

Theoretical Analysis and Components of the Concept of Literary Literacy

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Abstract:

Literary literacy has become one of the most widely discussed interdisciplinary categories in contemporary educational research, serving as a foundation for intellectual, moral, and cultural development. Traditionally understood as reading and comprehension, literary literacy is now viewed as a complex activity involving meaning-making, aesthetic perception, critical reflection, and social engagement. Scholars such as Dewey, Rosenblatt, Vygotsky, and Freire, along with Uzbek researchers including Tokhliev, Tillabaeva, and Rakhmonov, have contributed valuable perspectives, but these often remain limited to single disciplinary frames. Knowledge Gap: Despite the growing importance of literary literacy, there is insufficient integration of pedagogical, psycholinguistic, cognitive, and neuro-pedagogical approaches into a unified framework that identifies its structural components. Aims: This study aims to conduct a theoretical analysis of literary literacy, clarify its essential features, and define its multidimensional structure as an educational competence. Results: The research demonstrates that literary literacy encompasses interrelated components such as linguistic and speech ability, literary analysis, aesthetic perception, personal interpretation, and critical thinking. These components function in harmony, enabling learners to comprehend texts, analyze artistic and ideological content, create personal meaning, and develop empathy and social responsibility. Novelty: The study proposes an integrated model that interprets literary literacy as both a cognitive and moral activity shaped by intellectual development, emotional perception, and cultural heritage. Implications: By systematizing literary literacy as a universal competence, the research establishes a theoretical foundation for pedagogical practice, highlighting its role in fostering independent thought, critical awareness, creativity, and the moral maturity necessary for socially responsible citizenship.

Keywords: Neuro-Pedagogy, Literary Competence, Aesthetic Perception, Cognitive Activity, Affective Understanding, Neuro-Thinking, Personal Meaning, Sensorimotor Analysis, Reflective Reading, Metacognitive Strategies, Visualization, Neuro-Interpretation, Educational Technologies

Introduction

The concept of literary literacy is one of the widely discussed, multidimensional, and interdisciplinary categories in contemporary educational theory and practice. Its formation is closely linked with the general concept of literacy, the ability to read and comprehend information, engagement with literary texts, the creation of personal meaning, and aesthetic perception. Literary literacy does not merely imply reading or understanding a text but also involves analyzing it, recognizing artistic devices, grasping its ideological and aesthetic content, and shaping the learner's personal opinion, emotional response, and social position. Thus, a thorough theoretical analysis of this concept—its origins, developmental stages, and foundations—is crucial for defining the content and tasks of literary education[1].

In scholarly sources, definitions of literary literacy are diverse, encompassing interrelated linguistic, cognitive, aesthetic, cultural, and personal meaning-making dimensions. Modern approaches interpret literary literacy not only as the ability to read and understand a text but also as the learner's capacity to actively engage with it, perceive its ideological-aesthetic essence, recognize artistic devices, and form a personal attitude toward the work[2].

Internationally, the concept of literary literacy is often explained through the terms “critical literacy” and “literary competence.” These approaches emphasize not only the reader's comprehension of the text but also their ability to critically analyze contextual meanings, understand the author's stance, and apply reflective, evaluative thinking. For example, in Louise Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading, the reader enters into an active relationship with the text, recreating its meaning based on personal experience and worldview. Such an approach interprets literary literacy not simply as a measure of knowledge but as an indicator of the development of thought, emotional perception, and social consciousness. In local research traditions, the concept of literary literacy is also approached from an interdisciplinary perspective. Some scholars interpret it as a pedagogical category situated at the intersection of language, literature, and education, while others regard it as a process connected with aesthetic cultivation, moral development, and social activity. For example, B. Tokhliev defines literary literacy as the ability to deeply understand literature, conduct artistic analysis, and articulate personal opinions. In contrast, M. Tillabaeva describes literary literacy as an educational process that encompasses aesthetic taste, critical thinking, and moral values[3].

