



## THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING READING LITERACY IN PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14929963>

**Abstract:** this article provides a detailed analysis of theoretical approaches to developing reading literacy in primary school students. Based on constructivist, socio-cultural, and cognitive theories, recommendations are given for designing reading literacy development strategies that consider students' age and psychological characteristics. The study proposes a comprehensive approach encompassing the phonological, lexical, grammatical, and semantic aspects of reading literacy. As a result of scientific research, it is recommended to develop innovative methods, modern pedagogical technologies, and practical guidelines for primary school teachers to enhance reading literacy. The article also presents new approaches to developing reading literacy in the context of digital education, international experiences, and methodologies adapted to the national context.

**Keywords:** reading literacy, primary education, constructivism, cognitive development, phonological ability, lexical competence, text comprehension strategies, innovative methods, digital literacy.

**Introduction:** In the modern educational process, the development of reading literacy of primary school students is one of the urgent scientific and practical issues. Because reading literacy is considered not only as understanding the text and mastering reading techniques, but also as an important factor in the process of logical thinking, analysis of concepts, and independent learning. The formation of children's reading ability at the initial stage of education creates a solid foundation for their further education and successful activity in society.

There are many theoretical approaches to the development of reading literacy of primary school students, each of which has its own educational and psychological foundations. This article analyzes strategies for developing reading literacy, taking into account the age and psychological characteristics of students, based on constructivist, sociocultural, and cognitive theories. These theories are aimed at increasing children's interest in learning, developing critical thinking, and ensuring their active participation in the learning process.

The article also proposes a comprehensive approach to the development of reading literacy, covering phonological, lexical, grammatical, and semantic aspects. These aspects serve not only to improve students' technical reading skills, but also to deepen their understanding of the content of the text. Based on the research results, innovative methods and modern pedagogical technologies are recommended for primary school teachers, aimed at increasing the effectiveness of education.

The article also examines new approaches to the development of reading literacy in the context of digital education. International experience and methods adapted to the national context were analyzed, and practical recommendations for teachers were developed. As a

result of the integration of modern technologies into the educational process, effective methods for further developing reading literacy of primary school students and strengthening their reading skills are presented.

Thus, the article, based on advanced scientific theories on the development of reading literacy, puts forward practically sound methodological recommendations and highlights topical issues aimed at improving the quality of primary education.

#### **Literature analysis:**

Scientific research on the development of reading literacy of primary school students was conducted on the basis of various theoretical approaches. In particular, constructivist (Piaget, 1952; Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1990), socio-cultural (Vygotsky, 1986; Rogoff, 2003; Wertsch, 1991) and cognitive theories (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Flavell, 1979; Snow, 2002) form the main foundation of scientific research on the development of reading literacy. Each of these approaches plays an important role in the formation of students' reading competencies in the educational process.

Piaget (1952) identified the stages of children's mental development within the framework of his theory of cognitive development, emphasizing that the process of mastering reading and writing depends on the development of children's cognitive activity[1]. In his opinion, primary school students are at a specific operational stage, at which they rely more on visual and sensory experience in the learning process. Therefore, Piaget's theory serves as an important basis for the development of methods aimed at gradually increasing the complexity of learning materials and developing children's thinking abilities.

The sociocultural theory put forward by Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the importance of collaborative learning among students in the process of reading literacy. His concept of the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD) represents the difference between tasks that students can perform independently and those that they can perform with the help of adults or knowledgeable peers[2]. Research based on this theory (Rogoff, 2003; Wertsch, 1991) show that learning through teacher support and social interaction in elementary school effectively develops students' reading skills [3].

Proponents of the cognitive approach (Flavell, 1979; Anderson & Pearson, 1984) emphasizes that the learning process is effectively carried out not only through the acquisition of technical skills, but also through the formation of metacognitive strategies. The schema theory put forward by Anderson and Pearson (1984) suggests that it is possible to develop reading literacy by forming connections between what students already know and the new text[4]. Snow (2002) revealed the interrelationship of phonological, semantic, and syntactic aspects through a multi-level model of reading literacy development [5].

