THE INTELLIGIBILITY OF LEARNING SITUATIONS IN THE PROCESS OF THE DISCURSIVE APPROACH OF THE LITERARY TEXT IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Abstract. This paper provides some methodological reflections on the discursive specificity of the literary text. Through the discursive approach of the literary text we exploit the conditions of the literary communication focusing on the communicative, situational, textual and intra-textual instances. We point out the potentiality of the learning situations in the process of the development of the communicative competence on the basis of the literary text.

Keywords: intelligibility, discursive approach, literary text, task, situation.

The didactic approach of the English teaching-learning process covers as well the study of literary texts as an authentic document. During a long period of time the literary texts have been exploited exhaustively in the English classroom through different approaches. Their formative valences, namely, their artistic and imagery value contribute to the development of the English language. They have become the Didactics’ favourites as they propose a large spectrum of competences formation [1].

The process of working with the literary text may generate great results if there is present the pedagogical intervention combined with the learners’ motivation. The act of interpreting literary texts requires the use of appropriate teaching methods, strategies as well as new opportunities for creating a good learning partnership. There is a diversity of techniques and it is up to the teacher to choose the techniques
which will facilitate best the learners’ comprehension and interpretation of the text. The wrong approach of treating the literary text can prevent the learner from deciphering the text meaning [2].

In this regard, the teacher is responsible for the use of formative methods which valorize active contents and learning activities. It is recommendable that these activities used in the English classrooms should train learners to develop their abilities to explore, analyse, create visions and solutions [3].

We should state that the efficiency of the educational act depends on the teacher’s skills in conjugating the methodology with the objectives and outcomes, the content and the form of organizing the educational process. Here, we must mention the attitudes created and the relations established between the teacher and his/her students, as well as the relations between the learners [4].

The literary text generates meanings which are relevant to the learner’s experience and knowledge. The way of discovering the text message is prepared by the teacher through interactive tasks and thinking operations [5].

These operations can be: comparison, classification, matching, analysis, anticipation, correction, elaboration, communication. In terms of teaching the literary text, we can note that there is no particular methodology recommended by the English Didactics [6].

The current changes in the educational reform of the Republic of Moldova have provoked a reconstruction of the whole educational system.

The researcher Maria Dulamă points out that the three basic components of a learning situation are:

– objectives (intentions);
– the means used to achieve the objectives (teacher and student’s actions, contents, teaching materials, methods, forms of activity, etc.);
– results (completion).

These three elements are influenced by the activities realized both inside and outside the classroom.

As a rule, a learning situation represents a situation which underlines a conflict or problem that causes the necessity to search for a solution with the teachers’ help.
In the learning situation, knowledge is always rendered by the verb *to know*, and skills by the verb *to do*. Any learning situation is achieved through action-based learning tasks [7].

We should take into account that a learning situation is structured in three stages:

- **Preparation for learning**: the learner is provided with the information he/she would prepare for solving the learning task. He should understand the reason of doing a certain task. The identifying question for this stage is *What to teach?*

- **Realization of the task**: the teacher gives the task and guides the learner in the process of the task completion. At this stage we deal with the question *How to teach?*

- **Transfer of learning to other situations**: The teacher proposes other learning situations which may help the learners reinvent what they have learned.

Knowledge transfer represents the implementation of knowledge into practice. It is the stage when learners have to use the acquired knowledge (Figure 1).

![Fig. 1. The elements of a learning situation [8]](image)

The scheme portrayed above highlights the internal conditions (motives, learning mechanisms, motivation, interests, abilities) and the external conditions (the pedagogical intervention – a set of methods, strategies, content and material, teaching aids) [9].

However, it is not the learning situation which increases the efficiency of the learning act, it’s just the action undertaken by the learners that educates them.
According to the definition of a learning situation, its functionality depends on the following factors (Figure 2):

![Mechanism of the functionality of a learning situation](according to T. Lașcu)

For the discursive component, it is necessary to identify the strategies applied through learning tasks appropriate to the established goal. The teacher has to provide a wide range of teaching methods and procedures that prioritize the development of the following competences: **linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic and multi (cultural)** in terms of making the learner communicate as effectively as possible in a foreign language [10].

As for the discursive competence, learners have to deal with materials and tasks oriented to the development of coherence and cohesion, correctness and precision in the messages. They will be involved in activities of reception, mediation and production. Mediation activities refer to the interpretation (oral) and translation (written), as well as the paraphrase or reformulation of texts in the same language when there appear comprehension barriers. They allow the learner to adapt notions and conceptions to the social reality of the text.

It should be taken into account that while analysing a literary text, it is important to point out the author’s values, intentions, motivations and relate them, in a way, to life experience [11].

The discursive analysis of the literary text reveals the way the narrator and the reader build an argument which may fit into larger social practices. Through the
discursive approach we can observe the means or methodes chosen to communicate and disclose truths, intentions, beliefs, suppositions, beliefs.

In the respective approach, a major role is assigned to the notion of discourse. Discourse is how it is said and read, and the contexts in which language is used and processed, both immediate, linguistically, and in broader social and cultural terms, explain how meanings appear between the language users. These contexts are very often educational. They contribute to the construction of meanings and images, values and attitudes [12].

In this regard, we’ll offer some communicative tasks based on a passage from the novel *Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The activities reflect the peculiarities of the society and culture, which is a specificity of the discursive approach of the literary text.

