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FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE DISCURSIVE APPROACH
OF THE LITERARY TEXT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Abstract. The paper presents an analysis of the basic principles which govern the discursive approach of the literary text. The discursive approach covers both the internal and external aspects, a fact which promotes a new and more complex analysis of the literary text. Thus, the specific methodological principles which rule the process of developing the English communicative competence through the discursive approach are as follows: pragmasemantic principle of the literary text, dialogic principle of the text analysis, principle of intertextuality, principle of interpretative cooperation, principle of intercultural communication.

Keywords: principle, approach, discourse, communicative competence, literary text.

The discursive approach of the text can be explained through the fact that the literary text is always a means of expressing the language of the society. It has a sociocultural dimension. While making the analysis of the literary text we should take into consideration its semantic, syntactic, narrative levels, but also the social context which generates the text content. In this regard, the discursive approach proposes a new treatment of the literary text, suggesting procedures and techniques in order to integrate all the components of the communicative competence, namely, the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. Thus, the text gets a larger function, id est, not to develop competences separately but incorporating them into the same process. The paper insists on the fact that the discursive approach is a multidimensional study of the text, combining social, intercultural and contextual connections (conditions of text production and
communication situation) which facilitate the understanding and reception of the literary text.

In this light, the discursive approach covers both the internal and external aspects, which promote a more complex text analysis.

Consequently, the discursive approach can be applied as an efficient didactic means in the study of literary texts in the English classrooms. Through this approach, we can highlight all the conditions under which the literary communication occurs; for example, to determine the characteristics that make the subject of this act, working on communicative and situational components, such as the author and the reader; the writer and the reader; the narrator and the characters [1].

The discursive approach provides the possibility to underline the methodological potentiality of the literary text, namely, to analyze it with students looking for modalities, tones, voices, intentions, reality, language, history in its textual, communicative and discursive structure. Keeping this in mind, the English teacher changes the objectives of the literary text study. The teacher goes beyond the linguistic parameters and together with the learners, exploits the socio-cultural dimension of the literary text. Its universal social aspect takes the students to other social horizons, it helps them see different life sizes, various realities [2].

Just as C. Scripnic mentions in her work, all scientific researches can be carried out only if they are guided by certain principles. These are absolutely necessary indicators, to which the researcher must relate his points of view and experiments, in order to achieve the right outcomes using the appropriate methodology [3].

In this regard, after having analyzed more sources and researches in the field, it was possible to identify specific methodological principles which rule the process of developing the English communicative competence through the discursive approach of the literary text. Therefore, we are of the view that the discursive approach in the formation of the communicative competence is supported by the principles illustrated in Fig.1:
Fig. 1. Principles of the literary text analysis through the discursive approach

• Pragmasemantic principle of the literary text

This principle implies the study of the discursive relation between the agents of the communicative act. The communicative and social dimensions of this relation are ruled by discourse in different situations of communicative interaction between the speaker and the receiver of the message. In the process of teaching English to students it is recommendable to take this principle into consideration as the mastery of the bookish language skills isn’t enough for acquiring good communicative abilities. Students must be aware of the language functionality in the society.

Giving consideration to the pragmasemantic principles while analysing literary texts, great attention is paid to the extralinguistic factors that favour the whole configuration of the text meaning. Thus, the discursive approach focuses more on the external structure of the text, in particular, the extralinguistic factors involved in the act of communication.

The pragmatists consider the contextual factors as an integrating part of the production and text analysis process. These factors are extremely important in both processes of sending and receiving the message. With this knowledge in mind, we would say that knowing the concrete conditions of the text production is quite essential in the understanding of the text [4].

Accordingly, the pragmasemantic structure of the text can be described using the following formula (Fig.2.):
The pragmasemantic dimension of the text comprises three components:

– the deictic component focuses on the location of the content by referring to the elements of discourse (sender, receiver) and to the time of the communication. The given component puts the linguistic message into the communicative situation.

– the modal component codifies the author’s attitude towards the things communicated; it is illustrated by the emotional, intellectual or volitional shades of the text.

– the illocutionary component is intended to specify the purpose for which the text is used by the receiver. It is a new concept that emphasizes the importance of the relations between the sender and the receiver in the communicative process. The relation occurs due to the three factors which have a great impact on the communication: language, text and context.

These three pragmasemantic components underline the connection of the literary text with certain extralinguistic factors, as for example, the events taken from the reality and the communicative context.

**Dialogic principle of the text analysis**

Taking into consideration the fact that the literary text analysis is closely related to the concept of dialogue, we would say the dialogic principle has a big impact on the functionality of the discursive approach. In the course of time, there were a lot of discussions about the way the author’s intention was rendered through the dialogue between the reader and the text. Lately these kinds of
discussions have been related to the dialogue between the reader and the text, but, the latter intends to show the objective reality through different social events/norms.

According to Mikhail Bahtin, one of the researchers who were concerned with the text dialogical competence, dialogism is the permanent connection of the text with its context, with its author, as well as with the authors who preceded it. He considers dialogism as a synonym of intertextuality. This relation is a part of a larger lexical field (polyphony, heteroglossia, hybridization, etc.).

We can see that M. Bahtin emphasizes the presence of a plurality of voices (which is also called polyphony) in all texts. As a consequence, the term dialogism represents this mixture of responding voices [5].

In this regard, we understand that dialogism is also characterised by interdiscursiveness. This idea can be justified by the fact that a word gets a significance only in a discursive act [6].

