

Problem of Forming a Literate Reader in the Digital Age Based on the Material of Modern Children's and Youth Prose

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to identify the types of readers' characters, to study the literary preferences of readers' characters and the influence that the book has on the inner world, to analyze the positive and negative aspects of the influence of the Internet on the reading process. This study used a content analysis design and a qualitative approach to data analysis. In addition, quantitative analysis was also used to visualize qualitative data using numerical values, fixing elements of the text content (the frequency of different types of readers). As a result of this research, interesting observations were made: reading saves teenage characters from temporary difficulties, puberty rebellion, helps to find their place in life and decide on the choice of a future profession. It also forms a culture of communication and contributes to the maturation of the characters. Using the content analysis method, the authors were able to identify such types of reading characters as developing (*Spoilers* by Elena Ozhich, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak), literate (*Anka M and Anka P* by Tatyana Mart), unformed (*Death to Dead Souls* by Andrey Zhvaleyevsky and Evgeniya Pasternak), and professional (*Literodura* by Yulia Linde, *Black Swan Green* by David Mitchell). Having considered the problem of forming a competent reader, the authors came to the conclusion about three main agents of influence on the reading taste of a teenager: teachers, parents, and friends. However, in modern realities, the Internet seriously affects the formation of a teenager's reading taste, and with the help of the use of Internet resources, it is possible to support and promote reading, as well as solve the problem of forming a competent reader.

Keywords: *reading problem, children's and youth prose, character-readers, evolving reader.*

Introduction

In the modern world, reading is one of the most important elements of culture, which is also a tool for increasing an individual's intellectual and creative potential. During the past decades, the problem of reading has been in the purview of different academic specialists: there is a clear trend in the change of reading practices associated with the process of capturing belles-letters on the global Internet. The opinions concerning this subject range from stating a deep crisis of reading

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culture: children do not read much, preferring other types of leisure activities to books; children read low-quality literature that is widely replicated on the Internet, and so on. All this leads to a deterioration in the reading quality, and as a result, a decrease in the literacy level of the younger generation in general and the reader in particular (Isidro and Teichert, 2021; Kalimullina et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021). It is significant that reading becomes a serious factor of personal success or failure in various life spheres (Kozol, 1985; Plotnikov, 1999; Chudinova, 2012; Saenko et al., 2020; Poghosyan, 2018). At the same time, a new model of reading is being approved: the nature and methods of working with printed and electronic texts, as well as reader preferences, are changing: Vishniakova “Dynamic reading methodology”, “Acmeological reading technology” (Vishniakova, 2011), Borodina and Borodin, the role of reading for obtaining information in the world of computers (Borodina, 2017). At the same time, the problem of educating a competent reader is being discussed (Smetannikova, 2007; Tikhomirova, 2004; Koshkarov, 2020; Volkova et al., 2020; Akhmadeev & Bykanova, 2021), as well as the teacher’s role in introducing schoolchildren to reading (Marantsman, 1965), and the development of effective reading techniques in the process of literary education (Svirina, 2012)). However, in all these studies, the emphasis is placed on the socio-psychological and pedagogical interpretation of the reading phenomenon while analyzing the problem.

At a time when the number of articles devoted to reading problems is steadily growing and ways to solve them are being proposed in modern reality, the reflection of this problem has already appeared in the fiction of the 20th-21st centuries. The postulate of Tikhomirova – “to teach without teaching” – may be considered as a certain leading motive for solving the reading problem, which is fully reflected in the pedagogical essay *As a Novel* by the French writer and teacher Pennac. This book radically changed teachers’ approaches to the way of introducing children to reading and awakening their love for books. “In every reading process,” writes Pennac, – “there is inherent, however repressed, joy of being able to read, and it is akin to the delight of an alchemist. Such a joy of being able to read is indestructible, it is not afraid of any spectacle, even television, going day by day as a continuous avalanche” (Pennac, 2005). The philological and pedagogical aspect proposed by Pennac supposes that it is necessary to make the student not a reading slave, but an accomplice, free to choose a book and a genre.

The Russian researcher Antipova in the article “The image of a reading child in Russian literature of the 20th century” (Antipova, 2004), appealing to the characters of Soviet writers of the 1920s-

1930s (Charskaya, Annensky, Vodovozova, Lukhmanova, Ognev, Kassil, Lyubimova, Kaverin) and 1960s-1980s (Pogodin, Frolov, Demykina, Pashneva, Vyazemsky), analyzes how the attitude towards the book characters changes. All in all, she comes to the conclusion that in the first half of the 20th century, reading was not a desirable activity, it was subjected to a negative assessment of the younger generation, but since the second half of the 20th century, the status of reading increases. Bobina in the article “Book and reading in modern adolescent and youth prose” (Bobina, 2013) considers the influence of books on Generation Z, using the material of modern prose (the books: *Shakespeare Did Not Even Dream* by Zhvaleyevsky and Pasternak, *The SMS Bible* by Aya An, *Boys before the Flood by Rain*, *Winter and Summer of the Boy Eugene* by Kovaleva, *One Miracle for Life* by Murashova, *A Boy Who Does Not Feel Pain* by Likhanova, *A Terrible Fairy-Tale. A Non-Fictional Story about Childhood and War* by Samokhleb, *Warm Things* by Nisenbaum, *Deeds and Horrors of Zhenya Osinkina* by Chudakov, *Potapov*, *Come to the Blackboard!* by Kryukova), and concludes that humorist writers attract children and teenagers to reading fiction by means of their characters’ example.

Thus, the problem of reading is gradually reflected from the literary point of view. However, there is not any single work based on the material of modern prose that would reveal the influence of reading on the formation of a teenager’s personality (*Anka M and Anka P* by Mart, *Death to Dead Souls* by Zhvaleyevsky and Pasternak, *Literodura* by Linde, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Chbosky, *Black Swan Green* by Mitchell, *The Book Thief* by Zusak). The novelty of this study is as follows, not just to classify the characters of teenage prose but also to confirm the significant role of fiction in the life of the younger generation, in the formation of a literate reader. A certain belief system, tastes, and preferences start being formed in the adolescence period, at the same time interests develop, and needs for self-affirmation and self-realization appear. In particular, the teenager begins to define him/herself as a reader. Works of art have a powerful educational potential; therefore, the objective significance of books and reading in the formation of an independent and creative thinking personality with high spiritual culture is undeniable.

The latest teenage literature is only reviewed in the school course of literature, but the modern literary process is undoubtedly interesting for a new generation of schoolchildren since literature (with its openness and lack of a bright edifying, instructive function) is able to meet the cognitive needs of the student. Also, it may touch on topics and problems that concern modern teenagers, thereby reflecting the worldview of a new generation. Therefore, this article will be interesting not

only for teachers and parents but also for teenagers, since the image focuses on a character who is experiencing all the difficulties of the awkward age, who has already managed to achieve creative realization and respect among peers through reading books.

In order to reach the objectivity of the study results, the authors decided to take the works of both Russian and foreign writers of various genres. The practical significance of the results obtained is that the borrowed and tested classification of the types of characters-readers can be used in the educational and scientific-cognitive process, as well as in other studies related to reading problems. In addition, the final statistics of the appearance frequency of reading characters can serve as a basis for psychological or literary studies.