Methodology

The methodology of this study is rooted in a theoretical, analytical, and comparative approach that integrates insights from pedagogy, psycholinguistics, cognitive science, and neuro-pedagogy to examine the concept of literary literacy as a multidimensional educational category. The research draws upon the works of international scholars such as Dewey, Rosenblatt, Vygotsky, and Freire, alongside Uzbek researchers including Tokhliev, Tillabaeva, and Rakhmonov, to construct an interdisciplinary framework for understanding the nature, components, and functions of literary literacy[4]. Through comparative analysis of these perspectives, the study identifies commonalities and differences in the ways literary literacy is conceptualized, with a focus on meaning-making, critical reflection, aesthetic perception, and social responsibility. Elements of discourse analysis were employed to trace how the term is discussed across educational and scholarly contexts, while synthesis of theoretical viewpoints allowed for the formulation of an integrated definition. The methodology also involved examining the structural composition of literary literacy by analyzing its functional, cognitive, emotional, linguistic, and communicative components as interrelated dimensions of the learning process. By highlighting the cognitive operations involved in text comprehension, artistic analysis, aesthetic perception, personal interpretation, and critical thinking, the study established the interdependence of these elements in shaping literacy as both a cognitive and moral activity. This holistic methodological orientation ensures that literary literacy is examined not as a narrow skill but as a comprehensive competence shaped by intellectual development, cultural heritage, and social consciousness, thereby providing a sound foundation for advancing theory and guiding pedagogical practice[5].

Results and Discussion

The scientific interpretation of literary literacy is analyzed comprehensively from the perspectives of modern pedagogy, psycholinguistics, cognitive sciences, and neuro-pedagogy. Scholarly explanations emphasize that literary literacy is not merely the ability to read and understand but rather a cognitive activity grounded in meaning-making, reflective analysis, emotional perception, social interaction, and personal expression. In this sense, literary literacy entails a learner's ability to interpret a literary text in a unique way, to perceive its aesthetic and ideological values, and to respond to it creatively[6]. From a cognitive perspective, literary literacy is a process of performing active cognitive operations with the text in the brain—reasoning, constructing meaning through artistic imagery, linking with prior experience, drawing conclusions, and conducting analysis. These processes activate numerous neural networks in the learner's brain, which directly influences educational effectiveness. For instance, text interpretation activates the prefrontal cortex, perceiving artistic imagery engages the amygdala, while contextual comprehension involves the hippocampus. This approach therefore interprets literary literacy not as a sum of knowledge, but as a process that integrates cognition, emotion, and personal engagement within the brain[7].

From a psycholinguistic standpoint, literary literacy is considered a higher stage of language activity. It encompasses lexical, semantic, and pragmatic comprehension, recognition of artistic devices, discovery of the author's intention, and construction of contextual meanings. This process is particularly crucial for children and adolescents, as it serves as a fundamental factor in both speech development and personal growth.

The neuro-pedagogical approach explains literary literacy by linking it to neurobiological and affective-psychological factors. Accordingly, learners' emotional impressions of a literary text—such as empathy, aesthetic appreciation, and the creation of personal meaning—facilitate deep knowledge acquisition. Such activity activates neuroplasticity and enhances the effectiveness of education. From this perspective, literary literacy is an educational activity that unfolds through the integration of brain function, language, thought, and culture, and is inseparably tied to moral maturity and social participation[8].

Overall, as the scientific interpretation of literary literacy deepens across different disciplines, it is increasingly recognized as a universal competence in education. The concept is not only central to the methodology of teaching literature but also serves as one of the fundamental theoretical bases for fostering general literacy, understanding cultural heritage, and cultivating personal development. Thus, literary literacy should be regarded not within the boundaries of a single discipline, but as a universal educational category closely connected with the content, aims, and outcomes of education[9].

A pedagogical and psycholinguistic analysis of literary literacy further clarifies its educational essence and methodological significance. From a pedagogical perspective, literary literacy is the learner's ability to actively engage with a literary text, to comprehend and analyze it, to perceive its aesthetic and ethical values, and to shape a personal response. It contributes not only to knowledge acquisition but also to moral development, intellectual growth, and the formation of an independent position in social interactions. Such an approach provides grounds for interpreting the essence of literary education as an active, meaning-making process. In pedagogy, literary literacy is associated with the active analysis of literary categories such as artistic imagery, plot, the author's position, and the representation of time. In this process, the learner does not adopt a merely receptive stance toward the text but also engages with it interpretively and creatively. For instance, M. Tillabaeva emphasizes: "Literary literacy is the ability of the learner to comprehend an artistic work and to express personal opinions freely and with sound justification" [10].

