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TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF LITERARY TEXT

STRATEGII DIDACTICE ALE ANALIZEI STILISTICE A TEXTULUI LITERAR

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Abstract

The analysis of the literary text from the stylistic perspective supposes the linguistic-artistic comprehension of the work, the understanding of the word and its meanings, the decomposition of the artistic imaginary, because the writer selects, combines words and meanings, operates "aesthetic deviations". Stylistic analysis follows the essential aspects of the work under the analysis of the realization of the expressiveness, of the craft of the words that denote, color and soul.

Key-words: phonetic level, lexical-semantic, morphological structure, syntactic level, style figures, expressiveness of structures

Rezumat

Receptarea textului literar din perspectiva stilistica presupune descifrarea lingvistico--artistica a operei, intelegerea cuvintului si a talentelor sale, descompunerea imaginarului artistic, pentru ca scriitorul selecteaza, combina cuvinte si sensuri, opereaza devieri" estetice. Analiza stilistica urmareste aspectele esentiale ale operei sub raportul realizarii expresivitatii, al mestesugului cuvintelor ce primesc relief, culoare si insufletire.

Cuvinte-cheie: nivelul fonetic, lexical-semantic, structurii morfologice, nivelul sintactic, figurile de stil, expresivitatea structurilor

Literary criticism is an important aspect of literary studies. A post graduate students who is called a master in subject, must know how to analyse a piece of literature. Stylistics

provides a student a systematic and logical approach. The traditional classroom allows students to paraphrase and summarize while at the college level a student must learn to critically appreciate a literary work. Stylistic functions as a tool to study various perspectives of the author and analyzes the features of literary language to develop students' sensitivity to literature. Stylistics is concerned with the choices that are available to a writer, and the reasons why particular forms and expressions are used rather than others [9, p.75].

Stylistics is part of a language-based approach to using literature to make meaningful interpretations. Crystal D. stated that Stylistics, having to do largely with style, is a discipline concerned with the study of language of literature. It is the study of language as art [1, p.48]. As the study of style, it seeks to examine the expressive and suggestive devices which have been invented in order to enforce the power and penetration of speech. In words of Short M., Stylistics by defining literary studies as a linguistic subject provides a way of integrating the two subjects, English Language and English Literature which are commonly taught in isolation one from the other. It studies literary works as kinds of discourse and enquires into the communicative potential of the language concerned [4, p.5].

Language is made up of words, structures and sentences and literature is made up of these words, structures and sentences. Literature is language in its applied form and prepares a basis for the study of language through various points of view. Every piece of literary writing is different from the other. They have similarities but are never identical. Every piece of literature is unique with own peculiarities [3, p.75]. Therefore, literature offers as many models or varieties of language just as many writers. How the writers use the same limited set of sounds with a variety of words, structures, syntax and collocations – set the platform for the stylistic analysis of a particular task. Students must be taught to recognize and focus on the style markers used by the authors in their works which contribute to the effect of the work. A style marker may be recognized intuitively, or with the help of critics who have analyzed the text and identified various style markers used by the authors. Thus stylistics offers some critical and *creative* ways of looking at a work under study. Students will develop a sense of appreciation as well as acumen [5, p.18].

According to David Crystal, linguistics is the academic discipline which studies language scientifically and stylistics as a part of this discipline studies certain aspects of language variation [1, p.9]. These definitions vividly indicate and prove that stylistics is a very important branch of linguistic knowledge since linguistic variation, which is in the focus of stylistic studies, is practiced and functions in all kinds of human interaction; it is an intrinsic and indispensable ingredient of communicative interaction. Anybody who tries to interact in a certain situation by expressing their opinion, assumptions, hopes or fears, and so on, must do this by making their choice from the repertoire of means at their disposal [3, p.585].

Thus, stylistics is traditionally referred to as the study of various texts with the help of linguistic tools. Stylistics as a branch of general linguistics closely interacts almost with all philological disciplines such as phonetics, lexicology, semasiology, onomasiology, grammar (morphology and syntax), literature, literary criticism, translation studies, etc.

Teaching stylistics in higher educational institutions pursues both theoretical and practical objectives. On the one hand, the course gives theoretical knowledge on the stylistic resources of the language, different functional styles, criteria of defining and classifying functional styles, notions of norm, literary language, on the other hand, it is directed to teach students to apply the obtained knowledge for solving practical tasks. It contributes to developing students' ability to critically analyze information given in different types of texts and determine the functional style to which a particular text belongs and to argue their points of view on the basis of presenting criteria of differentiating functional styles, specifying expressive means and stylistic devices used in the text. The objectives of the course are realized through the authenticity of textual information belonging to different functional styles and genres, culturally-oriented materials, contributing to the development and enrichment of students' linguistic and stylistic thesaurus.