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What impact does the book have on teenagers in the digitalization century according to the material of modern children's and youth prose?
2. What types of characters-readers are mostly met on the pages of modern children's and youth literature?

Literature review

A particular interest in the study of the reader as a unique figure appears from the middle of the 19th century (Tolstoy, Korf, Alchevskaya, and Michurin). The first typology of readers appears in 1896 in the book by Rubakin *A Study on the Russian Reading Public*. The author classifies readers according to certain types: "abstract type (...), certain (...), emotional" (Rubakin, 1975). The first type is aware of concepts in the text, the second concentrates on images, and the third – on emotions. A special contribution to the development of the typology of fiction readers was made in the classification by Ryskin. The author proceeded from the level of reading culture, and therefore, in accordance with the given position, he distinguished: the emotional type of the reader ("they look for images of strong feelings in the book"), the thinking type, capable of knowing the text, and the aesthete-reader (who possesses the ability to understand the artistic merits) (Ryskin, 1996).

Modern authors analyze the reader's activity in a wider range of diverse manifestations. Belyaeva identifies five types that are similar to the previous three: the reader looks at the work aesthetically,

or basing on facts, or with a rational, emotional, and superficial perception (Belyaeva, 1971). Trubnikov has a different typology, which considers the interests of the reader. This is a reader who possesses: an indefinite taste (the reader sees no difference in the choice of a book: it just should be fascinating), a one-sided purposefulness (only one topic in the text is important), a versatility (the reader is interested in any author, topic, or genre). There are also readers who are not harmonically developed (with a wide range of interests in literary works, but chaotic in their choice) and vice versa – readers with an advanced taste (they differ from the previous type by the purposeful choice of the book) (Trubnikov, 1978). Golev and Maksimova offer a gender typology of readers: externally-indicative type, internally-indicative type, mnemonic, creative, pragmatic, and semantic types (Golev, 2008). So, it is quite obvious that “the readership is very complex, just as an individual person is complex with his or her individual reader interests, needs and motives for reading” (Kovalevskaya, 2017).

Therefore, at this very moment, there is no one universal classification of readers’ types. In order to reach the reliability and completeness of the study, the authors will use several similar, complementary classifications. In total, they will proceed from the classification of Trubnikov, which is based on the principle of reading motivation. The other one is the Ryskin classification. Of course, it can be argued that all the existing types of readers are similar to each other, but they can not be called completely identical. Different visions of readers are explained by the subjective perception of the world picture by each researcher in the aspect the authors are considering. They are also interpreted by the fact that it is read by people with different worldviews, which are formed depending on the level of education, place of residence, environment, individual experience, and many other factors.

Thus, researchers agree that the role of fiction today is significantly reduced, so psychologists, classifying reading literacy, distinguish such adolescents as the ones that are “inharmoniously developed”, “distracted” or “with undefined taste”. The formation of “emotional”, “versatile” readers is really rare. First, this happens due to gadgets, and second, to the increased influence of peer authority on the choice of a particular book. Their opinion is incompetent, based only on personal experience, so it misleads the unsophisticated reader and consequently leads to a total reading refusal.

Methods

Research Design

This study is a content analysis design and used a qualitative approach for the data analysis (Krippendorff, 2018), which is applied to such works as: *Spoilers* by Elena Ozhich, *Anka M and Anka P* by Tatyana Mart, *Death to Dead Souls* by Andrey Zhvaleyevsky and Evgeniya Pasternak, *Literodura* by Yulia Linde, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, and *Black Swan Green* by David Mitchell. The content analysis method allowed the authors to work with formal content units of the text (images) and to obtain high-quality data by analyzing the images of readers' characters in modern prose. The authors used a qualitative approach to find the types of readers, as well as a quantitative approach to highlight the frequency of appearance of certain types of reader characters in the works of teenage prose. This study reflects the contemporary social reality that is predicted in literary texts.

Sources of data

The corpus was the source of the study (material and formal units of a literary text: the study of the types of characters-readers, the influence of fiction on the younger generation). The qualitative data were analyzed as well, namely: 7 character-readers (Table 1). The table allows visualizing the data.

Table 1

Data sources

No.	Author	Name of the literary work	Main character (name)	Character-reader
1	E. Ozhich	<i>Spoilers</i>	Zakhar Tabashnikov	A student of the 10 th grade who arranges a literary quest in social networks in order to successfully pass the Unified State Exam
2	T. Mart	<i>Anka M and Anka P</i>	Namesake cousins named Anya	Twelve-year-old girls who attend the literary club and are not indifferent to literature and culture
3	A. Zhvaleyevsky, E. Pasternak	<i>Death to Dead Souls</i>	Valya	Teenagers who visit the library under duress

4	Yu. Linde	<i>Literodura</i>	Zhenya Shchetinina	Zhenya, who is gifted with the ability to fantasize, uses rhymes in order to convey her feelings
5	S. Chbosky	<i>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</i>	Charles	Fifteen-year-old Charlie loves reading books, dreams of becoming a writer
6	M. Zusak	<i>The Book Thief</i>	Liesel	Liesel dreams of learning to read, and at the end of the novel becomes a writer
7	D. S. Mitchell	<i>Black Swan Green</i>	Jason Taylor	Jason is passionate about poetry, he writes poetry and loves the works of Orwell

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure included the selection of factual material, the study of images of characters-readers in the works of contemporary authors who received literary awards. In order to do this, the authors selected works with reading teenagers as the main figures, and after analyzing the characters, established the latest type-classification. This classification was based on the studies of Trubnikov (1978) and Ryskin (1996), which are focused on the level of reading culture and readers' interests. Therefore, they identified the following types: **thoughtful reader, literate reader, unformed reader, emotional reader, versatile reader, inharmoniously developed reader.**

The authors expected to see the predominance of the unformed reader and emotional reader types over the literate, thinking, and versatile reader, as in the digital age, teenagers are increasingly attracted to social networks. However, the authors were convinced after answering the questions raised:

1. It is impossible to deny the influence of the book on the younger generation. Special conditions are necessary for the formation of interest in books: family reading, interactive methods in teaching, selection of the right literature, the authority of the teacher. Reading has a beneficial effect on adolescent children, as it helps them to survive the period of puberty rebellion, form a culture of communication, solve family conflicts, decide on the choice of a future profession, find their place in life, promote their maturation (which is reflected in Table 2, Figure 1).

2. Indeed, the type of literate character-reader prevails, but it is a little less popular than the thinking character-reader, which confirms the fact that children read and want to read (in this conclusion,

the authors fully agree with the position proposed by the team of authors Verevkina et al. (2016). In the twenty-first century, children and teenagers most often choose the Internet for leisure, so not all the characters pay due attention to books. Anyway, there is a type of unformed reader, but the life and type of a competent reader are reflected in the results – Figure 2.

