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RAISING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN IN MOUNTAIN REGIONS BY MEANS OF USING LOCAL HISTORY/LORE MATERIALS

VASYL KOBAL, MARYNA KOBAL

Abstract. The article is devoted to the effectiveness of the use of local lore material in mountainous terrain schools to improve student achievement in the development of their cognitive interest. In particular, the analysis of the role of the school in the development of Ukrainian Carpathian mountain areas of education and younger generation training. Attention is drawn to the fact that during the organization of the educational process in schools of mountainous terrain, we are to take into consideration rather high level of spirituality of Highlanders, their love for their land, traditions and customs. Therefore, during the lessons of social and humanitarian course the teacher is to use local history material that will provide development of students cognitive interest. The authors in the experimental studies process demonstrated that the organization of learning the history of Ukraine in the 5th grade should be directed to the development of cognitive interest in history. So, the children in the 5th grade will not have to study the whole history. They are to be prepared to gradually assimilate to it according to the curriculum. A critical factor in successful learning is to form cognitive interest. To make the learning process easier and more interesting the teacher must offer his/her students the curriculum material which they would not only feel, but also easily understand. The students must realize that it's not about teaching something/someone unknown, but about themselves, their parents, grandparents, great grandparents, family, region, country. Therefore, the initial training should dominate local history material, allowing the development of cognitive interest in history, lay the foundations of historical knowledge and provide increasing levels of students' achievements. This is ensured by a parallel study of the history of the native land. The authors defined teaching and learning requirements for local lore material to be used in the process of study and presented their own examples.

Keywords: local folklore, local history, cognitive interest.

We consider this topic due to the peculiarities of the functioning of secondary schools in mountainous regions under new socio-economic and socio-political environment and the challenge of finding ways to improve the quality of education and the development of cognitive interests of students with the use of local history/lore material.

Educational Institutions in the mountainous regions/highlands play multifunctional role in public life, because, "they solve not only educational problems but also enrich the development of national traditions and values - the unique potential of the national culture"⁵.

School occupies a specific place in Ukrainian Carpathians, primarily due to the role that is traditionally given to this type of establishment in the mountain village life, that is upbringing of the

younger generation. School in mountainous region has always been and will be a major factor of livelihood, the preservation and development of towns, big and small villages. The life of every inhabitant of a mountainous village and his family is connected with the school and teachers who work in it. Non-standard working conditions, the uniqueness of the structure and modes of learning, information lack about the latest achievements of psychological and pedagogical sciences due to the remote distance of mountainous school teachers has ambiguous impact on the functioning of the school. The teacher is required to organize flexible educational process¹.

It should be noted also, that the life of the community in the mountains now does not differ by modern IT but feature high spirituality, a kind of rich traditions that are needed to be combined with innovative content, forms and methods of work.

Life values of Highlanders, their spiritual and physical health, optimism, self-support system in difficult geographic conditions – can't but reflect on the perception of the worldview of children from mountainous regions, the teachers' work and the school itself. All previously mentioned factors contribute to the development of the personality of schoolchildren as well as adults.

Researchers and teachers themselves also note that schoolchildren, living in mountainous areas, suffer certain difficulties in learning lessons/curriculum insufficiently. Due to the fore above mentioned factor there are some notable knowledge gaps and the development and application of new technologies, forms and methods of teaching in a village/rural school of mountainous region are also required.

Therefore, developing ways of implementation of the main objectives of modern education - formation of harmonious intelligent and creative personality, within the framework of educational process organization in schools in mountainous regions, we are to take into consideration rather high level of spirituality of Highlanders, their love for their land, traditions and customs. The teachers of social and humanitarian lessons should make use of local history/lore materials for schoolchildren cognitive interest development, which is a must/requirement for improving the efficiency of schooling.

The aim of the article is to highlight the expediency and effectiveness of regional natural history information usage in the mountainous schools educational process with the aim of developing cognitive interests of students and improving their academic performance.

The below listed scientists have devoted their research materials to the learning of cognitive interests of schoolchildren as psycho-pedagogical problems: Aleksiuk A.M., Babanskii J.K., Bondarevskaya V.B., Danilov M.A., Lerner I.J., Makhmutov M.I., Onischuk V.A., Pidkasystyi P.I., Skatkin M.N., Traitak D.I., Shchukina H.I., Kostyuk H.S., Krutetskyi V.A., Menchynska N.A., Morozov H.G., Miasyshchev V.N., Ponomarev A.J., Rubinstein S.L., El'konin D.B., Jacobson P.M., Holant E.A., Korotkov M.V., Vagin A.A. etc.

