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USING PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING IN THE STUDY OF V. RASPUTIN'S WORKS

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Abstract:

This article examines the pedagogical possibilities of problem-based learning in the study of Valentin Rasputin's prose, with particular attention to the formation of interpretive competence, moral reflection, dialogic thinking and value-oriented reading among learners. Rasputin's artistic world is especially productive for problem-based literary education because his narratives do not merely describe events; they place the reader before ethically tense situations in which memory, conscience, responsibility, family, childhood, village culture, historical rupture and human dignity become objects of intellectual and moral inquiry.

Keywords: Problem-based learning, Valentin Rasputin, literary education, interpretive competence, moral reflection, Russian literature, pedagogical technology, critical thinking, dialogic method, value-based education.

Introduction:

The contemporary methodology of teaching literature is increasingly oriented toward the formation of an intellectually active, axiologically responsible and communicatively competent reader. This tendency is connected with the general transformation of education from a reproductive model, in which the learner mainly receives and reproduces information, to a developmental model, in which knowledge is constructed through inquiry, discussion, comparison, evidence-



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based judgment and reflection. In literary education this transition is especially significant, because a work of art cannot be reduced to a set of biographical data, plot summaries or formally memorized literary terms. A literary text becomes educationally effective only when it is experienced as a problem field: a space where the student encounters conflicts of values, contradictions of character, ambiguity of motives and the necessity of personal interpretation. Therefore, the use of problem-based learning in the study of V. Rasputin's works is not an external pedagogical addition to the text, but a methodologically appropriate way of revealing the internal dramatic and moral structure of his prose[1]. Valentin Grigorievich Rasputin occupies a special place in Russian literature of the second half of the twentieth century. His prose is connected with the tradition of so-called village prose, but its meaning is not limited to ethnographic description or nostalgia for rural life. Rasputin's artistic thinking is concentrated on the deep moral foundations of human existence: memory, responsibility, compassion, spiritual continuity, the family hearth, the dignity of ordinary people and the danger of cultural rootlessness[2]. In "Lessons of French," the autobiographical story of a hungry schoolboy and his teacher becomes a complex meditation on pedagogical tact, kindness and the moral risk of helping another person. In "Farewell to Matyora," the destruction of an island village for the sake of a hydroelectric project raises the problem of whether technical progress can be justified when it cuts a community off from its ancestors, graves, language and moral memory. In "The Last Term," the last days of a mother reveal the fragility of family bonds and the ethical emptiness that appears when everyday busyness destroys filial responsibility. In "Live and Remember," personal guilt is shown not as an abstract psychological feeling but as a social, historical and spiritual burden that deforms the destiny of the individual and the community[3]. Such texts naturally demand a problem-based approach because they resist simplified



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moral classification. Rasputin does not offer a mechanical opposition between good and evil; rather, he constructs situations in which the reader must see the complexity of human choice. For example, the teacher in “Lessons of French” violates the formal school order in order to save a child’s dignity, and this creates a methodological opportunity to ask whether a pedagogical act can be morally right while institutionally questionable. In “Farewell to Matyora,” the state project is presented as historically inevitable and socially useful, but the narrative voice insists that modernization without memory may become spiritual violence. The teacher who organizes the lesson as a problem does not ask students merely to retell what happened; the teacher encourages them to formulate the contradiction, identify competing values, search for textual arguments, compare positions and reach a reasoned conclusion. This procedure transforms literary reading into a cognitive and moral investigation[4]. Problem-based learning is pedagogically valuable because it activates the student’s need to think. A problem situation arises when there is a contradiction between what the student already knows and what the literary text demands for understanding. In a traditional lesson, the teacher may explain the meaning of Rasputin’s story and then ask students to reproduce that meaning. In a problem-based lesson, the teacher begins with a question that cannot be answered immediately: Why does the boy in “Lessons of French” refuse help even when he is hungry? Is Lydia Mikhailovna’s behavior an act of professional error or a higher form of pedagogical responsibility? Why does Darya in “Farewell to Matyora” defend the island not as property but as memory? Can a community remain morally alive when it loses the place where its dead are buried? These questions make the lesson dialogic and research-oriented. Students are required to connect plot detail, character psychology, authorial position, cultural context and personal ethical judgment[5]. The relevance of this article is determined by several factors. First, modern



