

**PROVIDING CONCEPTUALIZATION TO THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN (CASE OF RUSSIA'S ZABAYKALSKY KRAI)**

***FORNECENDO CONCEITUAÇÃO AO SISTEMA EDUCACIONAL DE ESCOLAS SECUNDÁRIAS (CASO DE ZABAYKALSKY KRAI, NA RÚSSIA)***

***PROPORCIONANDO CONCEPTUALIZACIÓN AL SISTEMA EDUCATIVO DE NIÑOS DE ESCUELA SECUNDARIA (CASO ZABAYKALSKY KRAI DE RUSIA)***



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**ABSTRACT:** The aim of this paper is to provide conceptualization to the educational system of interdisciplinary spatial representations of the local residence place of children in secondary general education schools in Russia's Zabaykalsky Krai. The main research method is conceptualization that implies the comprehension and generalization of the authors' many years of work with further presentation of the theoretical arrangement to the accumulated data array. The study may be considered a novel one since it combines different types of authors' activities (scientific, educational, popularizing) on a unified conceptual basis. Theoretical and informational platforms for the mentioned kind of education in Zabaykalsky Krai are the two projects supplemented by the quests system. The third project is aimed at popularizing the first two by organizing game quests among the children of the region. The local history quests of the project had a great impact on activating the cognitive interest of the students in local, interdisciplinary research.

**KEYWORDS:** Education system. Local interdisciplinary research. Zabaykalsky Krai. Secondary general education.

**RESUMO:** *O objetivo deste documento é fornecer conceituação ao sistema educacional de representações espaciais interdisciplinares nas escolas secundárias de ensino geral no Krai de Zabaykalsky, na Rússia. O principal método de pesquisa é a conceituação que implica a compreensão e generalização dos muitos anos de trabalho dos autores com uma apresentação mais aprofundada da disposição teórica ao conjunto de dados acumulados. O estudo pode ser considerado inovador, uma vez que combina diferentes tipos de atividades dos autores (científicas, educativas, de popularização) numa base conceitual unificada. Plataformas teóricas e informativas para o referido tipo de educação no Krai de Zabaykalsky são os dois projetos complementados pelo sistema de quests. O terceiro projeto visa popularizar os dois primeiros, organizando jogos de busca entre as crianças da região. As missões históricas locais do projeto tiveram um grande impacto na ativação do interesse cognitivo dos estudantes na investigação local, interdisciplinar.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Sistema educativo. Investigação interdisciplinar local. Krai de Zabaykalsky. Ensino secundário geral.*

**RESUMEN:** *El objetivo de este trabajo es proporcionar una conceptualización al sistema educativo de las representaciones espaciales interdisciplinarias del lugar de residencia local de los niños en las escuelas de educación general secundaria en la región rusa de Zabaykalsky. El principal método de investigación es la conceptualización que implica la comprensión y generalización de los muchos años de trabajo de los autores con la posterior presentación de la ordenación teórica al conjunto de datos acumulados. El estudio puede considerarse novedoso, ya que combina diferentes tipos de actividades de los autores (científicas, educativas, de divulgación) sobre una base conceptual unificada. Las plataformas teóricas e informativas para el mencionado tipo de educación en Zabaykalsky Krai son los dos proyectos complementados por el sistema de búsquedas. El tercer proyecto tiene como objetivo popularizar los dos primeros mediante la organización de misiones de juego entre los niños de la región. Las búsquedas de historia local del proyecto tuvieron un gran impacto en la activación del interés cognitivo de los alumnos por la investigación local interdisciplinar.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Sistema educativo. Investigación interdisciplinar local. Zabaykalsky Krai. Educación secundaria general.*

## **Introduction**

In today's era of information technology and communication, children can easily find information about distant countries and regions than about their own locality. The knowledge of local geography and history is falling by the wayside, losing out in the struggle for a place in the information flows. Children are less interested in their localities and, as a result, know and value them less than previous generations. As a result, when they grow up, they leave their homeland with no regrets, moving permanently to other parts of the country or even the world. Without knowledge of and attachment to their birthplace, people lose their territorial identity (DONSKIKH, 2020).

