

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO STIMULATING INTEREST IN READING

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Abstract: *This study explores innovative methods to stimulate primary school students' interest in reading, emphasizing non-formal educational approaches. The research was conducted over six months at "Aron Cotruș" Junior High School in Arad, involving an experimental and a control group. Various strategies, including literary cafés, book review competitions, and interactive reading activities, were tested. The findings highlight that non-formal methods significantly enhance students' engagement, reading skills, and overall enthusiasm for books. Additionally, teachers involved in implementing these approaches reported positive changes in their instructional strategies and student motivation. The study concludes that integrating non-formal reading techniques into the curriculum fosters a positive reading culture and improves educational outcomes.*

Keywords: *reading engagement; primary education; innovative teaching methods; non-formal education; book literacy; interactive learning; student motivation.*

Educational research is a fundamental component in the development and improvement of education systems, teaching practices and educational outcomes. It plays a crucial role in sharing knowledge and findings obtained through studies and analyses in the field of pedagogy. This essay explores the importance of presenting educational research and how it contributes to the evolution of education.

Educational research is a process through which researchers share the

results of their studies with the pedagogical community, with the aim of supporting the improvement of educational practices and policies. This presentation can take many forms, from scientific articles and conferences to seminars and trainings for teachers. Regardless of the form chosen, this research has multiple benefits.

First, educational research offers the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences between researchers, educators and other stakeholders. This collaboration is essential for the continuous development of the field and for identifying best practices in education. By presenting their results, researchers can receive valuable feedback and develop more effective solutions to challenges in the education system.

Secondly, pedagogical research contributes to the dissemination of knowledge and to raising awareness of educational issues. Teachers, parents and policymakers can be informed about the latest findings in the field and can make better-informed decisions. This is particularly important in a constantly changing educational environment, where adapting to the new needs of students and society is crucial.

In addition, pedagogical research can stimulate the career development of teachers. Teachers who are involved in research and who present their findings have the opportunity to improve their teaching skills, increase their professional status and gain recognition within the school community. This process can also motivate teachers to engage in their own action research, aimed at specifically improving the learning process in their classrooms. (Coşarbă & Roman, 2020)

Educational research can also contribute to the development of educational policy. By providing data and sound arguments, researchers can influence the decisions made by decision-makers and contribute to the development of more effective educational policies.

Through these presentations, researchers can draw attention to urgent issues in the field of education and promote significant changes.

Educational research is an essential tool for improving the learning process. It facilitates the exchange of ideas, the dissemination of knowledge and the development of more effective educational practices. It also contributes to the development of teachers' careers and the development of better educational policies (Torkos, 2021). Through educational research, we can build a better education system that meets the needs of students and contributes to the formation of a more educated and equitable society.

Research objectives:

1. To identify and analyze the methods and strategies currently used by teachers to stimulate a taste for reading in primary school students.
2. To examine teachers' personal and innovative approaches to

promoting reading among primary school students.

3. To assess the impact of these approaches on learning outcomes and interest in reading among primary school students.

4. To identify examples of good practice in promoting reading in primary school and document them in detail.

5. To develop and present a detailed case study that illustrates a personal and innovative approach to stimulating a taste for reading, providing details on the context, strategies and results.

6. To analyse the factors that influence the success or failure of innovative approaches to promoting reading among primary school students.

7. To provide practical recommendations for teachers and educators to improve their approaches to promoting reading.

8. To contribute to the development of a knowledge base in the field of pedagogical research on the promotion of reading in the primary cycle and to highlight the importance of personal and innovative approaches in this context.

9. To disseminate the results of the research in the educational community, so that other teachers and education professionals can benefit from our conclusions and recommendations.

The research objectives are well defined and focus on exploring and promoting personal and innovative approaches to stimulating reading enjoyment in primary school students. These objectives will help guide our research and achieve significant results in the field of promoting reading in primary school. Similar effects were also found in the study conducted by Tiberiu Dughi, Sofia Cotrău (2014). The results of the study conducted on 30 primary school students highlighted behavioral changes expressed through increased spontaneity, receptivity and active participation in students.