Data Analysis

In order to answer the questions of this study, the authors analyzed the socio-philosophical and pedagogical literature on the problem of the article and made sure that there was not a single study, which could give an idea of the influence of books on the formation of a literate reader, as well as their types in modern children's and youth prose. It happens although modern authors are also involved in the discussion and cover similar problems in fiction.

Thereafter

1. In response to the first question of the study, the authors analyzed “what impact a book has on teenagers in modern children's and youth prose” by using the method of Krippendorff content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018).

2. In response to the second question, the authors also used the Krippendorff content analysis method because of determining the frequency types of characters-readers in modern children's and youth prose. The quantitative approach allowed visualizing the qualitative data by means of using numerical values, fixing the elements of text content (in this case, the frequency of occurrence of different types of characters-readers), and then quantifying the data obtained.

When analyzing content, Krippendorff (2018) works with the text according to the following stages:

1. Defining objects of research: based on the authors' research question, a range of texts were chosen, i.e. a sample was made, since the content has a large volume, because the subject of research was literary texts of the 21st century;
2. The units and categories of analysis are defined: the characters of reading teenagers in the works of fiction of modern children's and youth prose were subjected to a detailed analysis;

3. A set of coding rules has been developed: the modern literary era, as well as the typology of images of heroes-readers, have become the dominant criteria for including these works in the authors' research interest;
4. Encoding of images of heroes-readers was carried out using the classification of Trubnikov (1978) and Ryskin and (1996);
5. Interpreting the obtained results, based on the objectives and theoretical context of the research.

To answer Research Question 1, the authors first analyzed data on the impact of the book on teenagers and then identified their frequency. Using the descriptive statistics, the authors found the rate percentage of each occurrence of the themes. To visualize the results of the rate percentage, the authors displayed them in the diagram.

To answer Research Question 2, reader characters were first analyzed, then the authors determined the frequency of their appearance in the texts. Using descriptive statistics, the authors found the percentage of the frequency of each appearance of the image of the reader character. To visualize the results of the rate percentage, the authors displayed them in the diagram.

Results and Discussion

Research Question No 1. What impact does the book have on teenagers in the digitalization century according to the material of modern children's and youth prose?

The results of data analysis to answer Research Question 1 appear in Table 2 for convenience and clarity. Special attention was paid to this question in the description later on Table 2.

Table 2.

The influence of books on the teenagers' characters (based on the material of modern children's and youth prose)

No.	Author	Name of the literary work	Main character (name)	Characteristic, attitude towards the book	The influence of the book on the teenager
1.	E. Ozhich	<i>Spoilers</i>	Zakhar Tabashnikov	Zakhar Tabashnikov does not like reading. His perception of the book begins with compulsory reading. Initially, he looks for easy, understandable ways for a modern teenager to solve the problem with a complex final essay of the Unified State Exam. Therefore, he chooses a game format for reading the classics. Gradually, the process of studying the book becomes fascinating for him. At last, the style of <i>Spoilers</i> narration is changing as the way of	As he participated in the literary challenge, Zakhar Tabashnikov learned to express his thoughts in a correct way, he learned to analyze people's relationships. So, for the first time, he discussed family conflicts with his mother – all this contributes to the character's growing up.

				teenager's thinking – and the boy moves from retelling texts to literary analysis by the end of the story.	
2	T. Mart	<i>Anka M and Anka P</i>	Namesake cousins named Anya	The tradition of family reading is really common in the family of Anka P. Adults stimulate the teenager's love for books by reading fairy-tales, discussing and arguing about the plots of classic books, that is why Anka P. knows the etymology of some lexemes and is interested in the pronunciation of phonemes. Anka really "infects" her sister with this love: she retells the myths and legends of Ancient Greece. Anya respects everything related to books, such as the profession of a librarian.	Reading forms the girl's curiosity, empathy, a sense of the subtleties of the native language, good manners. Books inspired her interest in the cities' sights and biographies of classical writers. Literature helps the main character to determine her place in life.
3	A. Zhvaleyevsky, E. Pasternak	<i>Death to Dead Souls</i>	Valya	The main character of this book is the girl Valya, the librarian's granddaughter, who visits the library not only under the teachers' compulsion but also on duty. Like many teenagers, Valya does not possess a literary taste, so she is attracted to "empty" novelties. However, Valya's tastes change dramatically after she joins the fight for the classics.	Books help Valya to understand herself, to find her place in life.
4	Y. Linde	<i>Literodura</i>	Zhenya Shchetinina	Extensive reading and subtle perception of reality make Zhenya a "white crow" in the class. This gives rise to the character's puberty rebellion: she wants to be similar to everyone else.	Books helped the girl to develop the child's imagination, which facilitated an abstraction from various problems – from kindergarten to school. Reading helps her to avoid puberty rebellion.
5	S. Chbosky	<i>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</i>	Charles	Initially, Charles likes reading books, but the reading process is related to the emotional cognition of a book. A book for Charles is a symbol of an invisible connection with the loved ones he has lost. Throughout the novel, he is learning to analyze a book in all its complexity, acquiring the skills of a thoughtful reader.	Books help Charles to survive loneliness, to understand himself. They help him to find his place in life – to decide on the future profession.

6	M. Zusak	<i>The Book Thief</i>	Liesel	Liesel dreams of learning to read, as reading, in her opinion, makes her closer to her dead brother and lost mother. Books replace Liesel's present, fill her world with light and warmth, so the character even becomes capable of stealing.	The book becomes a kind of universal code for uniting people (Germans during the Second World War). It is the books that give Liesel the opportunity to dream about the future, develop sensitivity and sensibility. They also help Liesel to decide on her future profession.
7.	D. S. Mitchell	<i>Black Swan Green</i>	Jason Taylor	Jason Taylor is an unusual teenager: he is endowed with a poetic talent (writes poetry). However, he is shy about this talent, because he is afraid of becoming a "whipping boy".	Books help him to know himself, to grow up, to decide on his future profession.

This conclusion totally confirms the opinion of the researchers Kozol, Plotnikov, and Chudinova that it is impossible to raise a fully developed, successful person without a love for reading. This is clearly illustrated in such texts as: *Spoilers*, *Anka M and Anka P*, *Death to Dead Souls*, *Literodura*, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *The Book Thief*, *Black Swan Green*. The authors of modern children's and youth prose present a type of evolving character: one meets a teenager before meeting with the literature/book and after. In two works of seven (*Spoilers* by Ozhich and *Black Swan Green* by Mitchell). The characters of the novels by Ozhich and Mitchell find themselves through the books. Tabashnikov stops hiding from private problems with his mother, as books have taught him to analyze life, compare facts, and make the right decisions. Jason Taylor stops running away from problems in a fictional world by knowing himself better. In three works of seven (*Anka M and Anka P*, *Death to Dead Souls*, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*), the books help the characters find their place in life: Anka found meaning in talking about literature and culture with peers and adults; Valya learned to distinguish the main thing: first to feel the author's idea in the book, then to understand the idea of paintings, and then to understand people. In three books (*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *The Book Thief*, *Black Swan Green*), literature became the main sense of life, as the characters: Liesel, Charles, and Jason want to become writers. In one literary text (*Literodura*), reading helps to prevent puberty rebellion.