It is quite obvious that the main practical task of stylistics as an academic discipline is to develop skills of understanding, interpreting and analyzing the information given in diversified texts belonging to different styles and genres, i.e. to carry out a stylistic analysis of the selected authentic materials. It is mostly connected with analyzing literary texts. Stylistic analysis enables to adequately evaluate a particular work of fiction and reach in deep understanding of its content and sense. Mick Short points out that stylistic analysis, «unlike more traditional forms of practical criticism, is not interested primarily in coming up with new and startling interpretations of the texts it examines. Rather, its main aim is to explicate how our understanding of a text is achieved, by examining in detail the linguistic organization of the text and how a reader needs to interact with that linguistic organization to make sense of it» [3].

The main task of stylistic analysis is to define the structure of the textual material and its semantic loading. In the process of the analysis students are recommended to fully answer the questions of how the given text is created and what it is composed of. It is important to draw attention to the levels of the textual analysis defined by scholars: phonetic, phonological, graphological, morphemic, lexical and syntactical [6, p.34].

Stylistic analysis contributes to better acquisition of the theoretical material and at the same time it is an effective form of control of students' knowledge on a particular topic. Students should be motivated to recognize intuitive responses to a text which are central to the process of reading and re-reading the text, thus helping them develop their own communicative competence as reading is the silent exposure of the self to the language. Intensive and extensive reading of a literary text enables the students infer more than one meaning and it helps them to understand how to make the use of the target language in everyday contexts [1].

The stylistic analysis of any literary text is aimed at revealing the subject matter of the text, which is sometimes buried deeply in the form, and investigating the language techniques used to express the author's thoughts and ideas manifested in the text. It is based on the theoretical knowledge of the available stylistic resources and is aimed at unfolding the author's message through bringing out the implicit information created by such means as the choice of vocabulary, the use of stylistic devices of different language levels, the peculiarities of the presentation of characters and events. It must be borne in mind that there are no hard

and fast rules about text interpretation but the following recommendations and logical steps can be helpful to the students [6, p.19].

The stylistic approach incorporates a close reading of its literature contrary to the traditional ways of memorization and reproduction. It can prove to be the best method to learn a foreign language through stylistic approach as it would give a close view of the target language. They will learn to relate a piece of literary writing to their own experience of language and consequently extend their experience. Literary analysis through stylistic approach encourages in students the ability to infer meanings by interacting with the text. The stylistic approach demands a close reading and re-reading of a literary text by the students. A close reading and re-readings of a literary text would help the students internalize the rules of the grammar of the target language indirectly. They would be learning language through literature and this is basic aim of teaching literature of any language.

Sorning K. advocated that the 'form' of the literary text should itself interpret its 'content'. Following this view, one could interpret the content without any reference or context. This can only be achieved if the students are taught how to study the 'form' of the literary text [7 p. 67]. A study of the 'form' of the literary text would intimate the student about the diction of the author. The knowledge of the selection of words, punctuation, parenthesis, or metrical patterns would enable students to study the work in depth and give an individual interpretation. Such an analysis would invite the creativity on the part of the students and studying literature would no longer be mindless memorizing exercises to pass the examination.

The stylistic analysis consists of two stages: the analysis of a text and the synthesis of the main idea (message) of the text. The first stage, in its turn is subdivided into several successive procedures. Firstly, the student is supposed to speak on some aspects of *the writer's creative activities*, mention his most important books and outline the peculiarities of the writer's outlook. The necessary information can be obtained from the course of English and American literature. Besides, some relevant facts can be found in the preface to the book or the commentary at the end of it. However, the student should not go into a detailed analysis of the writer's creative concepts, in order not to make his answer too long, but concentrate more on the linguistic aspects of the text. After this the text should be divided (in accordance with its contents) into a few logical parts. The interrelation between different components of a literary text is called *composition*. The four structural components of the composition are exposition, complication, climax and denouement.

Of course, it is a difficult task to teach students a stylistic analysis of literary text if they do not have any background in linguistic, phonetics or metrical patterning, but it is not impossible. This approach can be brought to the classroom by using the technique of foregrounding, a technique effectively used in advertisements. Foregrounding is aesthetically purposeful when it vitally influences interpretation. The foregrounding can be applied to a literary text through various methods such as Linguistic Deviation and Parallelism.

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It is traditionally regarded as commenting on the text from the functional point of view. The purpose of this comment is the establishment of genre and stylistic characteristics of the literary text and peculiarities of its linguistic organization. The analysis usually begins with reading and understanding of the text, so the first point is the so called commenting, i.e. interpretation of some difficult or unfamiliar words, outdated or archaic grammatical forms and structures. However, the requirement to the analysis is that the textual material should be authentic, implying that authenticity lays in the genuine nature of the texts selected [7, p.68].

Thus, while reading a particular text (at least three times), first of all, students should understand the plot of a selected piece of writing. During the second reading students are recommended to pay special attention to unknown words, structures and phrases. Different reference books (monolingual, explanatory, bilingual, dialectal, encyclopedic, linguocultural, thematic or conceptual dictionaries, glossaries and dictionaries of synonyms and antonyms, idioms and collocations, technical terms, neologisms, proper names, slang, foreign, obsolete and archaic words) present an important tool contributing to successfully implementing stylistic analysis of a selected work of fiction. With the help of monolingual dictionaries, for example, students will be able to determine linguistic and stylistic characteristics of individual words and set expressions; linguocultural dictionaries contain information about the symbolic, cultural and national values of the components of lexical units. During subsequent readings, they are advised to methodically begin to pay attention to how characters interact with one another, how the writer uses words to convey meaning, how the characters speak, who is telling (or narrating) the story, the kinds of images the writer uses, or any other aspect of the text that seems important [8, p.137]. Brief information about the author of the text, his biography, profession, social position, range of interests, motifs of creative activity can assist in determining the problem stated in the text, in clarifying the author's outlook and views.

