FACULTATEA LIMBI ŞI LITERATURI STRĂINE

SHOWING VERSUS TELLING IN TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING

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Rezumat

Scrisul academic veritabil se naşte dintr-o abordare activă, interogativă faţă de obiectul de studiu şi toti studenţii, indiferent de ciclul de studii, au potenţialul de a scrie mai bine. Prin învăţarea scrisului creativ studentul dobîndeşte cîteva capacitaţi, precum: mobilitatea si flexibilitatea gîndirii, educarea atenţiei, curiozităţii, stimularea imaginaţiei, dezvoltarea vocabularului, etc. Ca orice deprindere, scrisul creativ se formează prin exerciţii cu utilizarea anumitelor tehnici. Una dintre tehnici este „show, don't tell", care invaţă cum să elaboreze o idee pentru a fi bine înţeleşi.

Anyone who's ever written a short story or taken a freshman composition course has heard the words „show, don't tell". Many believe it's shorthand for Anton Chekhov's tutorial comment about the moon and the glass: „Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass" [12, p. 32].

Like most maxims, „Show, Don't Tell" is a simplification, a pithy summary of a general rule, in this case condensed writing advice. Telling, in its simplest form, means a concise statement, e.g. „The grass was soft and green". We've all experienced grass that feels soft; it's well-watered and groomed, free of sticks and debris. Likewise, grass comes in lots of colors, depending on weather conditions and time of year, so when we say green it's understood the grass is not brown or yellow or blue-green or more dirt than plant [12, p. 36].

A statement that tells in simple language is generally bare of unique facts — it certainly can have them, yet seems to rarely turn out that way. Statements provide necessary information without

dramatization or portrayal, e.g. Jesse touched the green grass; it was very soft [12, p. 37]. The words do not dramatize Jesse touching the grass; we don't learn how he touched it and by extension, how he evaluated it as soft. This is quick, informative writing; it's short and narrow, and the picture it creates is more like a simple cartoon or child's drawing. In this example it certainly lack clarity and the construction is short on drama.

Showing, on the contrary, allows the reader to follow the author into the moment, to see and feel and experience what the author has experienced. Using the proper balance of showing and telling will make students' writing more interesting and effective.

The act of creative writing is, at its roots, storytelling. In time, often-didactic storytelling ceded ground to entertainment storytelling, leading to our contemporary understanding that we use words to portray events, characters, settings, and outcomes— fictional and factual.

The act of showing is a demonstration or dramatization of how something is done, how something happened, how something appears, or what something feels like.

Returning to Chekhov for a moment, ,,the moon glinted off broken glass" shows an element of scene. From it, a reader can surmise (without simply being told) that:

1. The moon is out and reasonably bright.

2. The scene is either outdoors or near a window or open door.

3. Something significant has happened to cause glass to break and be left where it fell [12, p. 34].

The reader is able to surmise these points from the dramatized setting, making it much more vivid and memorable than simply saying "the moon was shining and the window was broken." The difference is the portrait of a scene versus flat facts.

Probably one of the first things a teacher should talk to his/her students about when he/she has them write personal essays is using

dialogues. Dialogue allows the reader to experience a scene as if they were there. Instead of telling the reader your mom was angry, they can hear it for themselves, e.g. ,,Michael", mom bellowed, ,,Get in here this instant!"

Dialogue can give students' reader a great deal about character, emotion and mood.

In order for readers to fully experience what you're writing about, they need to be able to see, hear, taste, smell and touch the world around them. That's why students should try to use language that incorporates several senses, not just sight, i.e. the so-called sensory language. It's clear that "showing" adds texture and drama to writing. It injects air and space so an author can express style through use of metaphor, simile, dimensional color, rich texture, and detailed images. Showing is sensory-driven.

The next hint is being descriptive but this is more than just inserting a string of descriptive words. It's carefully choosing the right words and using them sparingly to convey students' meaning. Let's examine the following example.

