

THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSING STUDENTS' READING LITERACY

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KEYWORDS

International Studies
PISA
PIRLS
Reading literacy
Literacy rate
Education system
International rating

ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the importance of assessing students' reading literacy in the context of international research, especially using data from the organizations PISA and PIRLS. The author analyzes the results of the 2022 PISA study, in which Kazakhstan ranked 61st in reading literacy among 81 countries and discusses measures that can be taken to improve the country's education system in this context.

The analysis of the results of international studies such as PISA and PIRLS on student reading raises questions about the quality of education in Kazakhstan. The ranking of 61st among 81 countries in PISA 2022 highlights the challenges facing the education system. One possible approach to improve this situation is to develop more effective educational strategies. This may include updating curricula, strengthening reading teaching methods, and providing access to modern learning resources. However, improving the educational system also requires systemic changes, including training and advanced training of teaching staff. In addition, it is important to pay attention to the resources provided to students, such as libraries and educational technologies. Transparency and cooperation between educational institutions, government, and society can contribute to sustainable change. Decisive steps towards improving student reading can have a positive impact on the overall quality of education in the country, contributing to its development and competitiveness.

Received: 10/ 11 / 2023

Accepted: 20/ 12 / 2023

Introduction

In this article, we will consider the essence and importance of Reading Literacy in the context of modern education, and also discuss the need to assess the level of reading literacy of students. Developing this competence, we develop not only reading skills, but also the ability to think critically, independently evaluate information and successfully adapt in a rapidly changing world.

Reading literacy is the complex skill and ability to read, understand, interpret, and evaluate texts. This term covers not only the technical side of reading, such as the recognition of words and sentences, but also deeper aspects, such as analysis, critical thinking, inference and the use of the information read in different meanings. Reading literacy is a key element of education, as it provides the basis for a successful learning process and develops the cognitive skills necessary for effective functioning in modern society[1].

Reading literacy is very important in the modern world, because in modern society information is becoming more and more widespread and accessible. Below, we will consider several key aspects of the importance of Reading Literacy:

Access to information: reading literacy allows people to successfully interact with various information from various sources, including print media, digital texts, sites, social networks, and other media. People with high reading literacy are able to effectively select, evaluate and use information.

Development of critical thinking: reader literacy contributes to the development of critical thinking, which is important for analyzing information, identifying hidden subtext and forming one's own opinion. People with this skill critically evaluate information and are able to make informed decisions.

Education and professional success: reading literacy is the basis for successful learning in any field of knowledge. This contributes to the development of vocabulary, improving the understanding of texts of varying complexity, and effective reading activities. These skills are important not only in the educational environment, but also in professional life.

Adaptive capacity: in the context of rapid technological development and socio-cultural changes, reading literacy provides the ability to constantly update knowledge and adapt to new conditions. People with good reading literacy learn new topics more easily and can overcome the challenges of change.

Participation in public life: reading literacy actively influences participation in public life. It allows effective interaction with society, participation in discussions, coverage of socio-cultural events, and the formation of critical public consciousness.

Thus, reading literacy plays a key role in the formation of competent and informed citizens who can successfully work in the modern Information Society.

Reading literacy, defined as a set of skills and abilities for effective communication with texts, plays an important role in the educational process. This competence implies not only the technical ability to recognize and perceive words, but also deep cognitive processes such as the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of information. Reading literacy serves as the basis for the successful assimilation of educational material in various educational disciplines. The relationship of the level of literacy with general achievements in learning indicates its central place in the formation of academic competence of students. The development of reading literacy also provides students with the necessary language tools and critical strategies for successful perception and analysis of Information[2].

Reading Literacy Assessment in education is the process of measuring students' skills and abilities in the field of reading and understanding texts in order to assess their literacy. This type of assessment aims to determine the level of students' understanding of various aspects of literacy, including texts, the ability to analyze and interpret information, and their general grammatical and lexical competence.

Assessment of reading literacy can include different elements:

Reading and understanding texts: this involves the ability of students to read a text and fully understand its content. Questions can relate to the main ideas, details, arguments, etc.

Analysis and critical assessment: assess the student's ability to analyze texts, identify key topics, evaluate arguments, recognize logical

connections, and formulate their own conclusions.

Lexical and grammatical literacy: includes an assessment of the level of proficiency in language structures, correct use of grammar, vocabulary, and lexical skills.

Ability to generalize and use information: evaluate the student's ability to apply what he has read in a new context, draw conclusions, summarize and generalize information.

Methods for assessing reading literacy can range from traditional question and task tests to innovative methods such as the use of online platforms, adaptation tests, and artificial intelligence technologies.