Scholars suggest various schemes for stylistic analysis of the authentic textual material. I.R. Galperin, for example, introduces some procedures which facilitate this process [2, p.39]. The first procedure is called the taxonomic stage of analysis which aims at determining a definite model of a text in the given style. The second procedure which is called the content-grasping stage is connected with approximate understanding of the content of the text. The third procedure (semantic analysis) has as its purpose the close observation of the meanings of separate words and word combinations, the significations of various sentences and supra-phrasal units. The fourth procedure (the stylistic stage) aims at finding out what additional information might be imparted by the author's use of various stylistic devices. The final procedure (the functional stage) consists in assembling the previously acquired data and synthesizing all the procedures [4].

While analyzing literary text students should follow the following steps:

1. Speak of the author in brief:

- the facts of his biography relevant for his creative activities;
- the epoch (historical and social background);
- the literary trend he belongs to;
- the main literary pieces (works).

2. Give a summary of the extract (or the story) under consideration (the gist; the content of a story in a nutshell).
3. State the problem tackled by the author.
4. Formulate the main idea conveyed by the author (the main line of the thought, the author's message).
5. Give a general definition of the text under study:
 - a 3rd person narration
 - a 1st person narration (an "I-story")
 - narration interlaced with descriptive passages and dialogues of the characters;
 - narration broken by (philosophical, psychological, lyrical etc.) digression; an account of events interwoven with a humorous (ironical, satirical etc.) portrayal of society, characters etc.
6. Define the prevailing mood (tone, slant) of the extract. It may be lyrical, dramatic, tragic, optimistic, pessimistic, melodramatic, sentimental, emotional, unemotional, pathetic, dry and matter-of-fact, gloomy, bitter, sarcastic, cheerful etc.
7. Divide the text into logically complete parts and entitle them. If possible choose a key sentence (a topic sentence) in each part that reveals its essence.

The compositional pattern of a complete story (chapter, episode):

1. the exposition (introduction);
 2. the complication and the development of the plot (an account of events);
 3. the climax (the culminating point);
 4. the denouement (the outcome of the story).
8. Give a detailed analysis of each logically complete part. Follow the formula: subject – matter – form. It implies that, firstly, you should dwell upon the content of the part and, secondly, comment upon the language means (EM and SD) employed by the author to achieve the desired effect, to render his/her thoughts and feelings.
 9. Sum up your observations and draw conclusions. Point out the peculiar author's language means which make up the essential properties of his individual style.

Literary texts are nothing but words put together with at least one purpose. Hence, analyzing this special structure by paying close attention to that production with our grammatical and linguistic knowledge will foster our understanding. In that sense, stylistics can be beneficial while uncovering the hidden yet visible aspects of a literary text.

A Stylistic approach teaches students how to look for and interpret stylistic dimensions of a text. Students are made to learn how and what is said, and how meanings are made. They are taught to know what makes the language of literature different from everyday language, if it really is. If we adopt the stylistic approach to teach literature at the college level, it will help the students understand the role of language in literature.

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HIGH IMPACT TEACHING STRATEGIES THAT FACILITATE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGII DIDACTICE CE FACILITEAZĂ DEZVOLTAREA ABILITĂȚILOR DE VORBIRE ALE STUDENȚILOR

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Rezumat

Articolul vizează descrierea unor strategii și tehnici interactive orientate spre facilitarea dezvoltării abilităților de vorbire într-o limbă străină. Tehnicile în cauză oferă o alternativă modelelor tradiționale de predare a vorbirii la lecția de limbă străină. Capacitatea de a vorbi fluent o limbă străină este absolut esențială pentru succesul studenților. În acest sens, strategiile la care ne referim vor ajuta profesorii de engleză să încurajeze participarea studenților la acte de vorbire, ajutându-i să-și amelioreze fluența în limba străină studiată.

Cuvinte-Cheie: elevi, limba engleză, engleza ca a doua limbă (EDL), strategie, tehnică, abilități.

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to present some interactive and student-centred examples of the speaking activities that offer an alternative to the traditional way of teaching speaking in an ESL classroom. The strategies mentioned in this article will help English teachers instruct their students, to improve their language development, in a supportive, encouraging way. These strategies and specific activities aim to help ELLs acquire and use oral language, thus improving their fluency in the studied foreign language.

Key-words: ELL (English language learners), ESL (English second language), strategy, technique, skill.

„Speaking skills are defined as the skills which allow us to communicate effectively. They give us the ability to convey information verbally and, in a way, that the listener can understand. Speaking skills are one of the most important skills we learn, as they allow us to communicate with others and express our thoughts and feelings. Speaking skills can be