In all the works, the authors pay attention to the point how literature forms the best person's qualities: empathy, sensitivity, good manners (Anka in *Anka M and Anka P*), curiosity, responsibility (Valya in *Death to Dead Souls*, Zakhar Tabashnikov in *Spoilers*), receptivity, the ability to dream, responsiveness (Liesel in *The Book Thief*, Jason in *Black Swan Green*, Zhenya Shchetinina in *Literodura*), tolerance, confidence (Charles in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*). Reasons for changing attitudes towards books and reading are shown in Figure 1.

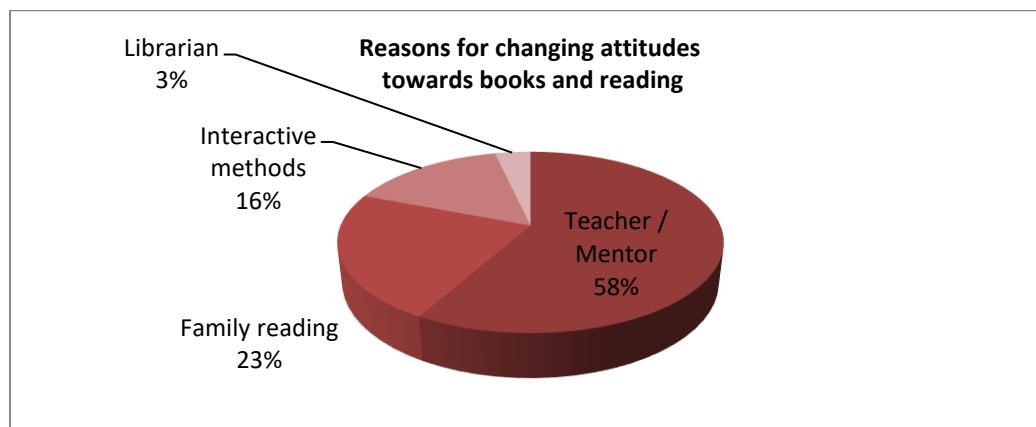


Figure 1. Reasons for changing attitudes towards books and reading

Therefore, speaking about modern children's and youth prose, the authors analyzed seven works (100%). As a result of this analysis, the authors identified a special type of reader – an evolving one. The character is changing under the influence of the book, but the role of external factors is really significant in this process, in particular the role of the teacher in introducing students to reading (Brazhe, Marantsman). As a result of the study, the authors concluded that in 4 (58%) works (*Spoilers* by Ozhich, *Literodura* by Linde, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Chbosky, *Black Swan Green* by Mitchell), the love of the book was instilled by a teacher or mentor. In 3 (23%) works (*Anka M and Anka P* by Mart, *The Book Thief* by Zusak, *Literodura* by Linde), reading in the family circle has a beneficial effect on the characters. In 2 (16%) works (*Spoilers* by Ozhich, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Chbosky), the interactive methods help to arouse interest in reading: literary quest, challenge, reviews, articles in the newspaper. In 1 (3%) work (*Death to Dead Souls* by Zhvaleyevsky and Pasternak), the librarian helps the character to understand the book. The authors of children's and youth prose clearly reflected all the variety of solutions to the problem of the reading crisis, invisibly joining the discussion.

Research Question No 2. What types of characters-readers are mostly met on the pages of modern children's and youth literature?

The authors demonstrated the answer to this question by means of the diagram (Figure 2).

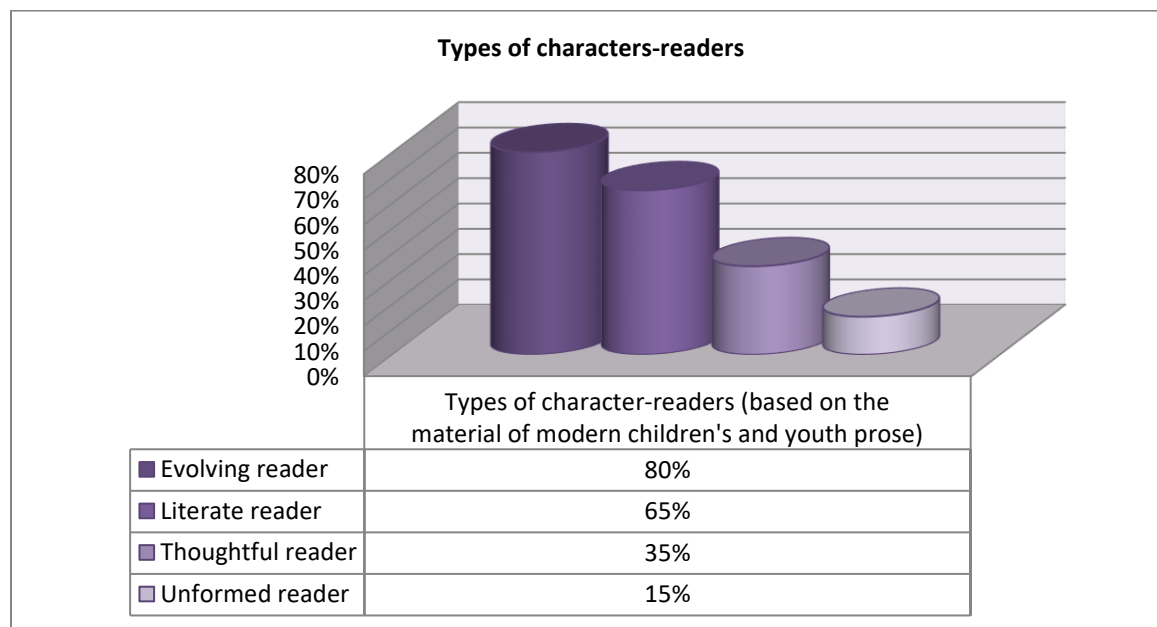


Figure 2. The analysis results of the types of characters-readers in children's and youth prose

Thus, the authors analyzed 7 (100%) works of modern children's and youth prose and came to the conclusion that in 4 (80%) texts there was a special kind of character-reader – the evolving reader (*Spoilers* by Ozhich, *Death to Dead Souls* by Zhvalevsky and Pasternak, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Chbosky, *The Book Thief* by Zusak). The main characters gradually become literate readers from lazy and unformed ones under the influence of mentors, they possess a different motive for reading (from compulsion – to desire), cultivated literary taste (classical books, but not “novelties” attract), broadened horizons. They begin to think creatively, rather than using templates, and they develop a skill for analyzing a literary work. In 3 (65%) cases, one meets a competent reader (*Anka M and Anka P* by Mart, *Literodura* by Linde, *Black Swan Green* by Mitchell). In these novels, teenagers initially have a special reverence for the literary word, they are able to understand the artistic merits of the works: Anka is interested in the myths and legends of Ancient Greece, Jason likes the work of Orwell, Zhenya is passionate about the prose of Leo Tolstoy and Remarque. In 2 (35%) works (*The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Chbosky, *The Book Thief* by Zusak), one finds a kind of thoughtful (but inharmoniously developed) reader: this character possesses a wide range of interests in literary works but is chaotic in his or her choice. Charles (Chbosky) perceives reading on an emotional-intuitive level: “I finished reading *To Kill a*

Mockingbird. It's my favorite book now. However, I always think so until I read the next one" (Chbosky, 2012).

