Tatiana Midrigan, PhD Student Tiraspol State University

Silvia Golubitchi

Tiraspol State University

# INTERPRETATION OF LITERARY TEXT IN PRIMARY CLASSES

### Introduction

Currently, the demands of society and technology require the improvement of opportunities to capitalize on information and determine the emergence of new approaches to literary works, while the basic participants of the educational process (students) study the literary texts to discover theme, main idea, artistic means, reproduction of the requested fragments, the categorization and characterization of the characters or the action analysis through the main moments. The interpretation of a text has its starting point in reading and is achieved, first of all, by reading or studying it directly and designates higher levels of reading, involving various meanings, including all levels of realization of the work from stylistic reception, to reasons and the integrative artistic image, to the idea-affective content and its historical-social determination. Debates on the text can take various forms of guided discussion, which will allow the teacher to highlight the knowledge of the content details and the understanding of the connection between events and realities. The interpretation must be understood and analysed from the perspective of a broader context which also includes the issue of intentionality or that of finality. The way we define them depends on the selected criteria, not on knowledge abstract ideal. The most interesting aspect of the text is the interpretive one.

### Theoretical assumptions

The interpretation of the literary text will be substantially complete and become an effective means of communication for young schoolchildren provided that the concepts specific to the interpretation and the components of the communication competence will be determined and capitalized; the components of the interpretation competence will be correlated with the methodological stages of the literary text; the strategies of interpretation of the literary text in the primary classes will be substantiated and capitalized;

The aim of the research is the theoretical substantiation of the ways of interpreting the literary text in the primary classes. This study also fulfils the following research objectives: approaching the theoretical landmarks of the literary text; determining the principles, factors and psycho-pedagogical conditions of the interpretation of the literary text; description of the efficient ways that contribute to the interpretation of the literary text.

The basic pedagogical resource of the integrated training-evaluation process is the literary/non-literary text of various types, carrying meanings and meaningful information to the student, and the teachers' duty is to help the students to analyse the texts from different perspectives, to perceive the meanings, to form themselves intellectually, morally, aesthetically, etc. Bringing the meanings closer, the teacher capitalizes on the text as a resource in terms of students' personal development by assimilating new knowledge and transforming it into abilities and skills and incorporating them into new oral and written products created by the students individually, which are signs of acquiring a skill.

To study the text, it is necessary to decipher the literary code which includes: notions of vocabulary, literal and figurative meaning, versification in lyrical texts, procedures of expressiveness, characterization of characters in epic texts, ways of exposition, styles and originality of expression, etc. A literary text at the lesson of the Romanian language and literature can be approached independently on a case-by-case basis. The text depends on the topic length. Changing the topic length causes the text to change. The topic, in turn, consists of a hierarchy of sub-topics, so the transition to a sub-topic within a text should not be seen as a change of topic. A new text is a text that deals with a topic, which has no semantic connection with the previous topic. In the study of a text, it is necessary to know the relationship between the author and the expressed reality, because it facilitates the understanding, stimulates the curiosity and the desire to learn new things.

Researcher A. Pamfil formulates two principles of text study: the importance of understanding the text "in depth" and of knowing it "in detail", knowing the "literary meaning"; and "capitalizing on the subjective experience that the act of reading and interpreting implies" [5, p. 70]. In the study of literary texts, the act of reading alone cannot ensure the acquisition of students' ability to orient themselves in a text if it is not considered at the same time the understanding of the message of a literary, scientific or other type of text, the understanding that is based on multiple text analysis. Any text directs the students to organize their reading as a process (to find the recommended book; to be able to read it in the reserved time); to work on the read texts performing the tasks adjacent to the reading; to present the product that demonstrates the quality of the reading process, in a free form or established by Professor T. Cartaleanu [4, p. 46]. The reader looks at a literary text through the prism of his life experience, past literary knowledge and aesthetic preferences.

## Methodology and discussion

The methodology of studying the text emphasizes various ways of interpreting the text. With each book read, we accumulate experiences, compare facts, express our point of view, make value judgments. The decisions made by the teacher regarding the working strategies with the literary text have a certain well-defined constant and fit into the teacher's teaching style, but can be changed depending on the exact situations that arise. The relationship with the world of the text, regardless of how it is approached or allowed to be approached, is directly influenced by the process of interpretation, which can be broken down into three "methodical times". The first hermeneutic time is defined by the presence of a "progressive orientation", the second by a "retrospective orientation", and the last by projecting the text on the "background of horizon changes" that marked the series of interpretations.