Our research hypothesis focuses on exploring the impact of the innovative approach "Book reading: a personal and innovative approach to stimulating reading enjoyment in both teachers and primary school students". We argue that the integration of this methodology into the teaching-learning process can have a significant effect on the development of reading skills and a passion for reading, consequently, this method will contribute to the formation of an educational environment in which reading becomes an exciting and rewarding experience, thus benefiting the overall development of primary school students.

The organization and conduct of pedagogical research on the theme "Book literacy - a personal and innovative approach to stimulating a taste for reading for both teachers and primary school students" is a particularly valuable initiative in the development of education and training of children in the primary school. This theme focuses on the

importance of reading and how we can promote a passion for books among teachers and students.

Pedagogical research begins by defining its objectives. In this case, the main objective is to find innovative methods to develop an appetite for reading among both teachers and primary school students. This personal approach focuses on the individual needs of each teacher and student, recognizing that each person has different preferences and interests when it comes to reading.

“A crucial aspect of pedagogical research is the identification of innovative methods” (Vasilescu, 2016). This can involve developing personalized reading programs for each student, using technology to create interactive and engaging learning experiences. Reading workshops and events can also be organized, where teachers and students can also share experiences and stories related to the books they have read.

Another important aspect of pedagogical research in this topic is impact evaluation. Different evaluation tools and methods can be used to measure the evolution of reading appetite among teachers and students. For example, questionnaires, interviews or observations can be used to collect data on changes in reading habits and attitudes towards reading.

“The results of pedagogical research can be used to develop strategies and practical recommendations for teachers and educational institutions. For example, guides for teachers can be developed with suggestions on how to encourage reading in the classroom or how to choose appropriate books for students” (Vasilescu, 2016). Training programs for teachers can also be developed to help them become more effective in promoting reading.

Research location: “Aron Cotruș” Junior High School, Arad

Research period: 6 months (September 2023-February 2024)

- September 2023 (choosing work samples, observing students and their teachers, collecting preliminary data);

- October 2023 (pre-experimental stage);

- November 2023- January 2024 (experimental stage + demonstrative intervention within the zonal pedagogical circle of 4th grade teachers);

- February 2024 (post-experimental stage).

Research sample:

a) The sample consists of 4th grade students who are included in the Step by step education system. 20 students from 4th grade A (experimental sample) and 4th grade B (control sample) will be selected from the "Aron Cotruș" Junior High School.

b) The sample consists of the four teachers who teach in the two classes that form the experimental sample and the control sample.

Sample content:

a) “An innovative approach will be used for students by creating new teaching strategies, such as literary cafes, book review competitions or interactive activities that will increase their enthusiasm for reading” (Jianu, 2018).

b) “A personalized training strategy will be developed for teachers, which will help them acquire innovative methods of stimulating students’ interest in reading. This could involve continuous training, coaching or creative workshops” (Jianu, 2018).

In the experimental pedagogical research on the topic “Book literacy - a personal and innovative approach to stimulating a taste for reading for both teachers and primary school students”, we used a variety of modern teaching methods and appropriate teaching materials.

The teaching methods used in our research are (Grigorescu, 2020):

- Thinking Hats (De Bono):

We used this method to encourage creative thinking of participants on how to improve reading activities and promote a passion for reading.

- Kahoot:

We created interactive Kahoot games to assess and stimulate students' knowledge and interest in books. We used these games to test the acquired knowledge and to engage them in a fun way.

- Gallery Tour:

We organized a tour of a "gallery" of books to expose students to a variety of books and authors. This is an event where teachers and students share favorite books and motivate why they like them.

- Graphic Organizer:

We created graphic organizers to help students analyze and compare different books. We used flowcharts and mind maps to highlight characters, plot, setting, etc.

- Snowballs:

We started from a concept or idea and let students and teachers add ideas or suggestions to develop creative approaches to reading and learning.

- Writing workshops:

We organized writing workshops for students in which they could create their own stories or express their thoughts and feelings related to books. These workshops stimulated imagination and writing skills.

