different periods and create conditions for a “dialogue of cultures vertically” (Strelova, 2020).

4. Composite texts containing several texts, each of which was created independently of the other, is coherent and complete. For example, texts containing mutually exclusive or complementary points of view are combined into a composite text. At the same time, the texts are presented in thematic unity and are intended to lead to the conclusion that different sources can be selected for the same topic.

As noted above, there are such methods of forming reader literacy as searching and extracting information from the text, interpreting the information contained in the text, integrating or linking individual messages of the text into a single whole, comprehending and evaluating the content of the text.

To specify the work with texts, let's turn to the tasks in which these methods are used.

Search and extract information from the text

To develop this group of reading skills, students are invited to search for additional information in special reference literature, in databases and information and reference systems (the Portal of the Scientific Electronic Library, the website of the Institute of Scientific Information on Social Sciences of the Russian Academy of Sciences, etc.), in electronic library resources (the Educational platform Yurayt, EBS Lan, etc.).

Extraction information is aimed at achieving such substantive results as:

1. Formation of skills to comment on historical sources (determine authorship, place and time of creation, phenomena and processes described in them);

2. The ability to analyze the text of the source, including determining the position of the author and participants of the described events;

3. The ability to answer questions on the content of historical texts and drawing up plans, tables, diagrams based on them;

4. The ability to correlate the content of a historical source with other sources of information when studying specific events, phenomena and processes;

5. The ability to use historical sources to argue controversial points of view.

Integration and interpretation of the information contained in the text

Integration involves connecting different pieces of information, including for comparison and understanding of cause-and-effect relationships. The development of this group of reading skills assumes a more complex level of work for both teachers and students, and is aimed at the formation of the following skills:

1. The ability to update information (based on the analysis of the facts of previous eras to give examples from modern reality);

2. To identify the interrelation of the spheres of society's life;

3. Mastering the techniques of searching for relevant information (educational texts, media materials, infographics, photo and video files, etc.);
4. The ability to correlate and verify the content of several sources of information;
5. The ability to generalize, analyze, concretize information from various sources on the topics studied, correlate it with their own knowledge and personal social experience, the ability to draw conclusions.

Comprehension and evaluation of the form and content of the text

Tasks forming this group of skills require students at the university to rely on their own experience and knowledge, the ability to put forward hypotheses. It requires the use of knowledge and ideas that go beyond the text, as well as the ability to abstract reasoning. To do this, it is necessary to continue the formation of such skills as:

1. The ability to compare and correlate facts, phenomena and processes in history and the design of comparison results in the form of tables, diagrams, clusters, mental maps;
2. The ability to determine and explain their attitude to the most significant events and historical figures;
3. Orientation in scientific concepts and specifics of interpretation in historical science.

Using new knowledge and skills for practical purposes and non-standard situations

This skill contributes to the effective work of students in the study of new topics, in the framework of seminars, colloquiums, participation in subject weeks (annual Week of the History of the East), during production pedagogical practices in secondary educational institutions, pedagogical skill competitions, research activities (Student Scientific Association).

When working with the text, questions that stimulate students' research activity play an important role. Conditionally, there are several options for classifying tasks with questions:

Low and high level issues:

1. Low-level issues;
2. High-level issues (problematic issues).

Questions about B. Bloom's taxonomy:

1. Questions on knowledge;
2. Questions for understanding;
3. Application questions;
4. Questions for analysis;
5. Questions for synthesis (Make a diagram, cluster on this topic);
6. Questions for evaluation.

Questions can be classified by the number of possible answers – open (many answers) and closed (a limited number of answers); by the degree of expression in the text – explicit and hidden; in relation to the cognitive goal – suggestive and nodal, etc.

Next, I would like to draw attention to some innovative techniques that also contribute to the formation of reader literacy. These include technologies for the development of critical thinking using such methodological techniques as insert, cinquain, cluster, mental map.

Insert is one of the techniques of the technology of developing critical thinking through reading and writing. This technique is used when working with text, with new information and is really a technology for effective reading. When reading the text, students mark it with special icons: v – “I know this”, + – “this is new information for me”, - (minus) – “this contradicts what I knew”, ? – “it's not clear to me, I need an explanation”. Students make markings in their notes, pencil on the margins of textbooks and anthologies, it is also possible to compile a table (Appendix 1).

Cinquain is a creative work in the form of a short poem of five non-rhymed lines. In the first line of the cinquain, a noun is proposed that expresses the topic or subject of the work; in the second line, two adjectives characterizing the main idea, qualitative characteristics; the third line is represented by three verbs that describe the actions to which the topic is devoted; the fourth line is a sentence that includes the distinctive features of the phenomenon being described; the fifth line is a conclusion or personal attitude (Appendix 2).