Recently, the authors of this paper have done a lot of work to popularize knowledge of the geography and history of their residence place among school-age children in Zabaykalsky Krai, the Russian Federation region. The authors participated in several projects involving education and popularization. The projects were mutually complementary. The first was a multi-year project "The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region". The second one involved creating an educational system for the comprehensive study of the Zabaykalsky Krai in high school. The third is grant activities.

The aim of this paper is to provide conceptualization to the educational system of interdisciplinary spatial representations of the local residence place of children in secondary general education schools in Russia's Zabaykalsky Krai.

The basic theoretical framework is the conceptual discipline of local studies (Krayevedeniye).

In Russian pedagogical practice, Krayevedeniye means a comprehensive study of one's place of residence on a local and regional scale. This word consists of two parts. The word "krai" is a geographical concept, as it appears in the official names of nine territorial entities of the Russian Federation: Altayskiy Krai, Zabaykalsky Krai, Kamchatsky Krai, Krasnodarsky Krai, Krasnoyarsky Krai, Permsky Krai, Primorsky Krai, Stavropolsky Krai, and Khabarovskiy Krai. The word "krai" is translated into English as "territory". Within the Russian geographical tradition, when distinguishing the regions of the country, each inland territory is called "oblast", while each territory near the border is called "krai", as this Russian word also means "edge".

The second part of the word "vedeniye" may be commonly found in the names of scientific disciplines in Russian. For example, general physical geography in Russian is zemlevedeniye (with "zemlya" standing for "the earth").

Thus, to understand the meaning of the word "local studies" ("krayevedeniye") for the English-speaking community, it is necessary to get to the bottom of its constituent roots. The largest Russian information-analytical portal in the field of science, technology, medicine, and education eLIBRARY.RU has 22 302 papers (as of December 2022) with the word "krayevedeniye" or its synonyms in the title.

Most often, the English translations of the titles and abstracts of Russian scientific works with the word "krayevedeniye" in the title use the phrase "local studies". In some works, the following phrases are used: "local history," "local ethnography," and "local geography. It would be more correct to emphasize the complex nature of these studies, calling them local, interdisciplinary studies.

We would like to mention the case of the correct translation of the term "krayevedeniye" in the English-language Journal of Historical Geography in the paper "Redefining the Soviet krayevedeniye: The role of spatial science in the Soviet system of knowledge production" by Sofia Gavrilova (2022). This translation is exact, as the paper analyzes the essence of the concept itself and its introduction to science and evolution.

Krayevedeniye of Zabaykalsky Krai in English may be interpreted as: "local studies of the Trans-Baikal Territory". Zabaykalsky Krai is the name of the Russian Federation, located east of Lake Baikal, at the eastern junction of the three state borders of Russia, China, and Mongolia, which in the English version is often written as "Trans-Baikal Territory".

The paper is academically relevant because it uses a single conceptual basis to unite all the authors' various activities (scientific, educational, and popularizing). The problem is that all these types of activities tend to exist independently. The work demonstrates the experience of synthesis realized on a single theoretical basis by the same team. On English-speaking scientific platforms, there are a number of papers that deal with specific questions concerning Zabaykalsky Krai within the frameworks of separate sciences, such as geology (BOROVIKOV *et al.*, 2020), biology (AFININA *et al.*, 2019; BAZAROVA *et al.*, 2022; MATAFONOV, 2022; TSYBEKMITOVA *et al.*, 2021), and history (DROBOTUSHENKO *et al.*, 2021; FLEMING *et al.*, 2018). Other papers focus on the methodology of organizing and conducting quests in Zabaykalsky Krai (RADETSKAYA; MIROSHKINA, 2020; RADETSKAYA *et al.*, 2020a). However, no work on conceptualizing the purposeful synthesis of science, education, and popularization was found either on the Russian or international platforms.

## Methodology

The main method of research is conceptualization (from Latin *conceptus* - thought), which is a comprehension and generalization of long-term work of the authors, and a presentation of the theoretical organization of the accumulated array of data and a series of works.