While analysing a text we go beyond it, it takes us beyond the boundaries of its psychological and historical context; the text owes its meaning to the dialogue that is established between the reader and the text. [7].

The theory of dialogism enabled the study of the social dimension of the text pointing out the human intersubjectivity. In such a way it brought a new breath to the process of analyzing the text and namely, its extrinsic aspect. Within this framework, the dialogic principle initiated by M. Bahtin, encourages the discursive treatment of the literary text, both intrinsically and extrinsically. The text has changed its status acquiring another function. The text stopped being considered a representation of the society in which it occurs, it is seen as a dialogue with this society, with all its values. The writer doesn’t produce a literary work without referring to his social experience. The same happens to the reader. In the process of the reception, he links the text to his social condition [8].

**Principle of intertextuality**

As reported by Julia Kristeva, intertextuality is a textual relation that implies different sequences (or codes) taken from other texts, with some transformations of textual structures [9].
Therefore, the literary text gets a transformation and combination of the various previous texts used by the authors, which constitute the intertext. On the whole, all texts are intertexts.

The concept of intertextuality has some common things with the dialogism defined by M. Bahtin. He considers the literary text a poliphonic space where different linguistic, stylistic and cultural components interact with each other. Thus, the concept of intertextuality takes from Bahtin’s theory the idea that literature is created as a result of the transformation of these components in a certain text.

Intertextuality represents, to some extent, the way the communication agents cooperate. Their cooperation consists in a transaction and mediation related to the production of the text as an intersubjectivity. We can say that the intersubjectivity and interdiscursiveness are dependant on each other. In terms of producing and communicating meaning, the linguistic and discursive levels function together.

The discursive approach underlines the actional aspect of communication through language. In this regard, within language there are types of communication with illocutionary potential. We want to infer that literary texts refer to certain models of reality accepted by the society.

This principle is closely related to the principle of cooperation as it defines the act of working together. In some other words, there is a cooperation between the writer, reader and the text with its context.

**Principle of the interpretative cooperation**

According to the principle of cooperation defined by H.P. Grice the communication should not be seen only as an exchange of information [10]. The concept of *interpretative cooperation* is perceived as the treatment of the cooperation activity that makes the receiver understand the message outside the text, combine the implicit with the explicit.

In this regard, U. Eco states that the reader should be actively involved in the process of activating the text content and pointing out his beliefs. This model is supported by three concepts: *understanding, updating and interpretation*.

U. Eco examines the way the text is produced and how the text reading emphasizes the process of creating its structure [11].
If this principle is respected, the interpretative activity of the literary text performed by the students will be a success.

**Principle of intercultural communication**

It’s useless to study a language without social, historical and cultural details even if theoretically it’s possible. If we don’t study the environment of the language, or, if we don’t understand those who use it, then the authentic integration into the communication universe cannot take place.

It is obvious that without taking into consideration the cultural context of the participants in the communication, the communication skills are incomplete.

The functional practice of a language involves the fitting of the discourse to the communication situation, namely, the relation of the content, of the vocabulary, of the chosen tone with the real context [12].

Linguistic and cultural knowledge improves gradually, in the case the vocabulary and the spectrum of knowledge about the society in the foreign language is enriched. The link of knowledge to the context is a part of the intercultural competence. Culture and communication go hand in hand, therefore, all communicative acts occur in cultural settings [13].

Keeping in mind the theories of the researcher Gudykunst (2004), we can define it as a representation of life and society rules, norms, values. In this situation, culture has a great importance as the cultural rules enable the understanding of the events and people’s behaviour. The rules expand or restrict our activities related to the social environment. It is known that the intercultural communication is guided by the cultural identity. For its study there should be taken into account numerous culture-related elements, such as understanding, knowledge patterns, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and the impact of the context. All these elements are not separated from each other, they form a unit and work together in an intercultural environment. Knowing all these components contributes to the analysis and discovery of new facts, things about other cultures, people, their thoughts, behaviour and manners. It makes us perceive our own world, culture, which is a crucial factor for the social development of every person. [14].
The mastery of the vocabulary, grammar knowledge, good pronunciation will not work when it comes to practice, there will be difficulties in applying them successfully if the learner doesn’t get used to the legalities and cultural conventions of the society where the given language is spoken. The lack of knowledge related to the sociocultural norms doesn’t generate a language proficiency. However, learning a common language may facilitate easier the development of the intercultural communication.

In this context, the literary texts are an efficient means to realize the cultural transfer. According to Byram (1997), the authentic literary texts are enriched with real language, they offer EFL learners the opportunity to develop their intercultural communication and participate, in a way, in the real life of the society by having the abilities to appreciate, judge, admire or express feelings, approval or disapproval of an event occurred inside a nation or culture. All these things can be perceived, compared and analysed. The literary text provides the learners with the awareness of the objective linguistic complexity of a foreign culture. They give learners the possibility to negotiate and mediate the meaning. We would like to conclude with Harald Weinrich’s idea which says that learning a foreign language without a literary approach is a complete savagery [15].

Using the right text approach, namely, the discursive one, we can provide our students with a sociocultural opening, full of life and anchored in everybody’s experience.

**Conclusion**

At the end of the article we would like to recall that the literary text is a language laboratory. Language and literature have a relative autonomy in relation to the conditions of production and reception. With the help of the discursive approach, the literary text emphasizes its potential to develop and transmit social myths and rites, gives significance to the world, and consequently to ourselves. Therefore, we consider the literary text a strong key element in the development of English language skills, but also a catalyst of intercultural understanding and dialogue.
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