At the same time, the character of the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* strives to improve: "I like reading twice", "I don't read this trash literature" (Chbosky, 2012). Liesel from the work of Zusak *The Book Thief* perceives the book as a mystical connection with the past, so initially, she almost does not think about the artistic merits of the book, but later she understands the power of the word: "Words found paths to everyone who was in the shelter" (Zusak, 2016). There is a kind of unformed reader in 1 (15%) work (*Death to Dead Souls* by Zhvaleyevsky and Pasternak). The main characters of the novel *Death to Dead Souls* are teenagers (Valya and Nick) who visit the library under the compulsion of teachers. They do not have enough experience in choosing books, so they prefer mass literature with a beautiful cover, a standard plot, illustrations, and a simple storyline. All this reflects real everyday life, in which there are two extremes. On the one hand, children are not able to become literate readers on their own, they need the help of not only a competent teacher but also not an indifferent person. On the other hand, these conclusions prove that the interest in the book as such among the younger generation is still great, but a teenager does not always have enough reading experience to choose a high-quality work, not a surrogate of literature, which forever discourages interest in reading. Thus, in order to develop a literary taste, according to Koshkarov, "...we, parents, teachers, librarians and just good friends need to know how to master the tool of fine-tuning the teenager's soul to the boundless fascinating world of reading" (Kashkarov, 2020).

Literaturocentrism was a special cultural feature of the twentieth century – it was the persistent attraction of culture in expression through literary and verbal forms. Accordingly, a book played an important role in a person's life, the character-reader perceived it as an important part of childhood, which introduced him or her to the unknown phenomena of life (Aksakov, Keil, Kaverin). The book was also considered the guardian of the universal codes of life. This tradition is also represented in the novel *The Book Thief* (2006) by the modern Australian writer Markus Zusak.

The title of the novel is metaphorical; on the one hand, it carries a negative connotation, condemnation of the committed act, on the other – the reality itself resembles Kafka's absurdity in Zusak's novel. The world is turning upside down, so the norms of morality are also doing the same. A reader can see Germany, which had come across the war, which is fighting not only

against Jews and Communists but also against books. This is a struggle for a sterile society, without memory and culture. In this novel, the book becomes a kind of universal code for understanding life and one's place in it: "A person remains meaningless without words" (Zusak, 2016). In these circumstances, a book theft can be considered as self-identification: the inclusion of oneself in the flow of events, the involvement in the German nation, in an effort not to lose oneself as a person. It is a paradox, but in Zusak's interpretation, stealing is equivalent to gaining, despite the circumstances. The main character Liesel Meminger perceives the book as an invisible connection with the past (her mother and brother) (Bozhkova, 2021). Liesel needs to feel connected to her family all the time, but she is not able to read. So she enters the world of dream-obsession: she begins to simply appropriate (steal) books, as long as she can not read. At the age of ten, the girl's adoptive father, Hans Hubermann, teaches Liesel reading: "Reading is the appropriation of words" (Zusak, 2016). In this case, words carry a cultural code: reading becomes Liesel's way of knowing reality. The novel mentions only fictional works, with the exception of Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*, the one which Liesel never read (therefore, she remained pure from the ideology of Nazism). Her father's lessons form a thoughtful character-reader. Initially, she is fascinated by the process of composing words, so she does not care what she reads (*Instructions to the Gravedigger* was Liesel's first book). Gradually, Liesel begins to have her own questions and judgments about the books. Ilse Herman, the burgomaster's wife who invites her to the home library also plays an important role in the development of the girl as a literate reader: "Books are everywhere! Each wall was reinforced by a shelf filled with dense but immaculate rows of books" (Zusak, 2016). From that moment on, the character's attitude towards books changes: "How many books she touched, how many she felt. This time she did it more slowly, with a full palm, feeling like magic, like beauty, like bright lines of light" (Zusak, 2016). Books become the meaning of Liesel's life, so when the burgomaster's wife refused the house, she felt like she was dying. The book is vital to the girl: she reads during the bombings and raids, she reads to the dying Max, she reads in the bomb shelter to the frightened people. As long as the book is alive, as long as the words sound, the memory is alive. The book takes on a certain sacredness, so in the finale of the novel *The Book Thief*, Liesel Meminger became a writer: "It's incredible... Although the letters faded, she was able to read her words. The fingers of her soul touched the story written so long ago in the basement in Himmel Strasse" (Zusak, 2016). The character's work is an attempt to preserve German history and culture for the future. Thus, the value and authority of the book are preserved in modern

literary works. In the story of the book thief, like in a drop, the difficult history of Germany in 1939-1945 is reflected. Zusak shows how talent is born under the influence of insurmountable circumstances, how Liesel turns from an illiterate emotional reader into a person who thinks independently and analyzes the laws of life.

The past is also addressed by Mitchell in his novel *Black Swan Green*. The time of action is the eighties of the twentieth century; there are tense relations between England and Argentina, a military conflict. The reason for the appeal of modern writers to the past, in the opinion of the authors, was an attempt to explain the origins of the change as the literary-centered cultural model was replaced by the media-centered one. It was also an attempt to understand the reasons for rejecting reading by modern teenagers. If in Zusak's novel *The Book Thief*, reading was equated with dissent, which was severely punished (Liesel reads books in the basement), then in Mitchell's work, the main character – Jason Taylor – is ashamed of his poetic gift, as it sets him apart from the ruck, makes him different from everyone else, causes harassment.

So, the rejection of the book is largely due to the tradition and historical background. At the beginning of the twentieth century, reading was a necessary point of evolution, as an activity reflected belonging to the era, but at the end of the twentieth century, reading became an atavism among teenagers, it turned into a cause for mockery, as there was a shift in orientation towards audio visualization. It is also important to note the fact that this is typical for the environment of teenagers who have not yet learned the generally accepted value rules. The character of the novel *Black Swan Green* Jason loves reading, he is passionate about the work of Orwell, and loneliness pushes him to create poetry.

The character is ashamed of his work, so he takes a pen name – Eliot Bolivar. Jason is a literate reader: he possesses a broad outlook, a well-formed literary taste, a sense of style, and an understanding of literary laws. However, he is not able to accept the fact that he is able not just to read but also to create value judgments. Eva van Utrive de Cromellinck became the person who helps Jason to accept himself as he is; it is a woman he meets at the priest's house. She was also the first he spoke openly about his poems with: "Your poems are strong enough to be criticized", "your images are fresh" (Mitchell, 2006). She considers him as the person with the ability to write the most burning issues of the day ("the metaphor of domesticity" – England, "demons fighting in the garden" – Margaret Thatcher and General Galtieri). The first critical analysis of Jason's poetry makes him take place not so much in the context of society as for himself. The character

understands the meaning of his vocation: he wishes to expose reality with words. Thus, it is possible to observe an appeal to the problem of reading in the novels of modern writers. In other words, writers invisibly enter into a discussion about the crisis of reading, trying to determine the origins of this situation, and also talking about the self-value of books and reading for the person's formation. Inquisitive, thoughtful readers arise in their works, as a book helps them to understand reality and themselves. The intermediary between the book and the teenager is both parents and mentors.