Telling: He sits on the couch holding his guitar.

There's nothing wrong with that sentence. It gives the reader some basic information, but it doesn't create an image. Compare that sentence with this:

Showing: His eyes are closed, and he's cradling the guitar in his arms like a lover. It's as if he's trying to hold on to something that wants to let go [6, p. 44].

The second example takes that basic information and paints a picture with it. It also uses figurative language — in this case, the simile ,,cradling the guitar in his arms like a lover" — to help create an image.

When using description, it's important not to overdo it. Otherwise, students can end up with the so called ,,police blotter" description. For example: He was tall, with brown hair and blue eyes. He wore a red shirt and jeans, and a brown leather jacket [14, p. 81].

And the last but not the least idea is being specific, not vague. Frequently, students will turn in essays with vague, fuzzy language. Instead of writing, e.g. ,,I had never felt anything like it before in my entire life" [3, p. 70] students are to take the time to try and describe what that feeling was, and then decide how best to convey that feeling to the reader.

When addressing the issue of showing versus telling, several points are worth considering:

1. Does every part of a story require strong imagery and active details?

2. Is it necessary (or prudent) to show every action, scene, and sensory element all the time?

3. Have I weighed the importance of the element I'm showing?

4. Am I showing everything yet revealing nothing?

5. Does the prose feel constantly heavy? Does it play like a single note rather than a melody?

6. Does the writing have balance? Does it include external sensory experience and internal reflection? [9, p. 53].

It's doubtful the ,,Show versus Tell" argument will fade away, and maybe it shouldn't — it does get students to consider other ways of doing things. As long as there are writers at all stages of learning and practice, the maxim will continue to be passed around and argued over. Many writers stick by the tenet that showing is always better than telling, yet others will argue its vague advice that should die a quiet death.

So, it's possible to conclude that writing is about balance. Students seem to benefit most when they understand the differences between showing and telling and how both can be used. Sometimes showing can tell more than telling. Sometimes it can't. In a lot of ways showing appears more compelling, stronger: It's more powerful to show a character sitting in her car outside her ex-lover's apartment than it is to simply say she still loves him or is painfully jealous of

his new lover [3, p. 71]. On the other hand, telling is more direct and can facilitate revelations that showing can't begin to represent. Telling can also act as summary when showing every single glint on glass isn't necessary or practical.

But it is worth mentioning that both, i.e. showing and telling, are more like guidelines anyway. How much guidance is acceptable and how it's used is ultimately up to the individual author.

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LINGUO-STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF LITERARY TEXT IN TRANSLATION

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Rezumat

Acest articol examinează modalitatea în care se face traducerea la nivel interpretativ. Ideea de la care am pornit această cercetare este că traducătorul trebuie să perceapă implicaţiile textului, interpretările sale posibile şi să aleagă cuvintele cheie, astfel încât acestea să rămână accesibile cititorului. Problema care se pune este identificarea fundamentelor interpretării specifice traducerii, precum şi a delimitării misiunii traducătorului de cea a criticului literar. Traducerea, în opinia noastră, este un proces complex în care gramaticalul se întrepătrunde cu elementele culturale.

Ne propunem să arătăm în acest articol ce ar trebui să cunoască un traducător „informat" pentru a oferi o traducere adecvată a textului sursă în limba ţintă. Demersul nostru de analiză a traducerii ca proces de interpretare se sprijină pe patru etape:
1. analiza genului literar;
2. analiza structurală a textului literar;
3. analiza stilistica a textului literar;
4. traducerea textului literar.

A literary work is the product of the author's selection of a piece of reality and the reflection of his individual process of its perception and understanding. When the author writes something, he does it in a context. This context includes the writer's feelings, beliefs, past experiences, goals, needs, and physical environment. A literary work is thus a fragment of objective reality arranged in accordance with the vision of the author and permeated by his idea of