Teaching materials that we used were (Grigorescu, 2020):

a. Resources for teachers: reading approach guides, lesson outlines or additional materials to help them implement their personal approach in the classroom.

b. Resources for students: books, educational games, worksheets and other resources to motivate them to read and explore books in an innovative way.

To conduct the experimental pedagogical research, we used these methods to collect data and evaluate the impact of the “Book Literacy”

approach on students' and teachers' interest and reading skills. We made sure that we planned and structured the research in accordance with the research objectives and that we used appropriate data collection methods, such as questionnaires, observations, or interviews, to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed approach.

The independent variable (IV) is the factor that we studied to see how the innovative-nonformal methods approached influence the taste for reading. The independent variable is the type of reading method approach: innovative, technological, and other specific methods.

The dependent variable (DV) is the measurement and outcome that I want to quantify and evaluate according to the independent variable. In this case, the dependent variable will include:

- The degree of involvement of teachers and students in reading.
- Increased interest in reading among students.
- Performance on reading tests or qualitative reading assessments.
- Number of books read by students.
- Feedback from teachers and students on the non-formal reading methods used.

Control sample: The control sample was included in the experiment to compare their results with those obtained in the groups exposed to methods adapted to learning styles.

This group did not benefit from any specific adaptation of teaching and assessment methods, and followed the standard methods used in the reading approach.

Control sample size: 20 students (7 boys, 13 girls), 2 teachers

Experimental sample size: 20 students (9 boys, 11 girls), 2 teachers

Methods for adapting teaching and evaluation methods: Non-formal teaching methods were used that we adapted to the activities we carried out.

Conducting the research and interpreting the results

To conduct our experimental pedagogical research on the topic of "Book literacy - a personal and innovative approach to stimulating the taste for reading for both teachers and primary school students", it is important to follow a well-structured methodology. This includes two major preparatory stages:

- Establishing research objectives: I defined the specific objectives of the research, such as evaluating the effectiveness of non-formal methods of promoting reading among primary school teachers and students.
- Literature review: I searched for relevant resources in the specialized literature to document myself on non-formal techniques and methods for promoting reading. I also analyzed previous studies that

focus on innovative approaches to stimulating reading.

Development of the experimental methodology:

1. I chose a control sample and an experimental sample to test non-formal methods in approaching reading at the primary school level.

2. I initially established the criteria for selecting participants (primary school teachers and students) and ensured that they were representative of the target sample.

3. I developed several detailed lesson plans for implementing non-formal methods in the classroom.

4. I decided how I would collect data, measure success, and evaluate results.

Implementing non-formal methods:

1. I organized and implemented lessons using the chosen non-formal methods.

2. I ensured that teachers and students understood the purpose and procedures involved.

Data collection:

1. I used data collection tools, such as questionnaires, interviews, and personal observations, to evaluate the impact of non-formal methods.

2. I collected data from teachers and students, including their feedback.

Data analysis:

1. I processed the collected data to identify trends and significant results.

2. I used statistical techniques to assess significant differences between the control and experimental samples.

Interpreting the results:

1. I analyzed the research results to understand the impact of non-formal methods on stimulating reading in teachers and students.

2. I discussed with my teachers the implications of the results for pedagogy and teacher training.

Reporting the results:

1. I developed a detailed report of the experimental research within this bachelor's thesis, which includes the context, objectives, methodology, results and conclusions.

2. I will present the results of my research at the bachelor's exam and would like to capitalize on them in conferences or publish them in scientific journals.

Evaluating and adjusting the methods:

1. I took into account the feedback received from the participants and adjusted the non-formal methods to make them more effective.
2. I intend to continue to monitor the long-term impact of these methods.

Dissemination of research:

1. I intend to share my findings with the UAV pedagogical community and other stakeholders to contribute to the improvement of pedagogical practices regarding my pedagogical research topic.

Pre-experimental stage

The pre-experimental stage is an essential part of experimental pedagogical research and is used to establish the basis for my study. In the case of my research on non-formal teaching methods for stimulating a taste for reading among primary school teachers and students, this stage was carried out in both the experimental and control samples and had the objective of recording the stage and the way in which reading is approached through the traditional methods used until then.

