

10<sup>th</sup> International Balkan Education and Science Congress on the topic of “Education and globalization”

University „Ss.Cyril and Methodius“-Skopje  
Faculty of Pedagogy „St.Kliment Ohridski“-Skopje  
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„EDUCATION AND GLOBALIZATION“

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10<sup>th</sup> International Balkan Education and Science Congress on the topic of “Education and globalization”

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**Irena Kitanova\***

## **Content analysis (interpretation) of a text in class teaching (interpretation)**

### **Abstract**

The level of analysis of a literary work in the lower grades depends on the physical, mental, and intellectual abilities of students. It must be neither too studious and highly scientific, nor too simplified. It is better for a literary text to remain as an aesthetic creation in a student's mind at their level of experience, rather than be trivialized with bad and incorrect analytical procedures. Analytical requirements in grade I and II are much lower than in III, IV and V grade where they can be extensive and studious. The greatest portion of time should be devoted to the analysis phase because students' understanding of a literary work depends on it. This is often overused, so the entire lesson turns into a lesson in education, which suppresses the artistic spirit of the work. By means of analysis we reveal the artistic values of a text - and this should be the ultimate goal, and we should afterwards realize the objectives related to the educational part of class.

We conditionally distinguish four types of analysis/interpretation of an artistic text from the theoretical-methodological aspect: - Content Analysis - Conceptual Analysis - Ethical Analysis - Psychological Analysis Some methodologists define analysis as absorption in the content and the notional character of the text. Despite the different views and opinions, for analysis as a phase it is common to analyze the content and the reproduction of facts and occurrences, and to reveal the underlying concept of the writer, i.e. of the idea or the message of the literary text.

**Key words:** *analysis, text, practical work, lesson realization.*

### **Content analysis**

In teaching methods literature analysis as a stage and as a whole is divided into three sub-stages by some researches: logical, ethical and aesthetic analysis. Others notice two structural elements: content structure and conceptual structure of the artistic text. Content structure includes: 1. Thematic structure (a snapshot of life that is recognizable in space and time); 2. Motives (smaller thematic sections

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of material and spiritual nature or of spiritual nature that make the shown life event seem more concrete and more credible); 3. Poetic images (meaningful interaction of several motifs with which sensory, cognitive and emotional representations of the phenomenon and its place in the context of the presented are achieved); 4. Various emotions (writer's emotional reaction to certain emotional phenomena); 5. Characters (their physical traits, personality traits and psychological states and relationships in specific life circumstances); 6. Conflict of heroes (dramatic conflicts and reasons for their occurrence, detection of the problem and its resolution). There are methodologists who define analysis as dwelling into the content and the ideological context of the text. Despite the different views and opinions, the common feature of analysis as a stage is the analysis of the text content, reproduction of facts and occurrences, and to reveal the writer's underlying concept, i.e. the idea or the message of the literary text.

The word content means a set of events, situations, phenomena, feelings, facts, and details shaped by the power of the writer's talent into a single artistic whole. Simply, the content is what a literary work is really about. Theorists of literature operate with the notion of content that covers everything from construction / material to its final cognitive and linguistic shaping of thought. In methodological terms, content analysis means understanding the text as a complete artistic structure. It means understanding the words, expressions, sentences, understanding their relationships within smaller sections or motifs. During analysis, the student sees the logical order of the author's presentation, discovers the plot and causal connections. The questions must be clear and unambiguous, logically derived from the text. The best are those questions that transform the immediate content into issues that inspire students to perceive, deduce and generalize.

Questions should be encouraging and revealing. The basic rule is: the teacher should not analyze the text while the students are passively listening. The dynamics and the quality of the lesson depend on the diversity of questions and on how they are asked (intonation, rhythm, etc.). Ever since the first grade students need to be educated about how to keep a conversation, how to communicate. It is wrong and harmful if the teacher asks questions, and the student responds in the course of the whole lesson.

The teacher should continuously and gradually encourage students to equally ask and respond to questions. Questions can be: ⇒ Concrete (Where did he go? Whom did he meet? What did he do?), ⇒ Questions with which a student can independently make conclusions (How did he do it? Could he have done something better? How would you have solved that situation?), ⇒ Questions for discovering causal connections (Why did he act in such a manner? How do we conclude that it is good? What didn't he understand?), ⇒ Stimulating-revealing

questions (pay attention, perceive, elaborate, validate, compare, explain, think, etc.), ⇒ Questions about establishing a relationship with the text (the text in the Find in the text! Compare in the text! Read what the writer says! How did the writer express it?), ⇒ Questions to express their own views (How do you think you would have solved that problem? Put yourself in the role of that character! How would you finish the short story/story?). The question is what questions to ask students? The answer is both simple and complex: teachers should always ask questions that lead to profound and essential considerations that will encourage the development of critical thinking skills on a higher level. The questions to which students need to answer only by stating a fact (example: Who is the main character in the text?) are not stimulating, creative and they do not encourage critical thinking.