Conceptualization of spatial representations in the process of local, interdisciplinary research of a place of the residence among children can occur in the presence of three interacting components: scientific, educational, and popularizing.

To provide a conceptualization of scientific ideas in the process of local, interdisciplinary research on children's place of residence, the following projects were set up: "The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region"; "Zabaykalye Region Studies" and popularization in the game form.

"The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region" project not only provides information and scientific support for the conceptualization. The authors of the paper have conducted scientific research for many years; it resulted in a system of peer-reviewed articles on geographical (BAKLANOV; NOVIKOV; PTITSYN, 2016; KOZYREVA; NOVIKOV; NOVIKOVA, 2017; NOVIKOV; NOVIKOVA; GILFANOVA, 2020) and pedagogical (RADETSKAYA *et al.*, 2020b; NOVIKOV; NOVIKOVA, 2020) sciences. This groundwork served as an information basis for creating a textbook "Zabaykalye Region Studies: economic and social geography of Zabaykalsky Krai. 9th Grade" and quests.

The paper presents an algorithm for conceptualizing spatial representations of "science – education – popularization". A whole set of specific methods—questionnaires, design, pedagogical reflection—helped reach that goal.

During the implementation of the activities, 800 students were questioned for determining their interest in local, interdisciplinary research before and after the event.

## Results

Since 2017, with the support of the Government and Ministry of Education of Zabaykalsky Krai, scientists and teachers implement a large-scale course "Zabaykalye Region Studies" ("Zabaykalovedeniye"). The course inspires patriotic feelings and love for one's small homeland and promotes successful socialization of schoolchildren and their self-realization. It consists of seven logically interconnected modules: "The Living Word of Zabaykalye",



"Folklore and Literature of Zabaykalye", "Geography of Zabaykalye", "Art of Zabaykalye", "History of Zabaykalye", "The Wild Life of Zabaykalye", "Sustainable Development of the Region".

A group of authors including teachers from Transbaikal State University and the Institute of Education Development of the Zabaikalsky Krai, as well as teachers of general education schools in the region, wrote the course textbooks.

The textbooks were printed in Moscow in the central publishing house "Russkoye slovo - uchebnik", which specializes in educational literature for schools. A total of 13 textbooks were published; they are now delivered to schools in Zabaykalsky Krai and are successfully used in the educational process.

The authors of this paper (A.N. Novikov and M.S. Novikova) also worked on the workbook "Zabaykalye Region Studies: economic and social geography of Zabaikalsky Krai" for grade 9 students of secondary general education schools (BAGOVA; BARANOVA; BUDKO, 2020).

A.N. Novikov and M.S. Novikova are also contributors to the massive project "The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region".

"The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region" is a region-wide, scientific and informational project intended for experts across disciplines and focus areas, as well as a wider range of readers. The project involved the support of the Government of the Zabaykalsky Krai; it was launched in 1997 and contains a comprehensive description of the Zabaykalsky region (up to 2008 it included two subjects of the Russian Federation: the Chita region and the Agin-Buryat Autonomous Okrug located within it). The project immediately attracted the attention of a wide circle of scholars, while the collective creativity helped modify and supplement it. The project is the largest academic integration project in Zabaykalsky Krai, with the leading organization being Transbaikal State University (until 2012, it bore the name N.G. Chernyshevsky Transbaikal State Humanitarian and Pedagogical University). The major scientific force is the Institute of Natural Resources, Ecology and Cryology of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, while the academia is represented by the association that included Chita State University (since 2012 - Transbaikal State University), Chita Institute of Baikal University of Economics and Law, and Chita State Medical Academy, etc. This scientific group also includes the Zabaykalsky Krai State Archives, the A.S. Pushkin Transbaikal State Scientific Universal Library, the A.K. Kuznetsov Zabaykalsky Krai Museum of Local History, the Center for the preservation of historical and cultural heritage, the Transbaikal Regional