In recent years, the integration of digital technologies into the educational process has led to the emergence of new methodological approaches to the development of reading literacy. The TPACK model, developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), emphasizes that for effective use of educational technologies, teachers need to combine technological, pedagogical, and subject knowledge [6]. Additionally, the theory of multimodal literacy put forward by Kress (2010) emphasizes the importance of working with texts of various formats (audio, video, interactive elements) to develop students' reading and comprehension skills in today's digital educational environment [7].

From the perspective of international experience, the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) study (Mullis et al., 2016) examined effective strategies for

developing reading literacy, emphasizing the importance of developing students' skills in analyzing text content, understanding text structure, and highlighting key ideas [8]. These approaches are also reflected in the experience of countries with high quality of education, including Finland, Canada, and Singapore (Sahlberg, 2011) [9].

Thus, the analysis of the literature shows that the combination of theoretical approaches is of great importance in the development of effective strategies for the development of reading literacy of primary school students. The formation of teaching methods based on constructivist, sociocultural, and cognitive theories, their enrichment with digital technologies, and the adaptation of international experience to the context of national education remain one of the main directions in today's educational process.

#### **Methodology:**

Analysis of theoretical approaches to the development of reading literacy of primary school students was carried out on the basis of a combination of scientific research methods. The following methodological approaches were used in this work:

Theoretical analysis - scientific literature and advanced research on the development of reading literacy based on constructivist, sociocultural, and cognitive theories were analyzed. These theories contributed to a deeper understanding of the stages of psychological development of children and the process of forming reading competencies.

Comparative analysis - international experience and methods in the national context were compared, the level of their effectiveness and the possibilities of their application in the educational process were assessed. Reading literacy strategies of Finland, Canada, Singapore and other countries were studied in terms of the possibility of adaptation to the national education system.

Empirical research - the results of international studies such as PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and scientific research on the application of advanced pedagogical technologies were studied. This approach made it possible to identify effective ways to develop reading literacy.

Analysis of pedagogical innovations - the influence of modern technologies on the development of reading literacy was studied. In particular, the advantages of using digital learning tools based on the TPACK model and the theory of multimodal literacy were analyzed.

Integrative approach - a comprehensive approach has been developed, combining traditional and innovative teaching methods. This approach involves the joint development of phonological, lexical, grammatical, and semantic aspects.

In the process of analysis, to ensure the reliability of scientific literature, sources based on scientific articles, monographs, international research reports, and best pedagogical practices were used. At the same time, the research results served as the main source for the development of practical methodological recommendations for primary school teachers.

#### **Analysis of results:**

The research results confirm the effectiveness of theoretical approaches in the development of reading literacy of primary school students. The obtained data were analyzed in the following main areas:

##### 1. Practical effectiveness of theoretical approaches

Strategies developed on the basis of analyzed constructivist, sociocultural, and cognitive theories play an important role in increasing the level of reading literacy of primary school

students. In particular: classes aimed at developing students' independent thinking and data analysis skills based on a constructivist approach were effective. Thanks to this method, the level of students' deep understanding of reading texts has increased.

Methods of cooperative reading and discussion, organized on the basis of a sociocultural approach, contributed to the development of an atmosphere of cooperation in the classroom and the development of students' communication skills.

The organization of classes based on a cognitive approach, with an emphasis on phonological and semantic components, served to significantly improve students' reading comprehension skills.

2. Adaptation of international experience in reading literacy to the national education system

Based on the results of the PIRLS study, the experience of countries that have achieved high results was studied. Based on the results, the following aspects were deemed important for adaptation to the national context:

In the Finnish education system, a differentiated approach to teaching and individual curricula are of great importance. Based on this methodology, it was proposed to use reading materials tailored to the needs of each student.

In the Singaporean model, the development of reading skills through an integrative approach and modern pedagogical technologies serves as an important factor in improving the quality of education. This model can also be applied in the national education system.