Some aspects of the usage of local studies in the school educational process are highlighted in the writings of some experts^{2,4,6,7}. However, topical issues, related to the integrated use of existing cultural and historical attractions of the Transcarpathian region for the harmonious development of schoolchildren personality in mountainous regions, still exist.

Since Ukraine gained its independence and reforming of education system, teachers are increasingly turning to national sources. Ethnology and local history are actively being developed.

In early 90-s of XX century educational community in Transcarpathian Region raised the issue of teaching Ethnology as a separate subject at school, as it is part of the whole educational process. With the help of these knowledge it becomes possible to cultivate the sense of dignity for the homeland, patriotism, loyalty and fidelity in younger generation.

Regional Education Conference "Local History is back to school" held in 1993, June 17-18, has energized this process. The participants were dynamically debating on the necessity of the Local History introduction into the schools curriculum. Actually, it wasn't the question- whether you need this subject or not, but the issue of implementing this idea into real life, was raised.

Currently, dozens of teachers and enthusiasts have already developed a number of teaching aids, have collected extensive practical material. New Historical Regional Lore Museums have been opened, the search groups, tourism and local history work have been successfully restored.

Studying the history of Ukraine should be considered as a vivid example of local lore material usage for the development of cognitive interests of students.

Psychological and pedagogical research, the results of education and classroom observations support the idea that a child perceives and understands the material that dominates in its natural environment the best. That is, the child can understand and remember all the information which is associated with him/her, his/her parents, family, city (village) land and the Motherland. This gives us the reason to believe that along with the propaedeutic course of the history of Ukraine "The History of the Native Land" must be studied.

The combination of these two courses must initiate the process of forming coherent historical consciousness of cognitive interest in history as a subject.

During the pilot study we proved that the history of native land is being studied during the History classes; scientifically based and proven system of teaching and organizational conditions is being used. Historical texts, the use of vivid clarity, teaching tasks of different levels of complexity of cognitive tasks, role-playing games and teaching systems, problem- search tasks (both classroom and home), independent work, sightseeing bots - the best time for the development of cognitive interests of students in history are the special tasks adapted to the schoolchildren being aged 10-12. The children of the 5th grade will not have to study the whole History, they must be prepared to gradually assimilate it according to the curriculum during the next few years of their study. A crucial factor in successful learning is to form cognitive interest. Therefore, the purpose of history lessons in 5th grade - to develop cognitive interest in the subject. So, to make the knowledge gaining process not difficult, you must offer your schoolchildren the material which would be not only easily felt but also easily understood. The child must realize that it's not learning about someone, but about him/her, their parents, grandparents, great grandparents, family, region, country. Therefore, during the initial training, the local history material should dominate, thus enabling the development of cognitive interest in history and laying the foundations of historical knowledge and provide increasing levels of student achievements.

We consider that the usage of local lore material is one of the main methodological conditions of cognitive interests of students to the history. That is why we took into consideration the following peculiarities while selecting the lesson material:

- Adaptation of text to the typical age peculiarities of children being 10-12 years old (accessible, understandable, interesting, mainly - art style (narrative description), the sequence of presentation of ideas;
- The use of historical documents (excerpts/passages from chronicles, stories, legends, poems, letters, decrees, etc.), which must meet the following requirements:
 - a) be based on the purpose and objectives of teaching history;
 - b) reflect the basic, most common events;
 - c) be in the organic unity with program material;
 - d) be clear and engaging for students in content and volume;
- Connection of material with the real life, knowledge and experience of schoolchildren, with the history of Ukraine;
- A combination of theoretical material with vivid illustrations, maps, diagrams;
- Maximum combination of material and excursion/sightseeing bots.

In accordance with the above mentioned psychological and pedagogical requirements we offer some examples of didactic material of local lore history material being used during the lessons of Native Land History, following the above mentioned psychological and pedagogical requirements we offer:

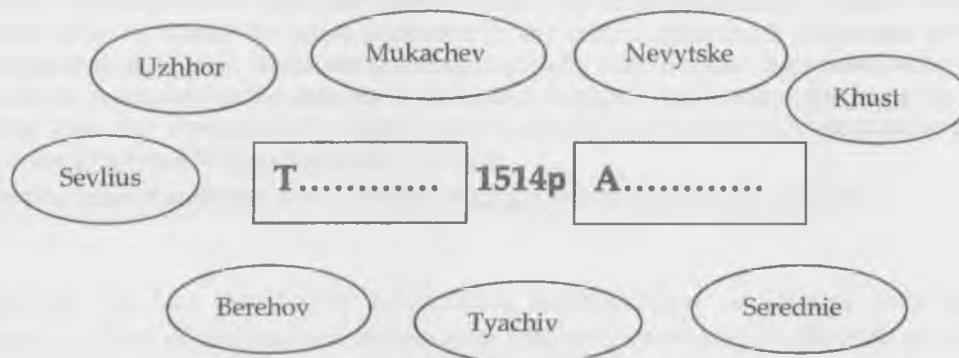
Retrieval problem questions and tasks system while studying section I "What is History?"