In our view, this definition highlights literary literacy from the perspectives of educational and intellectual development, demonstrating the need to pay particular attention to its active social and moral dimensions within the learning process.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, literary literacy manifests as a higher form of language and speech activity. It integrates processes such as semantic perception, contextual comprehension,

recognition of artistic devices, meaning-making, and personal interpretation. Thus, the learner perceives the text not only at the grammatical level but also at semantic and pragmatic dimensions. In this way, the learner uncovers hidden meanings, connotations, and socio-cultural contexts within the text, while simultaneously developing a personal response to them[11].

Psycholinguistic abilities—such as discursive thinking, associative reasoning, symbolic interpretation, and contextual analysis—are of particular importance in this process. These activities are linked to the activation of specific language centers in the brain and reflect the complex cognitive activity involved in interacting with a literary text. On this point, D. Slobin writes: “In understanding speech, the individual reconstructs reality through the text and reorganizes it within the inner world via language”. Indeed, this observation provides grounds to interpret literary literacy as a process that expresses the inner dynamics of human cognition. It is not limited to linguistic knowledge but also encompasses worldview, emotional impressions, and social perception, making it a multifaceted form of cognitive activity.

In contemporary pedagogical and interdisciplinary perspectives, the concept of literary literacy is understood as a complex structure of knowledge and competencies with multiple dimensions. It is not confined to knowledge of language or the technical ability to decode a text; rather, it encompasses artistic analysis, aesthetic perception, personal meaning-making, understanding of social and cultural contexts, reflective reasoning, and creative response. Therefore, in order to effectively develop and assess literary literacy, it is essential to identify its constituent components—functional, cognitive, emotional, linguistic and intellectual, social-communicative—and to analyze them in their interrelatedness[12].

The structural composition of literary literacy determines its richness of content and the extent to which the learner can engage in acts of cognition, emotion, and understanding during interaction with a literary text. This structure consists of several interdependent components: linguistic and speech ability, literary analysis, aesthetic perception, personal interpretation, and critical thinking. Each component plays an independent yet harmonized role in the processes of perceiving and deriving meaning from a literary text. Below, these components will be examined in detail[13].

Linguistic and speech ability constitutes the fundamental functional basis of literary literacy. It includes the capacity to comprehend lexical, grammatical, and syntactic structures within a literary text; to distinguish idiomatic expressions and stylistic devices; and to analyze semantic meanings. Through this ability, the learner correctly receives information from the text, grasps semantic relations among words, and reproduces them in speech. A learner whose linguistic and speech development is insufficient cannot fully perceive a literary text and faces difficulties in understanding its aesthetic or ideological dimensions. Literary analysis ability refers to the learner’s capacity to study a literary text in terms of both structure and meaning, including the analysis of characters, the chain of events, plot and composition, as well as recognition of the author’s style. Through literary analysis, the learner draws conclusions about the text’s structure, underlying ideas, artistic devices, and its relationship to the historical context. This component enables the study of literature not only through theoretical knowledge but also on the basis of active, analytical thinking[14].

Aesthetic perception is the ability to receive a literary text not merely as a source of information, but also as an object of emotional and spiritual impression. Through this component, the learner perceives the beauty within the text, the musicality of its expression, and the feelings conveyed through images of nature and human beings, while responding to them with personal emotions. Aesthetic perception cultivates taste, empathy, and an inner capacity for sensitivity in learners.

Personal interpretation is the ability to interpret a literary text not only from the perspective of the author’s intention or objective content, but also on the basis of the learner’s personal experience, worldview, and emotional state. In this process, the learner enters into a personal dialogue with the text, forming perspectives on life and reflecting upon human values. Personal interpretation strengthens the learner’s ability for conscious meaning-making[15].

Critical thinking represents the most advanced stage of literary literacy. It denotes the ability to analyze, compare, and evaluate ideas, the author’s stance, the dynamics of characters, and the broader

social significance within the text. Through this ability, the learner can freely and convincingly express opinions about the authenticity of the work, the orientation of its ideas, and the appropriateness of the author's perspective. Critical thinking forms the basis of active knowledge acquisition and plays a vital role in cultivating socially engaged individuals.