Any method that initiates interpretations is in the field of hermeneutics and tries to understand the whole, to understand the part and the element and, more generally, the text and the object interpreted as an existential mediating agent of the hermeneutic experience. The hermeneutic method corresponds to a technique of interpreting artistic texts in different fields and engages the student in the role of the second creative subject and contributes essentially in the formation of learning skills: directs the student to the meaning of the read text, helps him to read and to understand different types of texts. The development of competence

systems defined by the curriculum will be manifested in cult communicative behaviours, in activities and general literary-artistic and aesthetic attitudes. The comprehension sequences after reading take place in the form of activities performed regularly, in order to develop students' reflective skills on what they read, the transfer of information received in new situations, the formulation of personal opinions, and the relation of those examined to real life.

The explanatory reading is considered a complex of methods, which appeals to conversation, explanation, demonstration, story-telling, role-play, etc., aiming at reading the text in order to understand it. It has become a specific method used in the Romanian language and literature lessons in grades I-IV and by its very name draws attention to the fact that it is the reading accompanied by the necessary explanation which allows the revelation of the text message. It is not just simple explanation given by the teacher, but the commitment of students' intellectual effort in this process.

Interpretive reading does not come to take the place of explanatory reading, but only to complete it, to help a better understanding of the read text, because it can be defined as follows: "...to understand and appreciate. It requires an act of thought and education." It also aims to analyse equally the background of a text (ideas, feelings) and its form. These two sides of it are inseparable. The analysis of form cannot be a goal itself, but is subordinated to the understanding of the message of the text. By studying the means of expression, so the form, a better understanding of the meaning of the content is ensured. To this must be added the fact that the interpretation of a text is also determined by the individual particularities of the one who analyses it, by his/her ability to orient himself/ herself in the read text.

Explanatory and interpretive reading are two viable methods, the first specific, especially, to reading hours, the second to studying hours, methods that can be used separately, but also complementing each other.

Table 1. Explanatory reading and interpretive reading

Source: own study.

Students on the basis of the text acquire:

- Knowledge from the theory of literature: about the literary work, the structural elements, the message and the language of the work, knowledge about the author, knowledge about the world, about oneself, etc.;
- Competences (abilities, skills) of comprehension/listening/reception (of the text), recognition and identification (of the type of text read, main ideas, literary notions, characters, etc.), analysis and interpretation (of a piece of text, a literary fact or phenomenon), characterization (of a character), summary (of a narrative text), and appreciation (of a read text, a character, own post-reading state, etc.);
- Attitudes, which refer to the values transmitted through the literary text, feelings arisen by the literary work, personal feelings formulated by the reader in relation to the issue of the read text, opinions and personal appreciations of literary phenomena (with reference to character, author and means of expression, etc.) [6, p. 64].

Creative reading generates added value, negotiation of meanings. In order to arouse students' interest in reading, different activities and ways are required:

- Choosing texts in accordance with the students' expectation horizon;
- The teacher's enthusiasm when reading;
- Translating literary texts into another language: mime, role play, pantomime, dramatization;
- Use of interactive methods;
- Accompanying the reading activities with writing ones;
- Partnerships and joint activities with/within the library;
- Meeting writers and literary critics;
- Dramatization of known texts;
- Organizing reading circles, literary circles, meetings and contests, etc.
- The process of efficient reading involves several parameters:
- the global comprehension (exploration) of the text;
- questioning, questions, first evaluations and decisions;
- throughout reading;
- recapitulation;
- returning to review things, a selected reading, sometimes complete.

According to researcher A. Pamfil, the text is approached from the perspective of the following levels:

- Level of comprehension/understanding of the text: the strategies are focused on the content of the text and aim to highlight what the text says/ tells/renders/describes;
- Level of text analysis: the strategies are focused on the form of the text and aim to highlight the way the text says/tells/renders/describes;
- Level of text interpretation: strategies are focused on the meanings of the text and aim to outline what the text conveys through and beyond what it says, or more precisely, what the reader considers the text conveys [5].