At the Pre-Task stage we can do pre-readings, explore paratextual elements and make predictions on the text. In order to facilitate the learners’ involvement in the process of identifying the social and cultural references of the text we can elaborate tasks such as:

**Task 1. Exemplify in what situations you would say this.**
- Let me think/Excuse me/Seriously?/No way!/You don’t know me!/What did you expect?

**Task 2. What does the title suggest? What is the significance of the word *great*?**

Then, at the second stage of the lesson, Task-Cycle, we can take a global approach asking the learners questions in order to have a perception of the whole text.

This type of learning situations/tasks contribute to the development of the learners’ abilities to comprehend and decode appropriately the authors’ hints, beliefs and views.

**Task 1. What do the sentences suggest?:**

a) He hurried the phrase ‘educated at Oxford,’ or swallowed it or choked on it as though it had bothered him before.

b) His voice was solemn as if the memory of that sudden extinction of a clan still haunted him.
Task 2. What do the syntagms „educated at Oxford” and „rajah” mean on a literal level and what might they represent on a symbolic level?

At the Post-Task stage, we propose to do more in-depth studies, in search of the linguistic, textual and socio-discursive specificities of the literary text. The learners will be able to bring creative ideas and illustrate them with concrete examples. For ex:

Task 1. Essay. Write a 15-line coherent text commenting on: The values that shaped lives and identities in the society of the 1920’ and their role in an affluent society.

An effective tool to explore the literary discursiveness is the Case Study task. Such tasks make the learners interpret social realities rendered by the text.

Examples of suggested situations:
– Situation 1. You are in Gatsby’s house. Everything looks splendid. The surroundings reflect the host’s high social status. Meanwhile, you are convinced his retelling about the education received is fake. What would you say to entertain the conversation and give further progress to the actions? Your goal is to reveal the lie. Be polite in getting the details.
– Situation 2. What remarks are ways to hide smb’s distrust?
– Situation 3. Student A: You are a prosecutor in the court. Accuse Gatsby of having invented a story about his past. Analyse his manners, speech and give evidence of your suspicion.
    Student B: You are Gatsby. Defend yourself by exploiting your good-manners and social position.
– Situation 4. You find yourself in Gatsby’s house. You make a tour of it and get stuck by its luxury. Share your points on the appearance of the house with one of your friends. Use at least 5 ways of expressing surprise and amazement.

The learning situations, either through case-study tasks, role-play activities, projects, consitute the right tools in the process of analysing a literary text. Until recently, literary texts were used in English classes to study grammar, to write a summary, to characterize the characters or just to make a plot analysis. But, nowadays, the text is considered to be an authentic material in the educational process and it is
addressed through different approaches. We are more interested in reconciling language and literary text, since the latter contains the expression of a language, a mentality, a culture and a civilization. The unity of Language and Text encourages the competences’ enrichment, the forms of the English teaching as a foreign language.

In conclusion we state that the teachers should guide the learners’ training. Their role is to light their training paths with the help of suitable learning situations which are supposed to make the teaching/learning process more intelligent, open to new opportunities and horizons.

References:
1. Cosovan Olga, Strategii de dezvoltare a competenței lingvistice/pragmatice prin abordarea didactică a textelor funcționale, file:///C:/Users/Lenova/Desktop/Cosovan_strateg._dezvolt._competent._lingvist.%20foate%20bine.pdf
2. Nicu Adriană, Curs de pedagogie, file:///c:/users/lenova/desktop/rezumat%20soficu%201.pdf
3. Cimpac Natalia, Tehnici de receptare a textului literar din perspectiva transdisciplinară, Revista Limba Română, nr. 3, anul xxiv, 2014
4. Pavelescu Marielena, Metodica predării limbii și literaturii române, București, Ed. Corint, 2010, p.15
5. Manoliu Marius Narcis, Funcțiile textului literar – exploatare din perspectivă didactică–discursivă și comunicațională, Teză de doctorat https://usv.ro/fisiere_utilizator/file/Doctorat/2019/sustineri/manoliu/Rezumat%20RO%20Manoliu_3.pdf
6. Diaconu Lumină, Determinări psihopedagogice ale abordării comunicative în predarea limbii engleze, Studia Universitatis, Revista științifică a Universității de Stat din Moldova, 2012, nr.9(59), issn 1857-2103.
7. Nicorici Maria, file:///C:/Users/Lenova/Desktop/Siituații%20de%20învățare/Situatii%20de%20învatatare.PDF
8. https://www.12.gov.sk.ca/docs/francais/fransk/fran/elem/dem/dem2.html#:~:text=le%20transfert%20n'est%20pas,les%20situations%20d'apprentissage.
9. Johnson D.W., Johnson R.T., Holubec E.J. Circles of learning: Cooperation in the classroom (4th ed.). Edina: MN: Interaction Books, 1993. Cited by Scutelnic Oxana, Situații de învățare în echipă, Revista Științifică a Universității de Stat din Moldova, 2009, nr.5 (25)
10. Guțu I. et al. Curriculum Național. Aria curriculară Limbă și comunicare. Disciplina Limba străină, clasele X–XII. Ghid de implementare a curriculumului disciplinar. Chișinău, 2019. 117 p.
11. Petriciuc Lilia, Aspecte ale formării competenței pragmatic la limba engleză în cadrul formal, Revista de științe socioumane, Nr.2 (42) 2019.

12. Literature and discourse analysis, Acta Linguistica Hafniensia, International Journal of Linguistics, Volume 42, Supplement 1, 2010, pp.147-157. File:///C:/Users/Lenova/Desktop/Analiza%20discursului/Perfect%20discursiv.pdf