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## **The role of required reading in the axiological education of middle school students**

### **Summary**

The subject of the presented doctoral dissertation is part of the research on culture, literature and education in their close connection with the world of values. The signaled issues, due to their strategic importance for the quality and development of various spheres of human life, have been the subject of interdisciplinary discussions and disputes for many years. It is widely discussed in numerous publications, the authors of which emphasize the necessity and importance of axiological issues in the education of the young generation.

The dissertation is the result of reflection on the presence of the issue of values in the content of Polish language education and the search for justifications for the use of reading as tools of axiological education. One of the basic theoretical goals of the research – conducted on the example of a junior high school – was empirically based reflection on Polish language lessons as an axiological space. The means for this was the description of the relationship between the young reader, reading material and the world of values, as well as examining the role that a school Polish teacher can play in shaping this relationship. Another goal of the research was the desire to recognize the reading skills of the surveyed junior high school students, their attitudes and behavior towards reading and the world of values.

The work attempts to show the attitudes of students aged 13 to 16 toward values and the reading works as carriers of axiological meanings. The work focuses on the elements that build those attitudes, resulting from personal reading experiences acquired both as part of compulsory education and beyond this obligation. The results of participating observations, including 40 observations of Polish language lessons in junior high schools were used in the dissertation. In particular, the analyzes qualitative research results, obtained on the basis of over 1,200 student written statements inspired by the reading they read and 120 questionnaires diagnosing students attitudes toward current values, e.g. in the culture, the language, and the literature.

The work consists of four chapters preceded by an Introduction. The first one, entitled *Axiological issues in studies of literature and literary education* – contains research findings on the place of value in selected philosophical and literary studies. Theoretical relations between literature and axiology in the didactic, cultural and social contexts were discussed. I refer to the reflection on values in humanistic studies in order to show how the theoretical

findings concerning the axiological dimension of literary works and literary communication are adapted to didactic considerations. It has been shown to be a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. The collected findings were preceded by an explication of the notions of axiological education and values.

The second – methodological – chapter entitled *Conception and methodological assumptions of the work* describes the strategies of the research procedure, formulates the main goals, problems and research questions. The methods and tools used were characterized, key concepts related to the subject of the dissertation were defined: literature, reading, school teaching canon. The research environment was described, including the groups of respondents.

The third chapter, entitled *Ways of referring to values in Polish language education – material analysis*, contains the analysis of selected Polish language teaching programs, textbooks for literary education in junior high schools, methodological projects, as well as didactic strategies used by teachers during the Polish language lessons, that I observed in lower secondary schools in Ostrowiec. The analysis of selected documents made it possible to obtain answers to the research problems formulated in the dissertation, especially to the question about didactic models used in Polish language education, and on the place and role of school reading in the process of shaping the value world of adolescents.

Discussion of the research perspective adopted in the work, limiting the scope of considerations on the axiological education of Ostrowiec teenagers to Polish language education and the role of literary works in this process, is provided by the next chapter entitled *Students versus the values found in reading. Discussion of own research*. The overriding goal here was to find an answer to the question about the attitudes of teenage students towards the values found in the books discussed at school. An integral part of the fourth chapter are analyzes of the works of junior high school students inspired by reading and axiological issues. The research material exemplifies didactic strategies of including reading in the axiological education process of lower secondary school students. The subject of the research interest were selected aspects concerning the improvement of student reading competences "value-focused reading", inscribed in the process of reception of literary works included in school reading canons.

The analysis and interpretation of data obtained on the basis of a diagnostic survey, and student statements inspired by axiological issues led to some reflections and educational conclusions. They concern, inter alia, the necessary reevaluation in the area of didactic strat-

egies aimed at promoting "education towards values" in the contemporary times reality referred to as the "digital age".

An integral part of the work is the Bibliography and the Annex. It includes a calendar of selected scientific events (organized in Poland after 1990) related to axiological issues in Polish language education, a list of school reading (according to the core curricula of 1999 and 2009), a list of topics for school essays constituting research material and selected exemplary implementation of tasks.

**Keywords:** required reading, axiological education, values, literature reading, school, school student, middle school

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