Medical Scientific Library, and many other organizations. The first volume "The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region. Chita Region" (GENIATULIN, 2000) was published in 2000 and included the following sections: "Nature", "Administrative-territorial structure", "Population", "Economy", "History", "Peoples of Zabaykalye in 18-20 centuries", "Religions", "Education and Science", "Health", "Culture", "Archives", and "Statistics". In 2003, to coordinate and further develop the project, the scientific-editorial center "The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region" began its work as a part of the N.G. Chernyshevsky Transbaikal State Humanitarian-Pedagogical University. As the second volume (GENIATULIN, 2004) was being prepared, the volume of the alphabetical part of "The Encyclopedia..." gradually expanded and exceeded 8,000 entries, so that there was a need not only for the second but also for follow-up volumes. Therefore, in 2006 the third one (GENIATULIN, 2006) and in 2007 the fourth one (GENIATULIN, 2007) were published. The subsequent years witnessed a series of reprints of the four main volumes. About a thousand scientists, scholars, university lecturers, heads and staff of state institutions, as well as geologists, doctors, architects, teachers, local historians, etc., took part in preparing "The Encyclopedia. . .". During the process several materials had been accumulated and it became possible to prepare new series of books. These were the popular science information books and the issue-related "Small Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye Region" (THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ZABAYKALYE REGION, [21--]).

While doing their professional guidance work on behalf of Transbaikal State University, we visited schools to pitifully determine that the staff of the schools perceived the excellent volumes of the "The Encyclopedia" only as a nice, but leave-behind gift. In some schools, they stand in school libraries on high shelves of beautiful cabinets, while in other schools they are even in teachers' and headmasters' offices, to which children have no free access! The authors continually call for making these volumes more accessible to children.

In 2018, we won a grant from the Russian Geographical Society (RGS) to implement the project "Local history quests as an innovative technology to enhance the cognitive interest of students in geography in the educational space of the region." During the 2018-2019 academic year, students and teachers worked hard to popularize geographical knowledge of local history.

In 2020-2021, we implemented a local history grant project "Ethno-regional history quest games as a tool for forming the patriotism of schoolchildren in the Zabaykalye region", which continued in 2022-2023 as the project "The land of rosemary-purple dawns".

All projects have political relevance for Zabaykalsky Krai as a border region that loses 7 000 people a year due to migration; preserving the demographic potential is a strategic task of the country's national security.

The authors believe that increasing children's interest in interdisciplinary, local research depends on: the level of development of the system of local history education, educational and methodological support, and the popularization activity of scientists and teachers.

### **Evaluating Quests as Mechanisms to Stimulate Cognitive Interest in Local, Interdisciplinary Research**

Let's consider the issue of activating cognitive interest on the example of the project "Local history quests as an innovative technology to enhance the cognitive interest of students in geography in the educational space of the region" as it has already been finished and conceptualized.

Local history education is based on the inductive way of explanation, that is, on the transition from studying the particular to studying the general. Studying geographical features in children's area that are familiar to them is based on emotions and sensory experience. D. Harvey (1974), considering the pattern of the inductive path of generalization, noted that the initial stage is sensory experience, which gives us incoherent facts. These facts, in his opinion, are subjected to definition, classification, and measurement to become coherent and form the basis of new theories and laws.

At the current stage of development of local, interdisciplinary research, there is a clear tendency to deepen cultural, country, and information approaches. Cognitive quests aim to activate interest, so the authors constantly expand their topics, working on general cultural competencies of the target groups, that is, expanding their horizons.

The authors conducted a series of cognitive quests on the topics of local, interdisciplinary knowledge in various educational institutions of the city of Chita and Zabaykalye regions, which included secondary schools, vocational schools, and colleges.

The informative quests in the study of local history at educational institutions are a tool for inculcating patriotism and love for the big and small homeland and, thus, for preserving young people in the Russian provinces and fighting against the "washout" of talented children from the rural areas.

After each event, each participant was offered a questionnaire designed to evaluate its quality and importance.



The questionnaire contained 5 questions. The results of the questionnaire for each event served as the basis for pedagogical analysis and adjustment of work with subsequent participants. There was no need to develop a separate questionnaire for the primary school students as the results of work with them and their opinions were visible in the process of implementing the activity. With middle and high school students, and especially in the work with the students, observations do not provide such results.