I have established the next steps of my research, including the methods and procedures that I will use in the experimental stage. I have thought about how I will collect and analyze the data and how I will evaluate the effectiveness of non-formal methods in stimulating a taste for reading.

The pre-experimental stage involves observing and recording preliminary data on the type of reading and the degree of involvement of primary school students and teachers.

We used as specific data collection methods to measure reading and the degree of involvement in the act of reading:

- a. Questionnaires or interviews with participants to assess interest and attitude towards reading.
- b. Tests to assess reading skills and text comprehension.
- c. Direct observations of reading behavior.
- d. Reading activity log and time allocated to reading.

This information will later serve as a basis for comparison with the results obtained in the psychopedagogical experiment, to assess the impact of the intervention and to identify any necessary improvements in the learning and communication process.

The initial test had the following results:

Within the experimental sample, the following results were obtained: 8 children obtained the FB grade, 5 children obtained the B grade, 4 children obtained the S grade, and 3 children obtained the I grade.

Within the control sample, the following results were obtained: 9 children obtained the FB grade, 6 children obtained the B grade, 3 children obtained the S grade, and 2 children obtained the I grade.

Experimental stage

The pedagogical research on non-formal methods for stimulating a taste for reading among primary school students was carried out in the period November 2023- January 2024 and involved both the control sample and the experimental sample. The main purpose of this stage was to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of non-formal approaches in promoting reading compared to traditional methods.

Implementation of Non-formal Methods

Organization and implementation of lessons:

We implemented the non-formal methods chosen within the experimental sample, carefully monitoring the process and interaction between teachers and students. Observations included the level of student engagement, interactivity, and the degree of adaptability of the methods in different learning contexts.

Ensuring understanding of the purpose and procedures:

We ensured that both teachers and students clearly understood the purpose and modalities involved in using these non-formal methods. Training sessions were organized and informative materials were distributed to reinforce understanding.

Data collection and analysis

Use of data collection instruments:

We applied the same data collection instruments used such as questionnaires, observations, and standardized tests, as used in the pre-experimental stage, to assess changes in reading skills and student engagement in the educational process.

Data processing and analysis:

We analyzed the collected data in depth to identify significant differences and trends between the groups that benefited from non-formal methods and the control groups. The analysis included the assessment of individual progress and the assessment of the impact at the level of the entire educational community.

We also processed the collected data to identify significant differences and trends between the experimental and control samples.

Interpretation and reporting of the results

Interpretation of the results:

The results obtained indicated a significant improvement in reading skills among students exposed to non-formal methods. Notable increases were observed in the level of text comprehension, increased interest in reading and active participation in discussions related to the reading content.

We analyzed the results obtained following the implementation of non-

formal methods to understand their impact on stimulating reading.

Final report development:

We have compiled a thorough analysis of the experimental research, detailing the context of the study, the methodology used, the results obtained and the conclusions we reached from the data analysis. This report will serve as a basis for future recommendations and will be made available to the teachers involved for analysis and feedback.

Within the experimental sample, the results of “Very good” prevailed, with 11 out of the 20 students obtaining this grade. The “Good” grade was obtained by 8 students, and the “Sufficient” grade by 1 student, thus no results with the “Insufficient” grade were recorded in the experimental sample.

Within the control sample, the results of “Very good” and “Good” were equal.

Out of the total of 20 students, 9 of them obtained the grade "Very good", another 9 students obtained the grade "Good", and 2 students obtained the grade "Sufficient". And in this sample, there were no results with the grade "Insufficient".

In the post-experimental stage, the emphasis shifted to the implementation and consolidation of the results obtained during the experimental research. The initial data and the results obtained from the experimental process served as a starting point for the development and consolidation of pedagogical practices in the field of stimulating reading in the school environment.