Nowadays, in the 21st century, people are able to observe a sad metamorphosis: television, radio, the Internet, and social networks are gradually replacing the artistic word from everyday people's cultural life. This process provoked the inevitable evolution of the reader's image on the pages of children's and youth prose in the 21st century. The purpose of the appeal to the book is school necessity. In modern reality, the type of reading-compulsion is most often presented (for preparing for lessons and state examinations). It is possible to find the confirmation of this idea in the work *Spoilers* by Elena Ozhich, which is written under the pen name of Zakhar Tatashnikov. The narrative is filled with all the signs of the 21st century, among those – the complexity of the final essay of the unified state exam. The main character of this Ozhich's novel is a student of the 10th grade Zakhar Tabashnikov; he is confused with the typical delusion for non-reading young people supposing it is easy to pass the exam in literature, even if one is not familiar with the necessary texts. In order to fill in the gaps in his knowledge, he accepts a "challenge" from his teacher: starts reading classical works during all summer and then sends free-style reviews to the mail, as well as posts them in social networks and takes part in the discussion of the reviews between his classmates.

To begin with, Tabashnikov takes up plays. The choice of a teenager is clear: he is convinced that the simplest and smallest book is *Thunderstorm* by Ostrovsky. Zakhar reads the play with interest and he is fascinated by the eternal conflict of fathers and children because he recognizes the common problems of the 19th-century characters in modern times. The young man compares Kabanikha with his mother, arguing the conclusion with her favorite remark: "Yes, my father and I put our lives on you, and you snap your fingers at us!" (Tabashnikov, 2019). The teenager provided a modern reading of the drama: Tabashnikov is sure that Katerina should have gone against her mother-in-law and "affirm the triumph of feminism" (Tabashnikov, 2019). In *Without a Dowry*, Zakhar is attracted by the semantics of the main characters' surnames: "Knurov – so, a

pig <...> Ogudat' – seduce, deceive" (Tabashnikov, 2019). In order to understand the characters better, Tabashnikov transfers the plot of the play to modern realities: "... in our days <...> old Harita Ignatyevna would still instruct her daughter where to inject botox and in which clinic it is better to pump silicone" (Ozhich, 2019). Knurov and Vozhevato are hated by the teenager, their attitude towards the woman irritates him: "Yeah, nobody considers Larisa as a person, really?" (Tabashnikov, 2019). Then Tabashnikov proceeds to read the novel *Oblomov* by Goncharov. The schoolboy considers Ilya Ilyich as a lazy person, because the character does not use the possibilities of fate, but the boy respects his antipode for the hard labor. Zakhar explains the difference in the characters by their upbringing and different social status: "Stolz is like this one, cause he does not have a passive income, like Ilyushka, such a couch potato" (Ozhich, 2019). The young man is ironic, advising his peers to think about money: "... save up for real estate <...> while you are young, so that by the age of thirty you can <...> enjoy life" (Tabashnikov, 2019).

Therefore, Elena Ozhich uses the technique of intertext in her work *Spoilers*, creating mono- and poly-referential borrowings from other texts in the internal structure, thus recreating the portrait of a teenage rebel reader of the 21st century. The postmodern text represents the problems of modernity: loneliness in the network, lack of freedom of choice; misunderstanding of fathers and children; "devaluation" of moral values (Bozhkova, 2020). With the help of a literary "challenge", the author managed to find out that the world of literary texts initially seems meaningless to a teenager. However, the experience in writing reviews aroused interest in classical literature. The original teenage slang makes the language of the book understandable to modern schoolchildren. The interpretation of the classics is also interesting: the author assures that it should not shock, because it is time to re-read many works of art. However, a new approach to the works, which demonstrates the use of the rhizome principle, generated by a new type of thinking and reading, will not help to pass the Unified State Exam in literature, but it will contribute to the reinterpretation of the classical books.

Zakhar Tabashnikov's teacher helped him to love reading, turning him from a lazy reader into a literate one. Closer to the end of the work, the style of narration and the way of thinking of the teenager change as well: he moves on to literary analysis at the level of themes, microthemes, images, details, and names from simple text-retelling and highlighting the most interesting semantic parts (Bozhkova, 2020). The creativity of reading in the digital age manifests itself in two ways: on the one hand, in the process of creative work with the text, Zakhar Tabashnikov

refracts it through the prism of personal perception and reconstructs it in his mind with the help of imagination, memory, and intelligence. On the other hand, he forms new meanings through the creation of his own texts and reviews.

Chbosky also recreates the portrait of an American teenager of the late 1990s in the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* with the help of a postmodern intertext technique. The inclusion of references to the works of Lee *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Fitzgerald *Beyond Paradise*, *The Great Gatsby*, Knowles *A Separate World*, Barry *Peter Pan* in the structure of the novel recreates the main narrative outline and represents the key theme of the novel – growing up. Also, it highlights the social problems of the early 2000s: drug use, alcoholism, suicide, early pregnancy, homosexuality. It is important to note that Chbosky focuses on the point that reading is an alternative in overcoming the stated problems.

In his novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, Chbosky tells the story of an extraordinary fifteen-year-old teenager who struggles with depression (the reason is the death of Aunt Hellen) and loneliness (the reason is the suicide of Michael's only friend). The image of Michael is a key one in the work. This image arises in the context of Charlie's memories and most often it appears through the prism of a poem he wrote (about loneliness), which becomes a kind of credo of the character and reveals one of the reasons for the importance of reading for him. It is an escape from the world's triviality, from thoughts about his own worthlessness and uselessness. Therefore, the character begins to write letters to a stranger, because he feels the need for live communication. The work *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is an epistolary novel: the narrative coming from the first person, on the one hand, is subjective, on the other – it fully conveys the true feelings and thoughts of a teenager to the readers.

The plot core of the novel is the formation of the character as a person (one can find certain echoes of Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye*). An important factor that plays a significant role in the evolution of the character is reading. One can see a type of emotional "inharmoniously" developed reader in the exposition of the work (Trubnikov, 1978). Throughout the story, the author shows how Charlie's habits and literary tastes are changing. There are several stages realizing during the transformation of the character from a thoughtful reader to a literate one. The first is an introduction to the teacher Bill, who considers Charlie as a special and capable person: "He speaks, I have a sense of language and a great ability to perceive text" (Chbosky, 2012). This opinion completely reverses the existing perception of the boy as a socially inactive – "quiet" one. Bill is

a sensitive psychologist: he seeks to become not a mentor but a friend in communicating with Charlie. He tries to establish an emotionally warm relationship: instead of a prim “Mr.” – he uses “you”, also he notices any details in the behavior of the teen (“Bill noticed that I was watching others”), calls Charlie for a heart-to-heart conversation, the moral lesson of which the teacher suggests to learn from the books (“He patted me on the shoulder and gave me another book” (Chbosky, 2012)).