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students often encounter literature in conditions of information overload, rapid digital communication and weakened attention to slow interpretive reading. Problem-based learning allows the teacher to return depth to reading by converting the text into a sequence of meaningful intellectual tasks. Second, Rasputin's prose contains moral problems that remain important for contemporary education: the teacher's responsibility for the student, the conflict between material development and spiritual continuity, the crisis of family relations, the meaning of compassion and the danger of indifference[6]. Third, the study of Rasputin's works in the educational environment of Uzbekistan is relevant for Russian-language and comparative literary education, because it allows students to compare Russian cultural images with Uzbek literary and moral traditions, especially respect for elders, attachment to homeland, the sanctity of family memory and the educational value of kindness. Fourth, problem-based learning corresponds to competency-based education, since it develops not only knowledge of literature but also analytical, communicative, reflective and ethical competencies[7]. The scientific purpose of the article is to substantiate the methodological effectiveness of problem-based learning in the study of V. Rasputin's works and to identify the pedagogical conditions under which this method contributes to students' interpretive and moral development. The object of analysis is the process of teaching Rasputin's prose in literature lessons, while the subject is the system of problem situations, heuristic questions, discussion tasks and reflective activities used to organize students' reading and interpretation. The central hypothesis is that problem-based learning increases the educational potential of Rasputin's works when the teacher designs the lesson around contradictions inherent in the text, provides students with opportunities for dialogic argumentation, connects artistic analysis with moral reflection and evaluates not only the correctness of the answer but the logic, evidence and



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independence of interpretation[8]. From this perspective, the study of Rasputin's prose should not be limited to biographical contextualization or thematic classification. It should become a methodological model of how literature forms the capacity for responsible judgment. The student who analyzes the moral choice of Lydia Mikhailovna, the spiritual resistance of Darya, the family alienation in "The Last Term" or the tragic guilt in "Live and Remember" learns to see human existence as a complex field of values. This is precisely where the pedagogical meaning of problem-based learning becomes visible: it does not replace literary analysis but deepens it; it does not simplify moral education but makes it intellectually grounded; it does not impose ready-made values but helps learners discover them through interpretive effort. Thus, the use of problem-based learning in the study of V. Rasputin's works can be considered a scientifically justified and practically productive direction in the modernization of literary education.

The scholarly basis for studying the pedagogical possibilities of Rasputin's prose may be developed through the intersection of two research directions: literary interpretation of Rasputin's artistic world and methodology of teaching literature through active, problem-oriented approaches. In the Uzbekistan-based academic context, two authors are particularly relevant for this article because their works, indexed or traceable through Google Scholar-related profiles and academic repositories, connect Rasputin's texts with problems of literary analysis, speech development and comparative interpretation. L. U. Radjabova's work titled "Development of Unprepared Speech of Students in the Works of V. Rasputin 'Lessons of French' and A. S. Makarenko 'Pedagogical Poem'" is important because it brings Rasputin's "Lessons of French" into the sphere of educational methodology. The value of this approach lies in the fact that a literary text is interpreted not only as an object of philological commentary but also as a means



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of developing students' spontaneous speech, dialogic expression and moral-evaluative thinking. When students speak about the teacher's kindness, the boy's pride, poverty, dignity and pedagogical responsibility, they do not simply retell the plot; they enter a communicative situation in which the ethical problem of the story becomes a stimulus for independent speech. This idea is directly compatible with problem-based learning, because unprepared speech grows most naturally when a learner is placed before a genuine interpretive contradiction and must formulate an answer in personally meaningful language[9]. Z. D. Djalmatova's research on the typological and conceptual comparison of P. Kadyrov's "The Diamond Belt" and V. Rasputin's "Farewell to Matyora" is equally significant for the present article. Her work demonstrates that Rasputin's prose can be productively studied in a comparative literary framework, where national idea, urbanization, historical memory, psychological individuality and the relationship between human beings and place become the basis for analysis. This is methodologically important because "Farewell to Matyora" is not merely a story about the flooding of a village; it is a text about the moral price of progress, the destruction of spatial memory and the existential conflict between historical necessity and spiritual continuity. A problem-based lesson built on this material may require students to compare different models of modernization, to discuss whether social development can be morally neutral, and to evaluate how literary images preserve cultural memory. Djalmatova's comparative orientation is especially valuable for education in Uzbekistan because it allows Rasputin's artistic concerns to be connected with Uzbek literary traditions, where the themes of homeland, family, ancestral memory and moral responsibility also occupy a central position[10]. The broader theoretical literature on problem-based learning supports these conclusions. In pedagogical theory, problem-based learning is usually understood as a technology of organizing cognition through problem



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situations that require students to search for new knowledge, formulate hypotheses, test arguments and justify conclusions. Unlike reproductive teaching, it creates a productive intellectual difficulty. In literature lessons, this difficulty does not arise from mathematical calculation or factual ignorance but from the semantic openness of the artistic text. The student must interpret motives, reconstruct the author's position, distinguish between the narrator's view and the character's view, and evaluate conflicts of value. Therefore, the works of Radjabova and Djalmatova can be integrated into a single methodological logic: Radjabova emphasizes the speech and educational potential of Rasputin's "Lessons of French," while Djalmatova reveals the comparative and conceptual depth of "Farewell to Matyora." Together, these studies show that Rasputin's prose creates conditions for problem-based learning because it combines psychological complexity, ethical tension and cultural resonance. The literature review thus confirms that the use of problem-based learning in studying Rasputin is not accidental; it is grounded in the artistic nature of his works and in the contemporary need to teach literature as a discipline of thinking, dialogue and value-based reflection.

