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DEVELOPING HERMENEUTIC COMPETENCE IN THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION TEACHERS: THEORY AND PRACTICE

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Abstract

This article scientifically and theoretically investigates the role of the hermeneutic approach in modern pedagogical paradigms and its significance in shaping the professional competence of primary school teachers. In the research process, the epistemological foundations of the phenomena of “understanding” and “interpretation” are analyzed through the prism of pedagogical interpretation, particularly the hermeneutic views of thinkers such as F. Schleiermacher, W. Dilthey, and H.-G. Gadamer. The article also provides a practical justification of the methodology for hermeneutic decoding of texts in primary school “Reading Literacy” textbooks, using the topic “Modern Technologies” as an example. The obtained results confirm the decisive role of teachers’ hermeneutic competence in developing students’ critical thinking skills in accordance with PISA/PIRLS requirements.

Keywords: Pedagogical hermeneutics, interpretation, professional competence, hermeneutic circle, pre-understanding, reading literacy, authorial intention, cognitive development, PISA, PIRLS.



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Introduction

Today, global educational systems are undergoing a transition from a “knowledge-oriented” approach to a “competency-based” paradigm in the formation of learners’ personalities. In this context, teachers are required to transform from mere transmitters of information into interpreters who process and construct meaning. According to the National Curriculum of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the content of education is directed toward developing students’ abilities in text analysis, interpretation of implicit meanings, and critical reasoning [6]. Primary education serves as the foundation of human development, where the ability to “read the world as a text” is formed. However, in many cases, the educational process remains limited to mechanical reading and memorization of texts. To address this issue, the hermeneutic competence of teachers—understood as the ability to manage the “dialogue of meanings” between text, author, and reader—plays a crucial methodological role.

Theoretical Framework of Hermeneutics

Although hermeneutics historically emerged as the art of interpreting sacred texts, it gradually evolved into a broader philosophical and pedagogical discipline in the 19th and 20th centuries.

1. Epistemological Approach (F.Schleiermacher) As the founder of modern hermeneutics, Schleiermacher defines understanding as a dual process: grammatical interpretation and psychological interpretation (divinatory understanding). From a pedagogical perspective, this implies that teachers must comprehend both the linguistic structure of the text and the author’s inner intentions [3].
2. Ontological Approach (M. Heidegger and H.-G. Gadamer) Gadamer describes understanding as a “fusion of horizons.” According to this view, teachers should



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integrate the historical horizon of the text with the contemporary horizon of learners [1].

3. The Principle of the Hermeneutic Circle The hermeneutic circle is a fundamental law of interpretation, according to which the meaning of the whole is understood through its parts, while the parts are interpreted within the context of the whole. The teacher's skill lies in guiding students within this dynamic interpretative cycle [2].

Components of Hermeneutic Competence

The hermeneutic competence of teachers is manifested through the following components:

- Interpretative skill: revealing hidden meanings of the text and adapting them to learners' life experiences.
- Reflective analysis: awareness of the subjectivity of interpretation and fostering independent thinking in students.
- Empathic understanding: immersion into the learner's cognitive and emotional world [4].
- Pre-understanding (preconception): the teacher's prior knowledge that must not limit but rather enrich interpretation.

Three-Stage Hermeneutic Model of Text Work

Linguistic analysis – analysis of semantic fields of words and expressions in the text.

Dialogical analysis – discussion of authorial intention and character behavior.

Applicative analysis – integration of the text into students' personal experience [7].

Practical Analysis Example

The methodology is demonstrated through a dialogue about solar panels in the 2nd-grade "Reading Literacy" textbook.



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Surface meaning: Information about solar energy technology.

Deep meaning: Harmony between human beings and nature.

The phrase “affordable and environmentally friendly” reveals hidden values such as:

- responsibility
- sustainability
- ecological awareness

Through this short dialogue, the author instills the values of global citizenship and ecological culture in learners. The father figure in the text functions as a Socratic guide who stimulates inquiry-based learning.

Educational Significance

The hermeneutic approach develops learners’ competencies required by international assessment programs such as PIRLS and PISA, particularly:

- interpretation and integration skills
- critical thinking
- metacognitive awareness (awareness of one’s own thinking processes) [8].

Conclusion

The research findings demonstrate that hermeneutic competence is one of the most important indicators of a primary school teacher’s professional culture. The following recommendations are proposed: Introduction of “Pedagogical Hermeneutics” as an independent module in higher pedagogical education institutions. Development of hermeneutic maps for each text in primary school textbooks. Organization of practical training sessions on text decoding and interpretation for in-service teachers. In conclusion, hermeneutics is not only a methodological approach but also a spiritual bridge ensuring intellectual and



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human connection between teacher and student. By “reviving” texts through interpretation, we cultivate deep understanding and love for learning in students.

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