The novel presents a very informal model of relations in the teacher-student system, which largely contributes to the formation of the literary taste of the character. In the first stage, Charlie expresses his attitude towards reading in the category: I like – I don’t like: “What is your favorite book?” “Beyond Paradise”. “Why?” “Because I have just read it” (Chbosky, 2012). The character-reader perceives the book as a sensory experience, so Bill directs him: “He says that I use a loose sentence structure”, “he said that I need to use literary words”. The main type of work is essays. In the second stage, Charlie begins to express value judgments about books: “Sometimes I read books and imagine myself in the place of heroes”, “when you hold a book in your hands, there is an unusual feeling” (Chbosky, 2012). Gradually, Charlie develops his “sense of language”, “sentence structure”, the ability to analyze the actions of the characters from the books. “The main thing here is that this boy does not want to grow up, and when Wendy does it, he regarded it as a betrayal” (Chbosky, 2012). The third stage is implementation in independent activity: reading, literature, and books become the meaning of Charlie’s life. An episode of a New Year’s Eve party is indicative, where a “secret Santa” (one of the party participants) gives a gift to a random person. Chbosky shows the world of ordinary people with a template mindset: they give each other socks, slacks, jackets, shirts, and only Charlie gives Alice a book by Ann Rice. At this time, the character’s self-determination takes place: “I decided that I would probably become a writer” (Chbosky, 2012). The symbolic burden is also borne by Sam’s gift (the girl Charlie is in love with) – it is a second-hand typewriter: “someday write about me” (Chbosky, 2012). So, the work of Chbosky *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* shows the process of becoming a personality, the evolution of the character-reader from emotional to literate one, the rethinking of his purpose and self-determination.

Thus, in the novels of Ozich and Chbosky, it is possible to meet an experienced mentor – a teacher helping teenagers to open the world of the books, while skillfully stimulating the interest of the characters in works of art. This person also helps to look at reality from a different angle, reveals

the personal potential of the student, outlines the right guidelines for life. At the same time, the rejection of reading as a form of even leisure activity is not so much a problem of the school as of the family. It is necessary to instill a love for reading by example: if parents are passionate about the books, then the children, later, will come to it themselves. So in the work *Anka M and Anka P* by Mart, parents help the girls to become full-fledged readers. Cousins-namesakes go to visit each other, being accompanied by adults, exploring the sights of different cities, forming their own view of their architecture and culture. Books help to brighten up the hardships of the journey. The author creates the image of a reading teenager through the description of the dialogues of children with their parents and with each other: “Why is not Red Square red?” I whispered to Anka <...>. “Probably Red means “beautiful”! – I guessed it” (Mart, 2019).

In the character’s family, the tradition of family reading is widespread: all the family members unite in the evenings, reading fairy-tales, discussing and arguing about the plots of classical books, so Anya P knows the etymology of some lexemes and is interested in the pronunciation of phonemes: “A-anechka-a...”. A singsong “a” trailed through the air, then flowed into a smooth “e-e” and a new “a”, deep and long. “Why does she draw out the words so <...>?” I whispered in Anka’s ear” (Mart, 2019). Anka often retells ancient Greek myths and legends to her sister: “They say that Atlanteans fulfill their wishes!” I said <...>. You just have to hold their feet! For their thumbs”, “I told her all the legends that I know about sculptures and monuments” (Mart, 2019). All these details help to characterize Anka P as a versatile, passionate about culture and literature person. Anka’s favorite pastime is visiting a literary club, where the young character has been studying for several years. Once again, attention is drawn to the extraordinary interior: “On the walls <...> there is a brave young man in a red shirt from the Legend of Danko who is holding his burning heart in the palm...” (Mart, 2019). Anka P read the story of Maxim Gorky “Old Izergil” long ago; despite the fact that she was 12 years old, the girl really wanted to understand the illustration on the walls in the club.

Passion for reading makes the speech of the main character literate; this fact convinces the breadth of reading horizons of a teenager from St. Petersburg. Anya appreciates everything related to reading and literature; for example, the girl speaks with respect about the profession of a librarian (“They have a difficult job <...> Well, they need to inspire children to read books...” (Mart, 2019), she asks parents to buy her a book that interests her. Anka P is not indifferent to Russian culture; for example, when the representatives of the older generation in the bus become outraged about

the low level of culture among modern teenagers (“They don’t know anything! Neither when Pushkin was born, nor when Lermontov died” (Mart, 2019), she objects: “Lermontov was killed in a duel in eighteen forty-one” (Mart, 2019). The example of Anka P’s parents is illustrative, as due to family reading, the girl developed such qualities as curiosity, empathy, a sense of her native language, and good manners. At last, it may be considered as a reason why she became a literate reader.

Modern teenagers believe that the texts from the reading list are boring, so the choice of schoolchildren often focuses on the books of popular culture, which is largely due to both the advice of their peers and excessive Internet addiction. A similar problem is raised in the work *Death to Dead Souls* by Zhvaleyevsky and Pasternak. The authors use the technique of the grotesque, resurrecting the second volume of *Dead Souls* by Gogol: the trainee Kira conducted a comic ritual, which turned into serious consequences – a work burned by the writer appeared on the shelf. It became the leader of a revolt against the readers of classical literature and their favorite books, striving for unconditional primacy: “We are to rule the world!” (Zhvaleyevsky, 2016). The quoted statement implies the capture of two complementary worlds: the human and the literary. The episode of the release of the second volume of *Dead Souls* can be considered as an opening, which represents the conflict within each world. Books on the library shelves began to whisper to each other, and readers forgot about classical literature and wanted to get acquainted with the newly revived novelty.

The postmodern method of intertextuality once again expands the ideological and thematic plan, highlighting the problems of modernity. The codes of different epochs symbolically appear in the work: instead of uniting in the current situation, modern novelties oppose classical literature, since the reader is not interested in them at all (Bozhkova, 2020). The authors activate the contrast of epochs with the help of color painting (“Acid covers” (Zhvaleyevsky, 2016); classical literature is contrasted with bright books of modernity, free of content (“Valya <...> found completely empty sheets” (Zhvaleyevsky, 2016)), sound recording (“...their carefree voices were mixed into one ringing wasp itch” (Zhvaleyevsky, 2016) – a characteristic of literary novelties) and colloquial vocabulary of novelties (“No need to care of the small – no one will listen to it, but the red one should be removed!” (Zhvaleyevsky, 2016)). The trainee spent one hour with modern novelties while getting acquainted with the library fund and noticed that she became more aggressive: “I’ve had it up to here with them!” Kira said aside and continued reading. Valya and her grandmother looked at each

other in a complete bewilderment” (Zhvalevsky, 2016). The purpose of the revolted books is to achieve absolute control of the minds of the reading audience. So, first of all, they planned to eradicate interest in classical literature, assuring that such literature is easier to learn with the help of summaries: “Retellings will be read” (Zhvalevsky, 2016). So the authors pay attention to the topical problems of book culture – classical literature is not read, because children do not yet have the experience to understand the meaning of some works. “I am so guilty before the children” Tolstoy sighed <...> “I would not have mastered *War and Peace* at the age of sixteen. And what for?” (Zhvalevsky, 2016). As a result, high school students are ready to take up reading any work that is not included in the school list: “Take it, take it, this is the *Captain’s Daughter*, it is in your school curriculum”. “In the curriculum?” The girl gasped. “Ok, then I certainly won’t read it!” (Zhvalevsky, 2016). All these problems weaken society, lead to the lack of spirituality, which was used by the resurrected edition of Gogol.