This article used a complex methodological framework corresponding to the nature of literary-pedagogical research. The leading method was the problem-based method, through which Rasputin's works were examined as sources of pedagogically significant contradictions that can be transformed into classroom problem situations. In this logic, the text was not approached as a closed system with one predetermined interpretation; it was considered as an open semantic structure that activates students' inquiry. The problem-based method was combined with hermeneutic analysis, because the meaning of Rasputin's prose unfolds through interpretation of character behavior, narrative detail, symbolic images, ethical conflict and authorial position. Hermeneutic analysis made it



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possible to identify the internal questions of the text: what kind of help preserves human dignity, why memory becomes a moral category, how family responsibility is lost, and why personal guilt becomes a social tragedy. These questions were then transformed into educational tasks suitable for literature lessons. The article also used comparative-typological analysis, especially in relation to “Farewell to Matyora,” because the problem of homeland, ancestral memory and modernization can be understood more deeply when Rasputin’s text is compared with other literary traditions and with the value system familiar to students. This method helps prevent the isolation of the literary work from cultural context and allows learners to see universal and national dimensions of moral problems. Structural-semantic analysis was applied to determine how plot composition, conflict, character system, landscape, dialogue and symbolic objects create the problem field of each text. For example, the island in “Farewell to Matyora,” the game for money in “Lessons of French,” the mother’s deathbed in “The Last Term,” and the hidden existence of the deserter in “Live and Remember” function not only as plot elements but as semantic centers around which ethical inquiry is organized. In addition, the article used pedagogical modeling in order to design a possible sequence of problem-based activities: diagnostic questioning, formulation of the central contradiction, group discussion, textual evidence search, interpretive debate, comparative reflection and final written conclusion. The dialogic method was used as a necessary component of problem-based learning, because the study of Rasputin’s works requires exchange of positions and argumentation rather than passive listening. Elements of the case-study method were also employed: each literary situation was treated as a pedagogical and moral case that students could analyze from several positions. In “Lessons of French,” for example, the case concerns the teacher’s professional responsibility and the child’s dignity; in “Farewell to



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Matyora,” it concerns the community’s right to memory in the face of state-driven modernization; in “The Last Term,” it concerns the ethical consequences of emotional alienation within the family. The method of reflective writing was used to consolidate students’ interpretations, because problem-based learning should end not only with oral discussion but also with the individual formulation of a reasoned position. Thus, the methodology of this article was built on the integration of problem-based learning, hermeneutics, comparative analysis, structural-semantic interpretation, pedagogical modeling, dialogic discussion, case analysis and reflective writing. Such integration corresponds to the interdisciplinary character of the research topic. Rasputin’s works require philological precision, but their pedagogical use requires a method that can transform artistic complexity into educational activity. The chosen methods made it possible to show that problem-based learning is effective when the teacher does not artificially impose problems on the text but reveals the contradictions already present in its artistic structure. In this way, the methodology ensured unity between literary analysis and pedagogical design, between interpretation and education, between the student’s intellectual development and moral self-determination.

The results of the analysis show that the use of problem-based learning in the study of V. Rasputin’s works substantially increases the educational productivity of literature lessons. The first result is the activation of students’ interpretive independence. When students are asked to solve a literary problem rather than repeat a teacher’s conclusion, they begin to read the text more attentively. They search for details, compare episodes, analyze motives and distinguish between external action and internal moral meaning. In the case of “Lessons of French,” students notice that the central problem is not simply the kindness of a teacher, but the delicate boundary between assistance and humiliation, rule and



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conscience, professional duty and human compassion. This leads to a deeper understanding of the story's pedagogical meaning and prevents its reduction to a simple moral slogan.

Conclusion:

The analysis carried out in this article makes it possible to conclude that problem-based learning is one of the most productive methodological approaches to the study of V. Rasputin's works. The artistic structure of Rasputin's prose is internally problem-oriented: his narratives are built around situations in which the reader encounters a conflict of values and must search for a morally and intellectually justified position. For this reason, the teacher who uses problem-based learning does not artificially complicate the text but reveals its natural pedagogical potential. "Lessons of French" encourages students to think about kindness, dignity and the boundaries of pedagogical responsibility; "Farewell to Matyora" raises the problem of memory and progress; "The Last Term" focuses attention on family duty and emotional alienation; "Live and Remember" presents guilt as a tragic moral burden. Each of these works can become the basis of a lesson in which literary analysis is inseparable from ethical reflection.

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