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The Importance of International Assessment Programs in Enhancement, Assessment and Development of Reading Literacy of Primary Students

(As an example of the role and place of international research PIRLS in improving
students' reading literacy)

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the research carried out in Uzbekistan during the Third Renaissance in the field of education and its development, in particular, international research programs and their role in the development of education.

KEYWORDS: PIRLS, PISA, TIMSS, reading literacy, esteemed, strategic idea, assessment programs, third renaissance, normative requirements.

In his speeches, the President put forward the idea that "Man is the creator of the New Renaissance." "Educators are one of the creators of the New Renaissance," we can easily say. The emphasis on education is a key step in the development of society. This can be seen in the active participation of students in Uzbek schools in international assessment programs. In accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated December 8, 2018 No 997 "On measures to organize international research in the field of public education quality assessment in our country" emphasis was placed on improving the system using evaluation programs as PISA, PIRLS, TIMSS. The direct participation of Uzbek students in international assessment research programs as PISA, PIRLS, TIMSS is not only the basis for increasing Uzbekistan's place and role in the world, but also it will create a mega-level investment climate in Uzbekistan together with leading foreign corporations and firms. What does participation in international research on education quality assessment mean for Uzbekistan?

- The results of the research allow us to draw conclusions about the quality of education and its role taken into account international standards;
- It will be used to reform the national education system, improve the content of education, training and professional development programs for teachers, and create a new generation of textbooks by specialists and etc.

- We all know that our esteemed President said that the goal of development of our native Uzbekistan should be the Third Renaissance. This strategic idea shows the necessity of the common goal of our national development in all its aspects with its comprehensiveness and priority. Having look at the essence and etymology of the word Renaissance, in the root of this idea all the tasks of each field, future plans, education, investment policy, the training of personnel in the field should be focused on creating opportunities and conditions for it. In short, it is no exaggeration to say that Uzbekistan is on the threshold of "rebirth".
- Historically, during the Eastern Renaissance, as in all spheres, education and science flourished and reached the peak of glory. I would like to emphasize that the transformation of the idea of the Third Renaissance into a vital and influential national idea must first and foremost focus on education.

One of the international research programs named above is the PIRLS program. *PIRLS*– (*Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study*) an international research program to assess the reading comprehension of text by primary school students. In other words, it is a major international assessment program that allows you to compare data internationally on how well primary school students have developed reading comprehension skills and to provide information on public policy in the field of education to improve teaching and learning. In 2021, primary school students (4th grade students) of existing educational institutions in the Republic of Uzbekistan also participated in the research under this program. What are the priorities for developing students' knowledge, skills, and competencies in preparation for PIRLS international assessment programs? From April 5 to 14, 2021, tests on the PIRLS program were successfully conducted in 180 secondary schools in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The test results are planned to be announced in December 2022.

The teacher and student factor is a leader in the preparation for the PIRLS international research program. The teacher equips with theoretical and practical knowledge. The student puts into practice the theoretical knowledge based on the acquired knowledge. In order to achieve high results, it is advisable to create an action plan, or road map. Improving students' reading literacy is organized through direct reading lessons. According to the current SSE requirements, the requirement for a 4th grade student is that the student should be able to read 65-70 words per minute and compose a creative text of 5-6 sentences. Is that enough for PIRLS? This study requires the student to read and understand more than 1,000 words in 40 minutes. Elementary students are required to read unfamiliar text for 40 minutes, think logically, and answer open and closed test questions. As mentioned above, are Uzbek primary school students ready for the international assessment process? It is advisable to form a participant questionnaire (provided that the student has a socially active citizenship in society).

Participant questionnaire.

- Full information about the participant;
- Educational resources in the family (attitude of family members to education, attitude of the child to education);
- Attitude of the participant to the school, teachers, academic disciplines;
- Interaction of the participant with other participants;
- Level of knowledge of the participant;

- Self-assessment in academic subjects (in the process of self-assessment).

How to prepare students for the PIRLS assessment program?

- By ensuring classroom lessons conducting in the best possible way;
- By engaging students in a high level of fiction (including examples of world children's literature);
- By developing students' ability to select literature from the school and city (district, province) library that is appropriate to their age and individual characteristics and encourages logical and critical thinking;
- Encouraging students to study independently at home (here parenting is a priority);

In encouraging students to study independently at home, Keeping in touch with the student's parents, parental social support for the student to study at home and spend time studying, home-based learning that is appropriate for the child's learning are important. An important factor in this process is the cooperation of parents with the teacher. Gathering information at an early age, taking into account the age and individual characteristics of children, is the first step in their independent life in the future. Independent reading helps to develop the child's mental capacity. This, in turn, develops the child's ability to read and work with complex text.

Criteria for assessing the reading literacy of primary school students.

- Determining the student's ability to work with national texts;
- Participant-student reading for literary practice;
- Participant-student learning to access and use information;
- Collection and use of information in the process of working with sample texts, which are covered by the regulatory requirements of the international program PIRLS.

It is advisable to identify best practices through the best organization of classroom lessons and the dissemination of best practices by experienced teachers and to discuss with other groups of secondary school teachers by organizing model lessons (video lessons, online lessons).

In conclusion, the development of the education system in line with international research programs is one of the boldest steps towards a third renaissance in Uzbekistan.

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