Therefore, in the work *Death to Dead Souls*, the authors enliven classical literature, endow each writer with a voice. There is a type of unformed reader – these are teenagers who visit the library under the compulsion of teachers, they lack experience in choosing books and a mentor along the way. Therefore, they prefer mass-market books with a beautiful cover, illustrations, and a simple storyline (Bozhkova, 2020). However, the situation changes dramatically: against the background of the struggle for the survival of books from different eras, many young readers who are immersed in these problems (Valya, Nick) develop literary taste, they dream of reading a novelty that has appeared in the library. That is why Kira’s spiritualistic session contributes to the fact that more visitors come at last to the library.

As for the fifteen-year-old character of *Literodura* by Yulia Linde, her typical day at school is the mockery of classmates. The technique of color painting helps to reveal the psychological portrait of a teenager: “... and I am not white – the most ordinary gray: both eyes are gray, and hair is gray, usually light brown. No, I’m not white or gray – I’m transparent” (Linde, 2019). In the article “Teenage loneliness: causes and consequences”, Kiseleva argues that such an experience leads to a dual outcome: a person either becomes more aware or loses heart (Kiseleva, 2003). Only books, a reading family, and a competent teacher helped Zhenya to understand her life purpose.

While choosing books, Zhenya takes into account the advice of her mom and aunt Sima. The experienced characters understand that the girl has an original imagination; even in kindergarten, she believed that wrapped in a blanket during a quiet hour, she would wake up like a butterfly.

Zhenya's mother is a "chief librarian" (Linde, 2019). In order to make literature closer to teenagers, Anastasia takes into account their interests – "... recently she has launched and promoted new memes #booka <...> and #literodura" (Linde, 2019). Therefore, signs of modern reality that have become relevant in the teenage environment over the past two years appeared in the story, and Anastasia studies them to be closer to her reader. It is impossible to inspire every library visitor to read, but at home, book propaganda has been beneficial: "Audiobooks are not in any way comparable to my mother's reading" (Linde, 2019) – admits Zhenya. The second person who helped the girl make books a part of her life is her aunt Sima. She taught the girl the alphabet, and in this case, she "was a sorceress" (Linde, 2019): she asked Zhenya to choose a word in a rhyme and draw the result for each new letter. That is how the child developed an imagination which helped her to abstract from problems in kindergarten, and then – in school.

Artistic works strengthened the girl's desire to express a sense of sorrow for the participants in the Chechen war through rhymes: "I like reading a lot about the war <...> Tolstoy, Remark ..." (Linde, 2019). Zhenya is a literate, interested reader. Books make puberty much easier for her.

All in all, the authors of this article made an attempt to analyze the types of readers' characters based on the material of little-studied modern children's and youth prose. As a result of the study, they came to the following conclusions: the dominant type of the character-reader was the evolving type (the reader who remains in an internal transformation). Unlike many researchers, modern authors believe that the teenager's interest in reading can be aroused by means of family reading, the authority of parents or teachers, the use of interactive methods and innovative reading techniques, which do not always have a negative impact in the process of learning literature. In the 21st century, the digital era, the character-reader is able to realize his or her creative abilities and creative thinking in the Internet environment. The influence of a book on a teenager can be considered as an indisputable one, since it is reading that reveals the personal potential, shapes the behavior of a teenager, and influences his or her success/failure in the future. Thus, the interest in the book and reading allows bringing up not only a competitive individual but also a worthy citizen.

With this article, the gap began to be bridged, associated with the fact that previous research did not mention the types of reading characters, the potential of reading in the formation of a successful personality, the impact of books in the digital age on teenagers. One can solve this problem by showing that literature for teenagers is much affected by information and communication

technology. Supervisions from parents and schools are required. At the same time, it is the Internet resources and proper work with them that allows developing the creativity of thinking and creative abilities of teenagers.

The novelty of this work is in that it pays attention to the fact that teenagers continue to read, and the type of evolving reader is the most frequent in children's and youth prose.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the authors considered the influence of the book on the formation of a literate reader in the digital age on the material of modern children's and youth prose. In summary, this study indicates that book has a powerful influence on the younger generation: it develops empathy (Zhenya Shchetinina (Linde, *Literodura*)), critical thinking abilities (of Mart's work *Anka M and Anka P*), attentiveness (Zakhar Tabashnikov (*Spoilers*)), responsiveness (Liesel from the novel by Zusak), fortitude, and curiosity (Valya (*Death to Dead Souls*), Jason (*Black Swan Green*)).

Analyzing the types of character-readers in modern literature, the authors have come to the conclusion that writers create a type of modern character, who became a teenager, who scrolls the Internet, social networks and prefers TV to the books. In modern children's and youth prose, the type of unformed reader is common (Zakhar Tabashnikov in *Spoilers*, Charles in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, Valya in *Death to Dead Souls*, Liesel in *The Book Thief*). However, the type of literate reader is also vital – *Anka M and Anka P* by Mart; Zhenya Shchetinina in *Literodura*, Jason Taylor in *Black Swan Green*). It is also important that in the analyzed books, the authors identified a new type of character-reader – the evolving one, who is changing under the influence of books. There is a transformation from an inharmoniously developed reader to a literate person. At the same time, an attempt was made to debunk the myth that the Internet has only a negative impact on a reading teenager. The point is that it is possible to support and promote reading through Internet resources, focusing on the requirements of the time, and it could really help to solve the problem of forming a literate reader (Zakhar Tabashnikov in *Spoilers*).

Limitations and Directions for Future Study

The subject of this study was the problem of forming a competent reader on the pages of modern children's and youth prose. As a result of the study, it can be concluded that the most authoritative influence agents in relation to adolescents' reading are friends, parents, teachers, and in recent decades, the Internet has played an important role. It is an interesting fact but a key role in the

formation of a competent reader is played by libraries (*Anka M and Anka P, Death to Dead Souls*). The authors have established the need for pedagogical support for the reading activity: the problem of reading is to be solved together by parents, teachers, psychologists, and even writers. Having considered the influence of the book on the younger generation, comparing the data of past eras with the modern realities of the attitude towards the book, it is possible to see the reasons not so much for the regression, but for the progress in the attitude of adolescents towards reading. The process of reading is an internal creative work: the change of thoughts, images, fantasies, and memories that arise in the mind at the moment of perception of the text, that is why the change in reading techniques does not always have a positive effect. Nevertheless, it is the Internet environment that supports the desire of readers to identify a personal position, exchange impressions, and thus stimulate readers' interest (Shatunova, 2021). These data can be useful in the further study of modern children's literature, as well as in solving the problems of adolescent reading.

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