Question 1: Use a 6-point scale to rate how interesting this event was to you (0 - not interesting; 1 - some tasks were interesting; 2 - work of some stations was interesting; 3 - work of most of the stations was interesting; 4 - work of almost all the stations was interesting; 5 - work of all stations was interesting).

Generally, for all activities: 0 points - 1% of the participant, 1 point - 2%; 2 points - 2%; 3 points - 10%; 4 points - 40%; 5 points - 45%.

The event with the poorest result is of interest for us. The team received the worst score for the quest in a college of Chita (5%), and mostly among girls. The initial mood in the female part of the participants was negative. The organizers who worked at the stations mentioned certain problems: it was difficult to collect photo material for the site because the girls deliberately spoiled the pictures with their behavior when taking them. The authors and developers of quest tasks noted weak knowledge of geography and general narrow-mindedness. This college trains cook and locksmiths

Notably, the interest of the middle school participants was higher than that of the high school, whereas the younger students had the highest interest. Additionally, the quests that occurred in nature and involved practical tasks in general became record-breakers, receiving only the highest rates.

Question 2: Did you learn anything new for yourself during the quest? Use a 6-point: 0 - nothing; 1 - clarified certain facts; 2 - learned about individuals, local events, phenomena and processes; 3 - learned about regional events, phenomena and processes; 4 - learned about events, phenomena and processes at an all-Russian level; 5 - learned about events, phenomena, and processes at an all-Russian level.

Answers to the second question were distributed as follows: 0 points - 1% of the participants, 2 - 2%, 3 - 67%, 4 - 25%; 5 - 5%. On this question, the participants from different educational institutions did not show great differences in assessment. At some schools and high schools, students assessed the regional processes on the territory of modern Zabaykalsky Krai as all-Russian and even global.

Question 3: Will you be interested, clarifying, and deepening the knowledge gained at the quest? Use a 5-point scale: 0 - the information in the quest tasks is enough for me; 1 - I will definitely look up additional information in search engines today; 2 - I am likely to look up this topic in search engines for two or three days; 3 - I will try asking the teachers of subject matter during the week; 4 - I will do my own research for a month or two and will ask the organizers of the quest via social networks.

The answers to the third question were distributed as follows: 0 - 30, 1 - 20, 2 - 16, 3 - 14, 4 - 20%. During the quest, participants were allowed to use smartphones, but different schools have different attitudes toward it. Groups of students participated in the quests, who had to turn them off during the event, following the rules of their school. Participants who reported their own research were offered advice via email or social media.

Question 4: Have you acquired any skills? / Have you learned anything new to do on the quest? Use a 3-point scale: 0 - no; 1 - I remembered some actions I did before; 2 - I mastered new devices or learned new skills.

The answers of the participants to the fourth question were as follows: 45% answered negatively; 30% remembered some actions; 25% mastered new devices or acquired new skills. At the last events that occurred outdoors, wherein the tasks followed practical exercises on setting up a tent, knitting tourist knots, and measuring weather observation indicators, the proportion of the 2-point answers was up to 50-70%.

Question 5: How would you rate the work of the station organizers according to the 4-point scale: 0 - all organizers worked formally, not trying to interest the participants; 1 - some organizers worked formally, not trying to interest the participants; 2 - almost all the station organizers are interesting as persons. I want to communicate with some of them in the future; 3 - all station organizers are interesting as persons. I want to communicate with them in the future.

In the answer to the fifth question, none of the participants gave 0 points. Less than 1 % (0,32 %) gave 1 point, 2 points - 66,7%; 3 points - 33 %.

### **Social Effects of Popularization**

The problem with evaluating social effects is that they are more difficult to quantify. It is almost impossible to express them in monetary terms, but over time they can become economic effects—in this case, when, having become interested in local history, a student will not just improve his grades in geography or history, but will become a real expert in these fields

or related sciences in the future. Meeting students and participation in quests can be a "trigger" in the aspiration of the child's interest in larger goals. The fulfilment of a person in the professional sphere will bring new economic and social effects from his activities. Therefore, at this stage, we may speak only about predicting social effects.

The social effects of project implementation can be divided into three groups.

The first group of effects is the increase in students' cognitive interest in knowledge about their area.

