STYLISTICS IN TEACHER TRAINING SETTING

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Abstract: *The present article investigates the role of stylistics in the teacher training setting. Drawing on the concerns of pedagogical stylistics, the study aims to demine the overall implications of stylistics on the development of students' language awareness, text awareness, and cultural awareness. To evaluate student reactions to the practice of stylistic analysis conducted in the course of stylistics and text linguistics, a questionnaire was administered requiring respondents to choose one of the given alternatives. The items included in the survey are formulated based on the applied utility and relevance of stylistics to learning the English Language synthetized by G. Hall in the articles "Pedagogical Stylistics" and "Stylistics in Second Language Contexts: A Critical Perspective". The questions cover two main areas of learning situations – the impact stylistics has on the acquisition of the language and on the development of students' language awareness, i.e. gaining of knowledge and understanding of language use and language choice, and the contribution the study of stylistics exerts on the development of empirical research skills and transferable skills. Conclusions are formulated based on the overall findings from the questionnaire returns.*

Keywords: *pedagogical stylistics, representational language vs. referential language, language-based approach to literature, interpretation.*

Introduction

Stylistics in the educational system is regarded as a discipline that bridges the gap between literature and linguistics in different language degree programs. In the broader sense it is defined by G. Hall as "the close, systematic and linguistically informed study of language use and language choice" (Hall, 2014: 239). In this context, courses in stylistics are usually implemented to develop students' sensitivity to different features of language and the ways in which they are used in various types of texts with different effects. In addition to improving students' analytical skills at a linguistic level, stylistics is also employed with the aim of increasing students' own general linguistic performance or in specific courses on creative writing, for example. Pedagogical stylistics, a special branch of stylistics, is concerned with investigating the pedagogical implications of stylistics in the teaching of literature as well as in first and second language acquisition, *i.e.* the teaching of English through literature (Nørgaard *et al*., 2010: 5).

The pedagogic value of stylistics is reflected in the teaching of *representational language*, contrasted to *referential language,* proffered by John McRae. The former type refers to the use of language which makes an appeal to the imagination or to the affective side of the interlocutors. Imagery, idioms, advertisements, modality, text worlds are all textual elements which are crucial to the processing of this linguistic material. The latter is purely transactional, with no requirement for processing and interpretation – the kind of language usually provided in most textbooks for the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language. Pedagogical stylistics introduces representational language from the initial stages of language learning, the discipline being intended to develop ongoing language awareness, text awareness, and wider cultural awareness, all of which had been largely overlooked in language teaching until the middle of 1990s (McRae, Clark, 2004: 335-336).

Pedagogical implications of stylistics in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language

According to Gillian Lazar, the two main objectives of stylistics are to enable students to make meaningful interpretations of the text and to expand students' knowledge and awareness of the language in general (Lazar, 1993: 31). Thus, although the aim of using stylistics is to help students to read and study literature more competently, it also provides them with excellent language practice through conscious attention to linguistic elements of a text made salient by means of 'deviance' of some kind, repetitions, parallelism or other prominent patterns aimed to contribute significantly to

meaning. As Geoff Hall states, "the metalinguistic reflection and discussion promoted by stylistic approaches in the second language classroom are held to contribute to deeper processing, understanding, memorability and development of the additional language in use" (Hall, 2007: 4). The statement, we claim, is valid for teaching English as a foreign language, too. Awareness raising stylistic activities lead to enhanced ability for learners to use the language for their own purposes.

For the language learner, stylistics has the advantage of illustrating how particular linguistic forms function to convey specific messages. It uses terminology and procedures familiar to students (those of grammatical description) to reach and justify literary interpretations. In this way, it not only helps students to use their existing knowledge of the language to understand and appreciate literary texts, it also deepens their knowledge of the language itself. Stylistic analysis can also provide a way of comparing different types of texts, whether literary or non-literary, in order to ascertain how they fulfill different social functions. For example, G. Lazar suggests asking students to compare the description of a character in a novel with the information about someone given in a letter of reference or on a medical form (Lazar, 1993: 32). The students will then be able to examine how these texts differ and the reason for this difference. Literature can thus be integrated more fully into the classroom, since literary texts can be studied alongside other types of texts.

The method of stylistic analysis is frequently adopted within the *language-based approach to literature* consisting in close integration of language and literature aimed at improving student's knowledge of, and proficiency in, English. Students are guided to develop a response to literature through examining the linguistic evidence in the text. They are encouraged to draw on their knowledge of English, familiar grammatical, lexical or discoursal categories to make aesthetic judgments of the text. So, this approach may provide useful exposure to, or revision of, grammar and vocabulary in interesting new contexts (*Ibidem*: 25-27). The advantages of using literary texts for language activities, in this approach, are: they offer a wide range of styles and registers; they are open to multiple interpretations and hence provide excellent opportunities for classroom discussion; they focus on genuinely interesting and motivating topics for classroom exploration.