This does not mean that this type of questions should never be asked, but it indicates that their number needs to be reduced in teaching. In contrast, questions that require students to make a critical review (reflection), to discuss, imagine, create, etc., teach them that their thinking is on a more complex level and that in that way they can contribute to the community in terms of greater understanding and belief (example: Which character did you like best and why?). There is an opinion that all forms of analysis (content, conceptual, ethical and psychological) should be processed simultaneously in a synchronized manner with their interweaving. This is acceptable and applicable to the first grade, but analysis as a methodical stage is much more extensive and effective if it is differentiated into specific structural elements.

These structural elements or sub-stages should not be taken as a strict educational rule, because an artistic text is experienced and interpreted as a whole. Understanding of the text content is an essential prerequisite for understanding its overall value. In addition, retelling should not be equated with content analysis. In fact, content analysis always precedes the retelling. The approaches to teaching methods for processing the content structure of an artistic text are different. In the lower grades (I to V grade) four methodological approaches are mainly dominant: - Content analysis of a text as a whole, - Content analysis of a text by its logical wholes/parts, - Content analysis of a text according to a previously given plan, - Content analysis of a text by a series of pictures or slides.

### **Content analysis of a text as a whole**

The reproduction of a text is made by the method of conversation. This is done gradually, chronologically, line by line, taking into account the logical development of the action or the expressing of poetic images if it is a song.

During the analysis it is important to distinguish between the essential and the irrelevant and not to let students to emphasize the

unimportant as if it were the essential. In prose (short story, tale) the analysis goes from part to part, and in poetry from stanza to stanza. Depending on the nature of the text, the sequence of content reproduction can also take place in a synchronized manner.

### **Content analysis of a text by its logical wholes/parts**

The logical whole is a part of an artistically homogeneous text. Discovering logical sections students are trained to think logically, to learn how to break down the whole into smaller structural segments.

Methodological procedure for the analysis of a text by logical parts can take place as follows: 1. Expressive reading 2. Student's reading of a particular logical whole (one student reads the logical whole aloud, and other students, previously directed towards certain tasks, monitor the reading), 3. Interpretation of new words and phrases from the whole that is read, 4. Content reproduction of the read logical whole, 5. Formulating subheadings for the analyzed logical wholes. In the course of analyzing each logical whole it is necessary to write every subtitle for each logical whole on the board in correct order, thus composing the plan of the text. For certain logical groups the teacher can prepare illustrations to demonstrate them during the conversation, and, according to the given subheadings, the students can determine the logical units in the text by themselves.

### **Content analysis of a text according to a previously given plan**

Long texts are usually processed according to a plan given in advance. The teacher divides the text into certain logical, thematic and motive units and familiarizes the students with the plan during the previous lesson so that they could prepare for the lesson in time. The plan motivates students for an independent and responsible approach to work.

### **Content analysis of a text by a series of pictures and slides**

Photos and slides must be made by a professional person - artist. They can form logical groups. During the analysis care should be taken that these teaching tools do not dampen the interest in the artistic text and turn the students' attention away from the basic tasks of the analysis. So all kinds of illustrations should be applied cautiously, and priority should always be given to the word.

### **Conclusion**

The exhaustiveness of the analysis depends on the age of students. In class the analysis is partial, i.e. adjusted to the students' overall abilities and this should not be exaggerated. The task of the analysis is to awaken the students' aesthetic sense, to sharpen their powers of observation of a literary work, the critical spirit and to form their literary taste. These requirements/tasks are accomplished in the process of teaching with students' full and thorough engagement. Literary analysis raises and propels students' emotional, imaginative, intellectual and creative potential. The emotional component prevails at the beginning, but later it is enriched with reflective elements. During the analysis, the questions must be encouraging, to induce students to think, associate and link literary facts. The worst is when the teacher suggests his/her own views and knowledge to students, load them with his/her teaching style, retells the contents of the text or reveals the idea / message, the nature of the characters etc. The analysis is successful if the questions are well designed and stimulating, if a dynamic conversation is conducted, and if clearly defined knowledge and attitudes are exposed.