The second group of effects is to give students studying at Transbaikal State University (Chita) the opportunity to implement their ideas in the field of geography teaching methodology. Geography students, according to the Bachelor and Master's curricula, have several educational practices that they undergo at secondary general schools in Chita city and districts of Zabaykalsky Krai. However, the duration of practices decreases from year to year, which causes a negative reaction from teachers and deterioration of students' practical training. The activities implemented during the projects provide an opportunity to compensate for the loss of hours of pedagogical practices to a small extent. Additionally, students must follow the program during internships, and they have more freedom and thus opportunities for self-fulfillment during projects.

The team of students was divided into groups of 5-7 students. The main basis included Bachelor degree students, but the leadership of the creative teams included more experienced Master degree students. The principal form of work involves local history quests. Students created tasks for pupils, students of technical schools, and colleges in the entertaining form. According to the students themselves, the development of tasks helped them deepen their knowledge in many areas of the geography of the Zabaykalye region, and the pedagogical developments were comprehended by them at the level of term papers and graduate qualification works.

The third group of effects was not planned. At the request of the students who developed and conducted the quests with schoolchildren, we had to change the list of schools. The students, browsing the website of the Russian Geographical Society, drew attention to the "Geography for Children" (RUSSIAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, [21--]).

It is the Russian Geographical Society that oversees the social initiative "Geography to Children" working with organizations for orphans and children left without parental care. The aim of this initiative is to conduct purposeful work on the popularization of geography,

preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of Russia, nature protection and research activity, and attraction of children to a careful attitude to the environment.

On June 26, 2019, the project team, having experience in the field of educational and entertaining activities, held a meeting with pupils of the state educational institution "Karymsky orphanage" at the summer health camp "Leader" in the village of Kadakhtha (Karymsky district of Zabaykalsky Krai).

The children were shown films made with the grant support of the Russian Geographical Society.

The following events were organized and carried out in the countryside: a quest "Zabaykalye for Space" and a local history quest consisting of the best quests most popular among children. These are locations that require practical tasks on the ground.

Practical tasks aroused the greatest interest. This fact has two explanations. First, the team members had already undertaken these activities many times, both within the project and outside of it. The experience they gained allowed them to maximize their potential as young educators by involving children in local history activities. Second, the summer camp is located in a forested area. Practical tasks allowed the children to learn a lot about the natural environment around them.

Note that modern means of communication and such communication formats as social networks enable children who participated in the quests to continue communicating with students and lecturers of Transbaikal State University, asking them questions on geographical problems. Thus, children's interest in geography, if any, is maintained, which helps distract children prone to antisocial behavior from risks to their own physical and social health.

Quantifiable social effects include visits of project participants and organizers to the A.K. Kuznetsov Transbaikal Regional History Museum (30 people), the Military History Museum of the Military History Center "House of Officers of the Zabaykalye Region" (80 people), and Zabaykalye Botanical Gardens (40 people).

At the final stage of the project, backpacks (60 pieces) and 8 GB USB flash drives (53 pieces) were purchased with grant funds to encourage the best project participants who demonstrated the best knowledge and skills.

The materials of this paper may be considered as bringing about a quantitative social effect.

The qualitative results of the increase in students' interest in geography were the positive effects of the project at different levels, namely:

- at the individual level—all the students and participants received new knowledge and experience in the area of local history of Zabaykalsky region; individual encouragement in the form of certificates and letters of appreciation; and experience of teamwork;
- at the level of educational institutions—employment for students during school vacations, and professional guidance to acquire a profession at Transbaikal State University, which helps young people to stay in the region;
- at the regional and national levels—involving students in creative eco-oriented activities.

## Discussion

We believe that it is necessary to create an educational, interdisciplinary ecosystem for students, the most important components of which are: the materials of the "The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalsky Region"; a training course "Zabaykalye Region Studies"; the activities of popularization projects of communication with scientists, implying thematic quests. Two issues are up for discussion. The first one is about prioritizing the components of the ecosystem, i.e., their importance. The second question is: "There are other teams who created textbooks on the course "Zabaykalye local studies", took part in the project "The Encyclopedia of Zabaykalye region" and are similarly engaged in popularization activities. What contributes of these authors special?"