A mental map or an intelligence map is a technique for effective recording and visualization. The entry begins in the center of the sheet in the form of a keyword (topic). Then the map is supplemented with branches with basic subtopics from which new branches are built up. At the same time, images, symbols, and various colors are used. Mental maps help organize the main theses of a lecture, seminar, or brainstorming session. They allow you to creatively solve learning

tasks and store new material in memory for longer. Mental maps are also used to develop critical thinking skills (Tseng, 2020).

Cinquain, mental map, insert and other techniques are used in the context of interactive learning, when they are created not individually, but by mini-groups of students, after which these creative products are exchanged and evaluated. Within the framework of interactive learning, methods of dramatization and theatricalization can be used. Therefore, it becomes possible to improve reading skills through theatricalization (Paige et al., 2019). Creating your own graphic, text and creative works also contributes to the development of reader literacy.

Reader literacy is also formed through the use of case technology. Thus, students divided into problem groups are offered sets of various primary sources. In fact, these cases are incomplete, composite texts (Appendix 3).

Questions and tasks for texts, photos and video materials are aimed at attribution of sources, critical analysis of their content, characterization of the value attitudes of participants in the events of 1937 and the positions of modern historians and politicians. The implementation of such a case contributes to the comprehensive reconstruction of a historical event in the minds of modern students and the actualization of their knowledge. In addition, as noted by a number of Russian authors: "Students' awareness of the fact that cases can be used in their own teaching activities significantly affects the motivation for research and memorization of the material" (Solodikhina, Solodikhina, 2019).

Of particular interest are problem tasks using the conceptual apparatus. These can be both private-historical (single), and general historical and even sociological concepts. Students are offered a concept and the task is to find its features in various texts. For example, students should characterize the concept of "statism" taking into account not only general, but also specific Oriental features based on working with texts: Ataturk K. Selected speeches and speeches, 1966 and Lee Kuan Yu. From the third world to the first. Singapore History 1965–2000, 2018). Another effective technique for the formation of reader literacy can be the search for additional sources of information. For example, students get acquainted with a specific historical source that mentions an event, a fact, a person and are given the task to select other sources where this event or person appears.

The inclusion of folklore, as well as works of classical and modern literature in the educational materials of university disciplines can also contribute to the development of reader's literacy. For example, T. Dreiser's novel "The Financier" is being studied at Harvard Business School. Professionally-oriented reading is also included in the course programs of domestic universities. In particular, students of history are recommended to read works from the series "Literary Monuments", founded by the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1947 and numbering over 700 books, as well as works published in the series "The Lives of wonderful People" (more than 1 thousand books). These books are presented in electronic form and often, unlike printed publications, are more accessible in educational activities, while in DjVu and PDF formats they allow you to save the original background, fonts, illustrations, which is an important component of historical documents and prevents many problems associated with reading electronic texts.

The works closest to the subject under study were written by researchers mainly on the formation of reading literacy among students in general and secondary schools. At the same time, the training of students in higher educational institutions has its own psychological, pedagogical and methodological features. It should also be noted that the level of functional and reader literacy, and finally, improving the quality of education, directly depend on the joint efforts of all participants in the educational process: the state, methodological workers and teachers to form a modern educational environment for students, including students (Medzhidova et al., 2021).

5. Discussion

The conducted research was aimed at analyzing the works of modern authors devoted to the issues of reader literacy, included experimental work and the development of examples of tasks for the development of students' reading competencies.

The experimental educational work carried out during the semester with students of history confirmed the theoretical justification of the importance of the formation of reader literacy. We agree with Nina Smetannikova (Smetannikova, 2007) that reading competencies allow solving educational and professional tasks, which is undoubtedly important for students studying in the direction of "Pedagogical Education" as future teachers.

I would also like to note the significance of the works of Olga Strelova. The methodological recommendations developed by her on the use of “Tasks on reading literacy” and the development of “Reading literacy skills” among schoolchildren became the basis for the development of tasks for the development of reading literacy among students, naturally taking into account the psychological and pedagogical characteristics of students studying at the university.

Speaking about the problems, I would like to confirm the correctness of the positions of D. Leu (Leu et al., 2014) and Su Yen Chen (Chen, 2018), who note the importance of the Internet and digital technologies in modern society. On the one hand, the Internet contributes to a decrease in reading literacy in the traditional sense, since students spend less time reading and taking notes, sometimes mindlessly copying electronic text. On the other hand, digital technologies expand the boundaries of the educational process and the capabilities of its participants. With the correct organization of the educational process, when students learn effective methods of work and receive specially formulated tasks, the Internet and digital technologies become an important additional tool for gaining knowledge and developing practical skills (working with diagrams, tables, developing mental maps, etc.).

It is impossible not to agree with the position of the American researcher J. Loewen points out that students should master such skills as reading effectively, finding the main ideas in the text (film or other source); reading critically, assessing whether the ideas are supported by evidence; using the writing format effectively; speaking correctly and more (Loewen, 2010).