The assessment of Reading Literacy in education is very important, as it provides teachers with information about the current level of competence of students, allows them to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and also creates the basis for the development of further personalized teaching and educational strategies. Also, this trend plays a key role in the effective management of the educational process. The use of traditional and innovative assessment methods makes it possible to assess the level of literacy of students, identify their strengths and needs. These data are the basis for the development of personalized learning programs adapted to the unique requirements of students[3].

Thus, the Reading Literacy Assessment System is not only an integral part of the educational process, but also the basis for the development of intellectual and critical abilities of students. The relationship between Reading Literacy, Assessment and education reinforces the role of this aspect in shaping a person who is educated and adapted to modern challenges.

The teacher plays an important role in the formation of students' literacy, and its influence extends to various aspects of learning. Professional skills of a teacher, such as the use of various teaching methods and the development of effective strategies, are the basis for the successful formation of literacy. An important issue is the creation of a stimulating educational environment in which students can develop learning skills both in and out of class. Teachers also play a key role in individualizing learning, taking into account the different needs and levels of training of each student.

Modern educational technologies such as interactive platforms and the use of artificial intelligence are becoming important tools for

teachers in creating interesting lessons and adaptive assessment of literacy. The development of critical thinking is also the focus of teachers' attention, encouraging students to analyze texts and actively participate in discussions. In addition, an important aspect is the relationship of teachers with parents, the inclusion of families in the educational process and the provision of resources for learning in a family setting. All these elements jointly determine the successful role of the teacher in the formation of students' literacy.

Today, at the global level, the problem of assessing students' reading literacy is the focus of international organizations such as PISA and PIRLS. Assessment of reading literacy by these organizations provides an opportunity for a comparative analysis of the level of educational achievements in different countries, including Kazakhstan[4].

PISA (program for International Student Assessment) measures not only knowledge, but also the ability of students to apply them in specific situations. The results of PISA allow us to assess the extent to which students can apply their knowledge in reading and analyzing texts. In the context of Kazakhstan, participation in PISA can give an idea of what levels of reading literacy students achieve compared to other countries.

PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) assesses elementary school reading literacy. Participation in this study can provide data on how effective the methods of teaching reading in Primary School in Kazakhstan are and what level of literacy students achieve.

An analysis of the results of PISA for Kazakhstan can determine its position in relation to other countries in terms of Reading Literacy. 19,769 students from 571 educational organizations took part in the PISA study from Kazakhstan in 2022. As a result, it took the 61st place out of 81 countries in terms of reading literacy of students. These results of the PISA study can serve as a starting point for discussion and improvement of the education system in the country. It is important to understand that solving the literacy problem requires an integrated approach, and the following steps can be considered:

Data analysis: a detailed study of the PISA data helps to identify specific weaknesses and reasons for the low reading literacy rating. This may include the analysis of curricula, teaching

methods, the availability of educational resources and other factors.

Updating curricula: review and revise curricula taking into account modern teaching methods, including the active use of various texts, the development of critical thinking skills, and the use of new technologies.

Professional development of teachers: providing teachers with modern teaching methods, training in the use of technologies in the educational process and supporting their professional growth.

Attention to the individualization of learning: the development of individual teaching methods that take into account the diversity of learning styles and needs of students.

Attention to extracurricular reading: Support reading as an important skill outside of study time, encouraging the reading of fiction, scientific texts and other forms.

Parental involvement: actively involve parents in the educational process, provide resources for homeschooling, and support literacy development.

Monitoring and evaluation: establish a monitoring and evaluation system to continuously monitor progress and adjust educational strategies.

These steps can serve as the basis for the development and implementation of specific programs and activities to improve reading literacy among students in Kazakhstan. It is also important to take into account the socio-cultural characteristics of the country and develop educational strategies according to the unique context.

In conclusion, taking into account the results of the PISA study, the assessment of students' reading literacy becomes of high relevance and importance for educational systems, including Kazakhstan. The country, ranked 61st out of 81 countries, should seriously consider the current educational paradigm and take measures to improve reading literacy[5].

The assessment not only determines the level of training of students, but also serves as a powerful tool for highlighting weaknesses in the educational system. It is important to start systematically updating curricula, supporting the professional growth of teachers, and creating a stimulating educational environment.

Success in improving reading literacy depends on the close relationship of all its participants, including education authorities, teachers, parents and society. The development

of personalized teaching methods, support for extracurricular reading and the introduction of modern educational technologies contribute to the formation of students with the necessary skills of reading and understanding texts, which are the key to a successful future for each student.

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