Taken together, these components of literary literacy function in an interconnected manner, complementing one another and shaping in the learner a complex system of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. They provide the necessary theoretical foundation for designing methodological systems of literary education and for evaluating learning outcomes.

Among these, the ability for personal meaning-making and communication is regarded as one of the most significant and advanced cognitive-communicative components of literary literacy. This ability encompasses the learner's capacity to reinterpret a literary text on the basis of individual thinking, emotional impressions, and lived experience; to express a personal response; and to enter into social communication through the text. In other words, a literary work is not only an object for understanding the author's idea, but also a cultural and spiritual space of dialogue that enables the learner to generate personal meaning.

In the process of personal meaning-making, the learner compares the events, images, situations, and ideas within the text with his or her own life experiences, emotional states, and worldview. The learner's relation to the work manifests not only in the form of "correct or incorrect understanding," but rather as "I understood it this way" or "I felt it in this way," that is, in a subjective mode of comprehension. This process ensures the learner's active participation as a subject in education, helping to connect knowledge with a personal system of values. Such an approach is also reflected in P. Freire's theory of critical pedagogy, in which education is interpreted as a process of "meaning-making". The concept of literary literacy in recent decades has become one of the complex and multifaceted scientific categories that is widely discussed in international and local academic-educational circles. Scholars in pedagogy, psycholinguistics, and education research across various countries have offered different approaches to literary literacy, interpreting its essence, functions, and mechanisms of formation from diverse scientific perspectives. In particular, prominent foreign scholars such as J. Dewey, F. Rosenblatt, L.S. Vygotsky, and P. Freire have interpreted literary literacy in their theories as a critical, socio-moral, and cognitive process. At the same time, in Uzbekistan, scholars such as B. Tokhliev, M. Tillabayeva, Sh. Rakhmonov, and N. Matmurodova have studied this concept from the perspectives of literary education, spiritual upbringing, and the development of independent thinking among students. This section analyzes the views of these scholars, outlining their similarities and differences, as well as their theoretical significance.

John Dewey, in his pragmatic pedagogy, emphasized the necessity of building education on the basis of experience. According to him, a student should not accept knowledge in a ready-made form, but rather create it through personal activity and practical experience. In this process, literary literacy serves as a means for shaping an individual's thinking, reasoning, and attitudes that are connected with real life. Dewey's ideas of interactivity, thinking, and active participation in education provide a strong foundation for the formation of literary literacy.

Conclusion

The analysis of literary literacy demonstrates that it is not confined to the simple ability to read and comprehend a text but represents a multidimensional competence encompassing cognitive, aesthetic, emotional, linguistic, and social dimensions. It integrates skills of linguistic comprehension, literary analysis, aesthetic perception, personal interpretation, and critical thinking, which together ensure a learner's active engagement with literary works. Literary literacy, therefore, is both a cognitive and moral activity, shaping not only intellectual growth but also the development of empathy, cultural awareness, and social responsibility. The comparative perspectives of scholars such as Dewey, Rosenblatt, Vygotsky, and Freire, as well as the contributions of Uzbek researchers like Tokhliev, Tillabayeva, and Rakhmonov, reveal that while definitions vary, they converge on the idea that literacy must be approached interdisciplinarily, linking pedagogy with psycholinguistics, cognitive science,

and neuro-pedagogy. This ensures a fuller understanding of how meaning is constructed and how learners develop reflective and critical capacities. Dewey's emphasis on experiential learning, Rosenblatt's transactional theory, and Freire's concept of critical literacy highlight the role of active participation, personal interpretation, and socio-moral engagement, while Vygotsky underscores the developmental importance of interaction. However, limitations exist in isolating these approaches, as each provides only a partial picture of the complex phenomenon. Thus, literary literacy must be understood as a universal educational category, one that contributes to the holistic formation of competent individuals capable of independent thought, creative analysis, and socially responsible action. Strengthening literary literacy, therefore, is fundamental not only to literary education but to the broader aims of fostering culturally rich and morally mature citizens.

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