I would like to note that the results of theoretical and practical research have not revealed fundamental discrepancies in the works of both foreign and domestic researchers devoted to the problems of reader literacy. Some differences in the formulations of concepts do not lead to internal significant contradictions. In general, the authors agree on the formulation of the concept, content and meaning of reader literacy in the educational process.

The results of the practical study confirmed the hypothesis about the effectiveness of the development of reading literacy among university students. It was also demonstrated more successful formation (in the experimental group in comparison with the control group) of a number of skills and abilities, for example, such as searching and extracting information from the text, interpreting information, comprehending, evaluating and applying information.

The methodological recommendations presented in the section “research results” can be used by participants of the educational process (both teachers and students) in the process of studying and teaching humanities in general and history in particular.

6. Conclusion

Texts, questions, tasks, forms of work on the development of reading literacy should not be used in the form of a regular set, in the form of a complex pedagogical structure. Reader literacy is a part of functional literacy and is aimed at the formation of meta-subject results. Therefore, her role in classes in historical disciplines goes beyond one subject (for example, the history of Asian and African countries) and acquires a universal or supra-subject character. Therefore, the above construction should consist of several different texts, not only printed, but also electronic. Motivational work should be organized aimed at immersing students in a situation not only of an educational, but also of a personal and social nature, and at their interest in participating in interactive and value-oriented activities. Texts and assignments should be compiled largely according to the structure of cases and, on the one hand, should contradict each other in order to activate interest and cognitive activity, and on the other hand, lead students to logical conclusions. All skill groups should also be involved (if possible). In addition, the problematic nature of the tasks will help students resolve cognitive contradictions, show creativity and independence. It is also possible to intentionally use uncertainty in the ways of actions – i.e. students are not offered a strict algorithm for solving educational tasks, but are given freedom for creativity; direct links to competitive sources, to certain methods of cognitive activity and its results are not given.

The work on the formation of reader literacy involves the active use of hypertext in a narrow sense (the transition from one text to another, most often in electronic format) and in a broad sense (the transition from text to a system of other types of information, including infographics). Reading literacy tools are distinguished by their multimedia nature, i.e. the ability to combine text with audio and video files, the use of multimedia presentations and interactive flat displays (IFPD). For the effective development of reading literacy, on the one hand, a high level of interactivity as social communication is necessary, and on the other hand, a high level of interactivity as social

communication is characteristic. Working in interacting groups turns out to be more effective, and the joint solution of the set educational tasks, in turn, unites the team of students.

In the process of observing students in the course of interactive work, problem-based learning, including the project format, a freer and more effective operation of texts in solving various educational tasks, including non-standard type, was revealed. Students have become better oriented in infographic and composite texts, the effectiveness of information interpretation and the quality of answers to high-level questions have increased. Students began to form an effective algorithm for working with a variety of texts.

Summing up the research work, I would like to emphasize that such skills as assessing the quality and reliability of sources, understanding multiple texts and connections between them, synthesizing disparate information taking into account several points of view, the ability to personally evaluate and update information can act as indicators of the formation of reader literacy.

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Appendix 1

An example of filling in the insert table on the topic “National Liberation movement in India”, based on the analysis of M. Gandhi's letters on non-resistance to L. Tolstoy and others

| v | + | – | ? |
|---|---|---|--|
| Mahatma Gandhi was a staunch supporter of nonviolent struggle | In his autobiography, Gandhi writes about the great influence that Tolstoy had on him | In July 1939, Gandhi wrote a letter to Hitler asking him to prevent a war | Gandhi opposed British imperialism no less than he opposed Nazism, but insisted on nonviolent resistance to them |

Appendix 2

An example of a cinquain on the topic “Countries of Tropical Africa in the first half of the twentieth century”:

Africa.
Black, exotic.
Attracts, fascinates, scares.
A rich and patriarchal continent of jungles and savannas.
Colonial dependence.

Appendix 3

A selection of texts on the topic “The Nanjing tragedy of 1937”:

1. Materials of textbooks on the history of Asian and African countries (L.S. Vasiliev, A.M. Rodriguez, B.V. Safronov).
2. Materials of the “National Memorial” dedicated to the tragedy in Nanjing (<http://www.cngongji.cn/russian/index.htm>)
3. Photo and video materials made by the Japanese in occupied Nanjing (The Nanjing Massacre Project // <https://divinity-adhoc.library.yale.edu/Nanking/Photographs.html>)
4. Chinese and Japanese sources interpreting the events and the number of victims in December 1937 in different ways in Nanjing.
5. English-language studies (Iris Zhang's book “The Rape of Nanjing. The Forgotten Holocaust of the Second World War”, 1997).
6. Eyewitness accounts of the events in Nanjing.
7. Materials of a publicistic nature (L. Mlechin's film “The Night of Japanese Soldiers”).
8. Feature films (films “Don't cry, Nanjing”, 1995, “City of Life and Death”, 2009, “Flowers of War”, 2011, etc.).