Hence, literature in classroom represents motivating material due to complex themes and unexpected uses of language, interesting plot structures, features not found in the pseudo-narratives frequently employed in course books. It also offers access to cultural background of the people whose language they are studying, making them aware of the social, political, and historical events depicted in a particular literary text. In addition, literary texts contain meaningful and memorable contexts for processing and interpreting new language that encourage language acquisition and expand students' language awareness. Asking students to explore the deviant linguistic occurrences characteristic of literary texts, such as breaches of usual rules of syntax, collocation and even cohesion encourages them to think about the norms of language use and be aware of their specific stylistic effects in the given literary work. Finally, literary texts develop students' interpretative abilities, since literary texts are often rich in multiple levels of meaning and demand that the reader/learner be actively involved in eliciting the unstated implications and assumptions of the text, thus being a good source for developing students' abilities to infer meaning and to make interpretations (*Ibidem*: 15-19).

Basic activities using stylistic analysis or stylistic method vary from the traditional practice of "close reading" to the technique of heuristic rewriting of texts as a pedagogic aid, rather than an end in itself. The first type involves directing student's attention to conspicuous features of text language, such as unexpected or regular recurrence of certain lexical syntactic structures, deviances from the norm or other salient patterns and the consideration of the contribution of these elements to the interpretation and evaluation of the text. This type of activity correlates with the comparative method of pedagogical stylistics presented by G. Hall in "Pedagogical Stylistic" (Hall, 2014: 241). As Hall states, the main inquiry is "how are typically literary texts different yet the same as other uses of language?" (*Ibidem*). The second type of activities, within the transformative pedagogical stylistic approach (*Ibidem*), presupposes comparative analysis and re-writing texts from different perspectives, for instance the cross-genre "translation"/paraphrasing of a poetic text into the form of a prose note, followed by the formal analysis of every aspect of the adapted text as a basic part of

the teaching and learning process, before the text is rewritten back into poetic form and compared with the original (McRae, Clark, 2004: 340). These demand a different set of linguistic choices and knowledge of the linguistic features of a variety of genres and text types in order to transform, for example, a poem into a blog (Nørgaard *et al*., 2010: 38). Such exercises enhance text awareness, helping learners into an understanding of how the text creates specific meanings. The same technique can be applied by removing words, phrases, lines, or whole paragraphs/stanzas from a text and analyzing what differences the changes would make (McRae, Clark, 2004: 340). These activities correlate with two methods of pedagogical stylistics – *comparative stylistics* and *transformative stylistics* presented by G. Hall in "Pedagogical Stylistics" (Hall, 2014: 241).

Student perceptions of the pedagogical value of stylistics

A questionnaire was administered to 16 third-year students in order to find out their overall reactions to the practice of stylistic analysis conducted in the course of stylistics the respondents took for one term and in the course of text linguistics they took for two consecutive terms within the degree program *English Language and French,* teacher training domain, at the Faculty of Languages and Literature of Moldova State University. The course in stylistics contains topics mainly related to style and stylistics, varieties of language, stylistic classification of the English vocabulary, phonetic, lexical, and syntactical expressive means and stylistic devices, and functional styles. The courses in text linguistics provides students with the foundations of textuality encompassing text-as-a-product and text-as-a-process approaches. In addition to introducing students to the principles of the textualization of the message and its reception and interpretation, the course is intended to develop students' linguistic knowledge and encourage a critical and analytical engagement with the text. The latter aspect heavily draws on detailed linguistically informed analysis of language use in literary texts. Besides providing students with necessary information enabling them to form their own judgments of diverse aspects of textual organization and reception, such as cohesion, coherence, informativity, acceptability, intertextuality, etc., the course seeks to develop students' analytical skills of identifying and evaluating the deeper implications underlying the formal organization of the literary text; to develop students' critical and creative thinking competence in facing intricate literary texts; to solve the inconsistencies encountered in literary texts resulting from various linguistic deviations; to relate different aspects of the textual content, such as narrator, narrative situation, presentational modes, focalization, etc. to the textualization of the content. In attaining these objectives, the recourse to stylistics approach is of considerable importance as students analyze the author's choice of language and the specific effects achieved in rendering point of view, characterization, and fictional space and time (tense). The emphasis is laid on cultivating an active element in the students' approach to text, making them sensitive to language details and structure in the process of text comprehension and fostering their competences in conducting a critical linguistic analysis of the literary texts under study.

The devised questionnaire uses Likert scale and contains closed-ended items that require respondents to choose one of the given alternatives, i.e. to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements by marking one of the options ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The items included in the survey are formulated based on the applied utility and relevance of stylistics to learning the English Language synthetized by G. Hall in the articles "Pedagogical Stylistics" (Hall, 2014: 240) and "Stylistics in Second Language Contexts: A Critical Perspective" (Hall, 2007: 4-5). The questions broadly cover two main areas of learning situations – the impact stylistics is claimed to have on the acquisition of the language and on the development of students' language awareness, i.e. gaining of knowledge and understanding of language use and language choice and the contribution this discipline exerts on the development of empirical research skills and transferable skills. Below, the overall findings from the questionnaire returns are discussed.

		Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Neither agree, nor disagree %	Agree %	Strongly agree %
1.	Stylistics facilitates the study of literature.		12,5	6,3	25	56,3
2.	Stylistics enables students to make meaningful interpretations of the texts addressed.		6,3	6,3	25	62,5
3.	Stylistics betters the understanding and uses of language of the texts addressed.	6,3		6,3	6,3	81,3
4.	Stylistics contributes to teaching language use, i.e. it enhances students' abilities to take expressions from the text and appropriate them for their own purposes.	6,3			12,5	81,3
5.	Stylistics provides useful exposure and revision of grammar and vocabulary in new contexts.		6,3	12,5	25	56,3
6.	Stylistics provides students with language practice through deliberate attention to linguistic features of foregrounding, different forms of language deviance or salient patternings, such as parallelism, repetitions, etc. seen to contribute significantly to meaning.				25	75
7.	Stylistics contributes to deeper processing, understanding, memorability and development of additional language in use.		6,3	6,3	25	62,5
8.	Stylistics is of value for foreign language learning programmes, as attention to language use facilitates language acquisition.	6,3		12,5	31,3	50
9.	Stylistics enhances language awareness, i.e. it encourages learners to think about the norms of language use and be aware of their specific stylistic effects in the given literary work by asking students to explore the deviant linguistic occurrences.		6,3	6,3	18,8	68,8
10.	Stylistics enhances cultural awareness.		6,3	18,8	31,3	43,8
11.	Stylistics improves students' creative writing skills.	6,3		6,3	6,3	81,3
12.	Stylistics helps to teach linguistics in an inductive way.			25	31,3	43,8
13.	Stylistics helps to teach empirical research skills – analytical and observation skills.	6,3		6,3	18,8	68,8
14.	Stylistics helps students develop transferable intellectual and social skills and rhetoric (evidence-based argument, careful and systematic description and presentation, argumentation).	6,3		6,3	18,8	68,8

Table 1. Overall Student Perceptions of the Role of Stylistics and Stylistic Approach

The results of the questionnaire aimed at eliciting students' reactions to the course of stylistics and stylistic approach in the context of foreign language teaching show that most of the students consider that stylistics improves the understanding and uses of language of the texts addressed; contributes to teaching language use, i.e. it enhances students' abilities to take expressions from the text and appropriate them for their own purposes and improves students' creative writing skills (13). A great number of students consider that stylistics provides them with language practice through deliberate attention to different linguistic features of foregrounding, language deviance or salient patternings (12); enhances language awareness (11); and provides useful exposure and revision of grammar and vocabulary in new contexts; contributes to more effective processing, understanding, memorability and development of additional language in use (10); teaches empirical research skills (11) and helps students develop transferable intellectual and social skills and rhetoric (11). Many of the respondents strongly agree that stylistics enables them to make meaningful interpretations of the texts under study (10) and consequently facilitates the study of literature (9). Only seven out of 16

respondents strongly agree with the statement that stylistics helps to teach linguistics in an inductive way and broadens cultural awareness.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be stated that the role of stylistics within the pedagogical framework is that of sensitizing students to language use, its complexity and capacity for creating meaning. An inevitable result of various stylistic activities in the context of foreign language learning and teaching is the improvement of students' linguistic competences. The main factors which contribute to language proficiency are: students' engagement in extensive reading, the metalinguistic consideration of linguistic and rhetorical choices conducted by stylistic approaches, and the development of language awareness.

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DISCURSUL DIPLOMATIC ÎN VIZIUNEA LINGVISTICII COȘERIENE: STILISTICĂ ȘI TERMINOLOGIE

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Abstract. *Our aim in this article is to address a less studied topic - that of diplomatic language and discourse based on extensive German material. Based on the most important contributions of E. Coșeriu, according to which the faculty of language and, consequently, any language that embodies it, is based on two fundamental principles: creativity and otherness, as "the reason for being of language/ languages and their content in their evolution".*

Keywords: *diplomatic language, speech, diplomatic code, diplomatic normativism, diplomatic rhetoric.*

Studiul semantic, stilistic și pragmatic al limbajelor de specialitate, inclusiv și al limbajului diplomatic, determinarea trăsăturilor lor, a zonelor de interferență și a raportului cu limba, norma și actualitatea reprezintă aspecte dintre cele mai provocatoare pentru cercetarea lingvistică modernă în cheia lucrărilor fundamentale ale lui Eugeniu Coșeriu. Savantul ne-a lăsat reflecții vizând funcțiile diferitor limbaje și discursuri începând cu limbajul politic până la cel medical.

Ne-am pus ca scop în această articol să abordăm un subiect mai puțin cercetat - cel al limbajului și discursului diplomatic în baza unui amplu material german. Pornind de la contribuțiile esențiale ale lui E. Coșeriu, după care facultatea limbajului și, în consecință, orice limbă care-o întrupează, se întemeiază pe doua principii fondamentale: *creativitatea* și *alteritatea*, ca „rațiunea de a fi a limbii/ limbilor și a conținutului acestora în evoluția lor".