The interpretation has a global character, and can be initiated only after fully reading a text or a piece of text (statement, paragraph, chapter, etc.). Any interpretation in the framework of a piece of text can only be validated at the end of the text reading. O. Ghidirmic mentions that interpretation means decipherment, decryption, assuming also an explanation [1, p. 25–26]. Interpretation is a controlled, rationalized, systematic reading, undertaken by an expert or critic, sometimes also by the reader who borrows the method, constituting a term of reference, a background on which the standard reading is projected to check the intuition or to measure deviation, a (theoretical) horizon of the full expansion and efflorescence of meaning".

The decoding and interpretation of the text is done, first of all, by reading or studying it. The phrase studying the text designates higher levels of reading, implying a deeper interpretation of the text. The efficiency of studying the text is ensured by going through some obligatory processes:

- a) receiving and processing information at the sensory level (text view);
- b) the actual perceptual decoding of the text (words, word-connections);
- c) the linguistic decoding itself (the meaning of the words, the morphologicalsyntactic decoding, the value of the components, the relation of the linguistic units);
- d) interpretation (significations become meanings);
- e) aesthetic-stylistic interpretation (in the case of the literary text).

By interpreting the text, the student connects facts that are not explicitly connected, makes assumptions, fills in gaps, elaborates points of view, creates tensions, etc. The interpreter's strategy supposes in this case a pragmatic process of meaning formation that from a temporal point of view means the step-by-step interpretation of each constituent statement of the text from the perspective of the content. An important role in deciphering the text is played by the keywords, which focus or radiate meaningful flows. Finding keywords is one of the main skills of exploratory reading, hence the teacher's insistence in proposing to students a set of exercises and learning situations, in which the words can be explored. The interpretation offers the following scheme for the study of a literary text (literary work):

- 1) re-creating the text, the author's intention, his evolution, etc.;
- 2) the study of the author's personality, his biography, creativity in general and the place of a certain work in its context;
- 3) the study of the results of the first stage in the context of the epoch, of the social life, of the historical situation, of the literary tendencies.

Undoubtedly, an interpretation is successful if it is used for something, i.e. it clarifies, edifies, justifies, "heals", modifies certain epistemic inertias or indicates new lines of action. The performance of the interpretation depends, to a large extent, on the competencies of the interpreters, they convert their own subjectivity in the direction of an expected objectivity. The subject-object relationship in interpretation is the subject of theories of reception or reading. When trying to specify the purpose and importance of studying literature in school, we must keep in mind that, unlike other forms of human knowledge, literature, as a branch of art, which capitalizes on the expressive function of language (expressiveness

results, especially, from the use of mediated language, with sensory envelope, able to excite), addresses mainly sensitivity, triggers emotional and aesthetic effects.

The methods of interpreting a literary text, currently existing, offer the reader a whole system of various techniques designed to reveal the deep meaning of a literary work, understanding its main idea and intention of the author. We appeal to the existential interpretive method, which has its origin in one of the directions of modern philosophy and considers the human being as an object of study. In this case, a literary work is considered a segment of reality. Integrity is what makes the origins and fundamental questions of human existence obvious.

The multi-processional query method contains questions that also refer to the interpretation of the literary text, focusing on the meanings of the words, starting from the following types of questions:

- Literal questions are those that require accurate information. Usually, they only need to memorize the answers, and the student only needs to know, in the short term, the specific information that has been presented in order to answer these questions well. Typically, the answers to the literal questions are found in the text. They only ask the student to cite something that has already been said. However, some researchers have found that because the answers to these questions are either correct or incorrect, many very good students consider them the most demanding and threatening.
- Translation questions ask students to transform information. Such a question will ask them, for example, to imagine the situation, scene, or event they are learning about, and to describe what they see. Translation questions urge students to restructure or transform information into different images. Students who answer such questions will describe the image they see or the sounds they hear while reading. What they are required to do is, in fact, to mentally live a sensory experience and then use language to pass on their experience to others. This is already an active and creative process that engages the student.
- Interpretive questions ask students to discover the connections between ideas, facts, definitions or values. The students need to think about how certain ideas or concepts relate to make sense. They must understand the connections between ideas and build various contexts for these ideas. An interpretation question is, for example: "Why do you think the old man's daughter did the right thing?" Such questions stimulate interesting speculation.