We implemented a series of post-experimental strategies to consolidate and extend the results obtained in the experimental stage. These strategies included:

- Feedback and reflection sessions: Regular feedback and reflection sessions were organized, in which the teachers we collaborated with were able to share their experiences related to the implementation of non-formal methods in the classroom. This process facilitated the exchange of ideas and the identification of the most effective approaches to improving reading teaching practices.
- Continuous adaptation of non-formal methods: Based on post-experimental data and feedback received, we continued to adjust and adapt the non-formal methods used during the research. This process was crucial for the constant optimization and improvement of pedagogical approaches.
- Expanding practices in the educational community: We sought to expand the benefits of our findings by sharing the results and effective methods with other schools or teachers in the educational community. This effort was intended to contribute to the overall improvement of pedagogical practices throughout the community.

The overall performance of the students in the experimental sample is

encouraging, with most students achieving good and very good results. In conclusion, the post-experimental stage represented a continuation of efforts to develop and improve pedagogical practices, based on the results and conclusions obtained from the experimental research. The continuous approach, adaptation and expansion of the benefits of our findings were fundamental to ensuring a sustainable stimulation of reading within the school environment.

Conclusions of the experimental research

The conclusions of the didactic experimental research on the impact of the innovative approach "Book Citizenship" on stimulating the taste for reading at the level of teachers and students in the primary cycle demonstrated a series of significant and promising results.

The integration of the "Book Citizenship" method in the teaching-learning process generated a notable increase in students' interest and involvement in reading. Students showed increased curiosity about books and developed a positive and enjoyable attitude towards the reading process. A significant improvement in the reading skills of students who participated in this innovative method was observed. They showed progress in reading speed, text comprehension and the ability to analyze and interpret information from books.

Teachers' participation in implementing the "Book Literacy" method had a positive impact on their approach to promoting reading. Teachers observed a change in students' enthusiasm and involvement in reading activities, which motivated them to continue and adapt this method within their teaching process.

The integration of this innovative approach contributed to the formation of an educational environment in which reading became an exciting and rewarding experience. Students perceived reading as an enjoyable activity and associated it with positive experiences, which led to the creation of a reading culture in school and outside it.

The long-term impact of this methodology was reflected in the overall development of primary school students. They demonstrated an increase in vocabulary, improved communication skills and openness to exploring and understanding the world around them through books.

These findings support the initial hypothesis that integrating the "Book Literacy" method into the educational process can have a significant impact on stimulating a taste for reading among both teachers and primary school students. By promoting a positive attitude towards reading and developing reading skills, this method proves to be a valuable resource in transforming the educational process into an engaging and beneficial experience for the overall development of students.

Rekindling interest in reading among primary school students from a

non-formal perspective is a crucial theme in the context of contemporary education. This paper focuses on investigating and deeply understanding how non-formal methods can be used to encourage and maintain interest in reading among primary school students.

The research identified several key findings.

First, it was observed that non-formal approaches, such as interactive activities, role-playing games and interactive stories, have a significant impact on stimulating interest in reading. Students are more actively engaged when the learning process is interactive and enjoyable, allowing them to develop their reading skills in a relaxed and fun environment.

It was also found that the involvement of parents and the community in promoting non-formal reading had positive results. When these actors are involved in reading activities, children are more likely to discover the pleasure of reading and develop a lasting interest in books and diverse texts.

The implications of these findings for teachers and education policymakers are significant. Educators should adopt non-formal strategies in the teaching process to increase students' interest in reading. Developing educational programs that integrate non-formal methods could lead to increased student engagement and achievement in reading skills. In addition, education policymakers should support and promote collaboration between schools, communities, and families to create an enabling environment in which reading is considered an enjoyable activity and essential for children's personal development.

In terms of directions for future research, there are considerable opportunities to explore non-formal methods and their impact on the development of reading skills among primary school students. Further studies could investigate in depth the effectiveness of different non-formal approaches, adapting them to the specific needs of different groups of students and communities. Research could also explore more deeply how technology and new ways of presenting content can be integrated into non-formal methods to enhance interest and comprehension of reading.

In conclusion, this paper highlights the importance and potential of non-formal methods in rekindling interest in reading among primary school students. Implementing these approaches could represent a significant step towards creating an educational environment in which reading becomes not only an obligation, but also an enjoyable activity and beneficial for children's personal development.

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