The question of priorities is complicated. In general terms, it is indisputable that the "The Encyclopedia. . ." project has priority. However, without implementing it in educational practice, this heritage may not be called relevant information. As for the issue of forming the necessary minimum of knowledge about one's place of residence, the priority is to be given to the "Zabaykalye Region Studies" project. Mandatory teaching it in schools of Zabaykalsky Krai implies that every schoolchild learns the minimum necessary interdisciplinary knowledge about the nature, population, and economy of his/her small homeland. Although, the textbooks on Zabaykalye Region Studies are supposed to stimulate students' interest, since they have a text, prepared by a group of scientists and teachers from the region, interesting tasks, pictures, and geographic maps, it is not always enough. More often, an enthusiastic study of a science or a question does not start with a serious attitude, but with emotions. Of course, the colorful design of textbooks evokes positive emotions, but in these terms, the competition with other publications is great. The priority in the approach to schoolchildren is behind organized



communication with people who are passionate about science. The scientific ideas have to be clear for schoolchildren and laymen: to produce new knowledge not only for serious scientific journals, but also to take care of its implementation in the educational process at school, as well as to work on popularization among schoolchildren and the adult population. Adults and schoolchildren do not have the opportunity to get acquainted with scientific journals. Their style of writing is specific, and access to them is not always open.

Thus, the debatable issue of the priority of each component is the question of the relativity of evaluation, that is, relative to which goals the priorities are set. However, one issue is indisputable - all components of the educational system is necessary.

The problem of distinctions is not easy, but one can identify two distinctive features. The first is that, when creating the textbook "Zabaykalye Region Studies. Economic and Social Geography", the authors developed a series of tasks, indicating that the necessary information basis must include "The Encyclopedia. . .", thus establishing a connection between the two projects. The third project is fully aimed at the first two and complements them. The interconnection was planned from the very start. The only unarranged component was the "Local Studies Dictation", which occurs annually in schools of Zabaykalsky Krai. Materials gathered by the authors of this paper are often used in this dictation.

The second distinctive feature is the interdisciplinary nature of geography, which, unlike other disciplines, synthesizes data from all other sciences about the Earth, life, and society into a single system. Interdisciplinary geography quests are remarkably diverse topic-wise.

A weakness of the educational system of interdisciplinary, spatial representations of the local place of residence among children of secondary general education schools in Zabaykalsky Krai is the lack of electronic versions of textbooks on Zabaykalye Region Studies that would have multimedia material.

## **Conclusion**

From the authors' point of view, Russian local research must be accessible to an English-speaking foreign audience. Inaccurate translation of key terms creates a barrier. The explanatory work carried out in the paper will help the English-speaking audience to become familiar with the studies of Russian scientists over the past years, while the materials of the presented work will help Russian scientists to choose a more precise wording for restoring the thesaurus with future foreign (English-speaking) readers. The conducted research on scientific

works on the nature, population, and economy of Zabaykalsky Krai has shown that all of them have a narrowly specialized focus on individual components. No studies dealing with combining components to create an educational system of interdisciplinary, spatial representations of the local place of residence in the children of secondary schools in the Zabaykalye region have been found. The organization of the educational system of interdisciplinary spatial representations of the local place of residence among children of secondary schools in Zabaykalsky Krai should include the personal participation of its creators in the development and implementation of all three components: scientific, educational and popularizing. The authors managed to combine the components and implement this education system in Zabaykalsky Krai. The results of the conducted survey allow us to conclude that the quests implemented by the authors activate the interest of the participants; the activities were well organized and successfully implemented. The quest technology cards were provided free of charge to teachers of schools in Zabaykalsky Krai. The social effects of the implementation of the educational system of interdisciplinary spatial representations of the local place of residence among children of secondary schools in Zabaykalsky Krai are multifaceted. However, the most valuable ones are not immediate, changeable, and determinable, but delayed, which will manifest themselves in the future in the form of a profession chosen for mastering in a university in Zabaykalsky Krai, further life and work in its territory.

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