Genealogy of Transcarpathian Region "in 5th grade at school:

1	What does History study? How is it swayed? Historical relics. Treasury of native land History.	Problematic issue of the lesson: Why History is called the teacher of life? - How to study Ancient History? - How did we learn about ancient people style of living? What were they busy with?
2	Genealogy of Transcarpathian Region and my family History.	Problematic issue of the lesson: Why do they say that people memory is the memory of history? - Look at the time line and find the birth date of Jesus Christ. What other event does that date indicate? - Where did the tribes settle down in Transcarpathian Region? Why? - Why did Transcarpathian lands belong to various states at different times?
3-4	Primitive people on the territory of Transcarpathian Region. The Slavs.	Problematic issue of the lesson: Who are our ancestors? - Why do they say that about 1 million years ago the sea roared in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains? - What name was given to the inhabitants of Upper Potyssia (Verkhnie Potyssia)? Why? - When and why did the settlement appear? - Why did the ancient authors say nothing about the origin of the Slavs? - How can we verify that pastoralists settled down in the mountainous regions? - Show on the map the first settlements of the White Croats in the first millennium BC. - Why has trade had a significant impact/influence on the economy? - Why did the classes appear in the VIII century? - Why did the White Croats maintain close relations with Kyiv, and were included as a part of the Kievan Rus?
5	The spread of Christianity on the territory of Transcarpathian Region. Kyrilo and Methodius	Problematic issue of the lesson: How did Christianity influence the lives of our ancestors? - Which states did the Transcarpathian Region bordered on in the west, in the south and in the east? - How to distinguish Christianity from paganism? - Who from the inhabitants of the land did quickly begin to take Christianity and why? - Why did the priests who come to the Slavs from Greece in VIII century adapt new Christian holidays to ancient pagan? - What is the merit of Saints Kyrilo and Methodius?
6	The history of native land in the written records	Problematic issue of the Lesson: What is the value of written records today? - Why are the records divided into General Slavs records and local ones? - Why did the writing begin to develop from the ninth century in the Carpathian region? - Why does the folklore also help historians? - Prepare one legend about the origin of the village (town), river or mountain of our region.

Examples of independent tasks of problematic origin:

1. Consider carefully "time line". Find the birth date of Jesus Christ. What other event does that date indicate?
2. Draw a conventional time line. Mark your date of birth, the year when you went to school and the year when you finish school.
3. Prepare a story (use a plan) about one of your distant relatives:
 - a) surname, name, patronymic (grandfather, grandmother, grandfather, great-grandmother etc.)
 - b) where he/she was born and lived (lives)?;
 - c) interesting life episodes of a relative;
 - d) what is left behind him/her?
4. Make a crossword puzzle due to the content of a legend.
5. What is evidenced by the fact that Hungarians after having settled down (had chosen the sedentary life style), were greatly influenced by the Slavic culture?
6. Mark on the map the following counties (komitats): Berezkyj- yellow color, Uzhanskyi- green color, Ugochanskuj - blue color, Maramoroskiy- red one.
7. Carefully consider the diagram of a family tree and fill it in. The more rectangles you fill in, the better genealogical memory you have.
8. Prepare reports on relics of ancient history connected with your favorite village, city (story, picture, pictures, staging, legends, songs).
9. Find the confirmation of relationships between the White Croats and The Kiev an Rus in the "Povistvremennykh Lit" ("The Tale of Bygone Years").
10. Specifying the names of states, mark with arrows what town belonged to what state after 1514.



We share the view of the famous scientist, investigating the problems of rural schools O. Savchenko that "while searching for new models of modern rural school development we must hold a deep comparative study of the activity of these schools and to determine their invariant features and also peculiar characteristics, due to the authors' educational systems, influence of contemporary conditions for their realization"³.

Experience shows that one of the most effective ways to improve the quality of school education in mountainous regions is to use, in the educational process, methodically and didactically adapted local lore material that matches the value of life and life of inhabitants of mountain areas and enhances cognitive interest of schoolchildren and favors the formation of citizenship and patriotism.

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