In Canada, strategies aimed at developing reading literacy within the framework of bilingual education were studied. This approach can be useful for children studying in a multilingual environment.

3. Effectiveness of modern pedagogical technologies and innovative methods

According to the research results, the following innovative approaches to the development of reading literacy in the digital educational environment have shown their effectiveness:

The use of a multimodal approach based on the TPACK model contributed to the formation of students' literacy skills through visual and interactive materials.

The formation of reading skills based on gamification and interactive games increased students' interest and motivation.

Personalized learning with the help of online educational platforms and artificial intelligence proved to be effective in creating individual curricula for primary school students.

4. Advantages of the integrated approach.

**Methods developed on the basis of a comprehensive approach, including phonological, lexical, grammatical, and semantic aspects, have led to the following results:**

- The phonological approach developed students' skills in differentiating pronunciation and sounds.
- Lexical and semantic approaches have improved the skills of understanding texts and extracting key ideas from them.
- The grammatical component played an important role in the development of students' skills in expressing their thoughts in writing.

Practical recommendations for teachers.

As a result of scientific research, the following practical recommendations were developed for primary school teachers:

Applying methods appropriate to the age and psychological characteristics of students - developing learning strategies tailored to each student.

Implementation of cooperative reading and reflexive assessment methods - involving students in active communication and creating opportunities for free expression of their thoughts.

Use of interactive technologies - application of digital educational platforms, artificial intelligence tools, and gamification in reading lessons.

Adapted use of international experience - adaptation of elements taken from the models of Finland, Canada, and Singapore to the national education system.

Development of an approach covering all components of literacy - joint development of phonological, lexical, grammatical, and semantic components.

**Conclusion:**

The results of the conducted research on the development of reading literacy of primary school students show that it is possible to deepen students' knowledge and skills only if effective educational strategies are developed based on theoretical approaches. During the study, the role of constructivist, sociocultural, and cognitive approaches in the formation of reading literacy was analyzed in detail. Each of these approaches is important in the educational process, and their combination serves to increase the effectiveness of education, taking into account the individual characteristics of students.

The constructivist approach allows students to think independently and acquire knowledge based on their own experience. Strategies developed on the basis of this approach increase students' self-control abilities and educate them as active participants. The sociocultural approach serves to develop cooperation between students, strengthen the assimilation of knowledge through communication and mutual exchange of ideas in the educational process. This method contributes to the development of reading literacy by improving the social environment in the classroom and increasing the interaction of students.

The cognitive approach serves to increase literacy by stimulating brain activity in the learning process, optimizing the processes of understanding and memorization.

Modern pedagogical technologies and innovative methods also play an important role in the development of reading literacy. Innovative methods such as the use of multimodal approaches based on the TPACK model, the introduction of gamification and interactive games into the learning process, and the development of individual learning strategies using artificial intelligence serve to increase students' motivation and increase their interest in the educational process.

In addition, the need to develop reading literacy based on a comprehensive approach has been identified. Reading literacy should encompass not only phonological, lexical, grammatical, and semantic aspects, but these components should also be developed in close connection with each other. From a phonological point of view, special attention should be paid to the formation of students' skills in correct pronunciation of sounds, and from a lexical point of view, to increasing vocabulary. Through the grammatical approach, students' written speech should be developed, and through the semantic approach, a deep understanding of the content of the texts they read should be ensured.



The study showed that the mutual integration of theoretical approaches plays an important role in the development of reading literacy of primary school students. By introducing modern pedagogical technologies and innovative methods into the educational process, it is possible to significantly improve students' reading ability. The quality of education is improved through the use of international experience and adaptation to the national context. When the methods recommended for teachers are implemented in practice, the reading literacy of primary school students can be developed at a high level.

Thus, based on the research results, it was determined that a comprehensive and systematic approach should be applied to the development of reading literacy of primary school students. Developing more effective methods for literacy development using theoretically and practically sound strategies and improving teachers' qualifications in this area is one of the important directions for future research.

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