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## Models of Readership Development – Application of Narrative Methods

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### Abstract

The relationship to reading from childhood to adulthood is considered a major factor in shaping literacy. It is important to monitor its development for effective impact on students in this area, as well to enrich the theory of readership. The aim of the empirical investigation by means of narrative methods was to identify the factors and processes that affected the relationship of pedagogy students to reading throughout the course of life. Furthermore, the aim was also to create models of readership development. The paper is devoted to the results of this investigation. It provides information about codes that have been abstracted from readers' biographies. Moreover, it characterises five models of reading that were modelled on the basis thereof: the model of permanent interest in reading, the model of gradually developing interest in reading, the model of reading with obstacles, the model of lost interest in reading and the model of unawakened interest in reading.

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### 1. Introduction

Readership as a positive and active relationship to reading and literature plays a major role in the educational effect on the development of individuals, as well as, through it, on the cultural level of the nation. Interest in reading is accompanied and supported by pleasant experiences and satisfaction or joy from acquired knowledge. Frequent contact with texts contributes to the cultivation of personality in different areas. It leads to the development of reading skills required in everyday and professional life, as well as for studying, learning about the surrounding world, deepening the interest of a reader in a particular area of science and culture, developing the imagination and

emotional life of an individual. We will monitor the continual development of this important phenomenon in pedagogy students from childhood to adulthood, as it has a valuable mission in their case. In their future profession, they will help to develop the literacy of their students. We want to contribute to the knowledge of relevant processes and factors with the purpose of application in didactic theory and pedagogical practice.

### *1.2. Developmental Period of Readership and Factors of its Formation*

The development of a reader takes place **in stages**, the characteristics of which are given by Czech authors O. Chaloupka (1982), K. Homolová (2008), J. Trávníček (2013), A. Zachová a kol. (2012). Foreign authors include, e.g., Ch. Garbe (2008).

These experts agree on the basic features and factors. They establish that children in the pre-school age are interested in books and storytelling. In grade 1 primary school, in the majority of cases interest in reading persists, although the impact of the difficulty of training reading skills at the beginning of learning often has an adverse affect on some individuals. The deciding factor for the further development of reading is the period of puberty, when a reading crisis may arise. If interest in reading remains in this period, then it is typically retained until a later age in life.

The specifications of individual stages are essential for practical intervention in readership support. Information helps shape an optimum relationship between external factors (socialisation of others) and internal development, so-called self-socialisation (cf. Garbe, 2008, p. 11) in favour of readership.

The basic **factors** in shaping interest in reading and books are family, school, possibly peers and even indirectly mediated by the conditions of society and multimedia. These factors are currently confirmed by the last major reading research conducted in the Czech Republic.

Research points to some negative moments and trends in the development of readership today: the amount of time children spend reading is shortened, the frequency of contacts with books is lower, interest in reading books for pleasure is declining (boys more than girls), as other media compete with books. All of this has an impact on the development of reading skills in children and youth, as well as on the results of education. (For more details see above mentioned authors). The way leisure time is spent is also impoverished, thus the quality of life as well (Hlásna, S., 2011; Loudová, I. & Havigerová, J., 2014).

This very brief and general characterisation describes the most common and the most significant features and manifestations of relationships to reading in individual ontogenetic periods. The development of interest in reading, however, is much more extensive, as variable factors interfere with its continuum that have different degrees and various consequences or responses in individual (non-)readers

### *1.3. Methodology of Investigating the Development of Reading*

Research conducted in the Czech Republic has largely monitored the state of readership of a certain age period through questionnaires and interviews. The coherent process of the development of readership in individuals from childhood to adulthood with associated individual changes in factors and varied reactions has been investigated less often. This can be monitored through narrative methods, because is necessary to recognise the dynamics of a reader's life and not just test results.

- Narrative Method and its Results to Date in the Field of Readership

The narrative qualitative research method is a procedure where the respondent talks about his/her life from birth to the present, while the personal experiences stored in his/her memory in the form of stories are included in the narrative and bring new perspectives to old topics and reveal new ones (Gavora, P., 2006). In his/her reader

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