- Application questions give students the opportunity to solve problems or carry-on various logic or reasoning problems encountered in their reading or learning experiences.
- Analytical questions are the ones that raise questions like, "Is this event adequately explained?" or "Are there other reactions or circumstances that explain things better or more rationally?" The student can ask questions about the motives of a character or about the research plan of an experimenter or can question the validity of the reasoning on which the conclusion of the story is based.
- Synthetic questions involve solving problems creatively, based on original thinking. If application questions ask students to solve problems based on information they already have, the synthetic questions allow them to use all their knowledge and experience to solve a problem creatively. Synthetic questions ask students to create alternative scenarios. Here are some examples of such questions: "What do you think these two characters could have done to avoid suspicion?" or "How can we look at the circumstances in such a way as to avoid the problems we now have?"
- Assessment questions ask students to make good/bad, right/wrong judgments, based on self-defined standards. These questions assume that the student understands the facts he has encountered and integrates them into a personal system of beliefs, on the basis of which he can make judgments. It is a complex integration and understanding, which personalizes the learning process and gives the student the opportunity to truly learn new ideas and concepts. Assessment questions ask students to judge the quality of information or their own behaviours in terms of new information. They may be asked to judge the behavior of a character in a story, to say whether s/he acted well or badly, or whether s/he was honest with other characters. They develop these meanings using their own words and expressions based on learning experiences, which are unique.

An important thing to recognize is that students of any age can cope with the query at any level. Moreover, they are eager to ask questions and answer. Through reading, students are led to form their ability to capture, to discover contents and forms of reality, expressed in a multitude of ways of expression, to associate with others, which allows them to expand, thus, the area of knowledge.

In this aspect, the text appears as an expression of the maximum generality of any linguistic communication, as a notion that shapes all the products of textual competence. This process also includes the student's competence of studying the text as a totalization of the knowledge necessary to read and understand the texts, the students adapting their codes and knowledge of the text specifics, continuously producing inferences to reduce the distance between what they possess in the repertoire and what they actually encounter.

To have formed the textual competence means, from the perspective of a normative school document, to operate, to apply an adequate and pertinent theoretical-scientific instrumentation on textual structures of any type. From the perspective of the theory of reading, reception, or rather of the reader-receiver, consumer of meanings and meanings, this student's competence means having the ability to penetrate the structure of the text, decipher the connotations, analyse/interpret/appreciate the background and the form, the texture of the work, you would understand the message or the intention [2, p. 69].

#### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, through analytical-synthetic study it was proved that the study of literary text in primary classes is done in a complex manner, which provides not only comprehension, reception, analysis, interpretation and appreciation of what is read, but also the transfer of literary-artistic and linguistic-communicative acquisitions in new situations and can be approached independently on a case-by-case basis in the context it is a paradigm of the transition from the study of literature to education through literature that aims to train interpretive readers, competent in a discussion initiated on the basis of the literary text .

While penetrating the diversity of literary texts, students will follow specific paths of knowledge, from concrete to abstract, from intuition to representation and fantasy, reaching the possession of multiple tools useful to satisfy their desire to discover the surrounding reality. Thus, the interest for knowledge, the capacity for selection, for association, in order to understand the multiple meanings of reality, represented by different literary creations, is cultivated.

Training framed into an experience of interpreting a literary text cannot be an isolated act. So, when we present a content, we have to help students to comprehend it, analyse in depth, feel the connections of ideas and concepts, and compare the experience in the text with that in the real world. Gradually, the studied texts on the basis of a critical analysis, relying on interrogation and formulation of appropriate and stimulating questions, become a value that leads to finding solutions in any circumstance.

**Abstract:** The study of the literary text is an up-to-date topic, which consists in deciphering the literary code which includes: notions of vocabulary, literal and figurative meaning, versification in lyrical texts, procedures of expressiveness, description of characters in epic texts, ways of exposition, styles and originality of expression etc. Interpretation is a controlled, rationalized, systematic reading, undertaken by the critic, sometimes also by the reader, to verify his intuitions. The interpretation of the text is done, first of all, by reading and designates higher levels of reading, involving various meanings.

The communicative-functional model, which implies the integrated development of the capacities of oral reception, of oral expression, respectively of reception of the written message and of written expression, proposes a new approach of the text, as a whole. Working with the literary text presents several opportunities to develop students' interpretive skills and to review certain segments of the studied subject. Along with text analysis operations such as delimitation of artistic means, elaboration of the ideas plan, analysis and interpretation of the text, the student has the opportunity to develop the ability to express and communicate, which is one of the key competencies in the National Curriculum.

**Keywords:** text, literary text, interpretation, scheme of interpretation, meaning of the word

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