

SEMIOTICS OF FICTION IN TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
SEMIÓTICAS DA FICÇÃO NO ENSINO DO RUSSO COMO LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA
SEMIÓTICA DE LA FICCIÓN EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL RUSO COMO LENGUA
EXTRANJERA

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ABSTRACT: One of the conditions for the spread of the Russian language is the education of foreign students in Russian universities. Consequently, the search for new approaches to teaching Russian as a foreign language becomes relevant. Practice has shown that literature is a guide to understanding the characteristics of the Russian language and the development of oral speech. The object of the study is a literary text in the system of teaching the Russian language. The purpose of this work is to search for the effective forms and methods of teaching foreign students the Russian language on the basis of literary text. The results of the study showed that the most effective form of training is the use of educational technologies based on practice-oriented aspects of semiotics. On the material of the Gogol's poem "Dead Souls" the technique of working with literary text is shown.

KEYWORDS: Russian as a foreign language. Modern education. Semiotics. Gogol. The poem "Dead Souls".

RESUMO: *Uma das condições para a difusão da língua russa é a educação de estudantes estrangeiros em universidades russas. Consequentemente, a busca por novas abordagens para o ensino do russo como língua estrangeira torna-se relevante. A prática tem mostrado que a literatura é um guia para a compreensão das características da língua russa e do desenvolvimento da fala oral. O objeto de estudo é um texto literário no sistema de ensino da língua russa. O objetivo deste trabalho é pesquisar as formas e métodos eficazes de ensino da língua russa a alunos estrangeiros com base no texto literário. Os resultados do estudo mostraram que a forma mais eficaz de treinamento é a utilização de tecnologias educacionais baseadas em aspectos da semiótica orientados para a prática. No material do poema de Gogol "Dead Souls" é mostrada a técnica de trabalhar com texto literário.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Russo como língua estrangeira. Educação moderna. Semiótica. Gogo. O poema "Dead Souls".*

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RESUMEN: *Una de las condiciones para la difusión del idioma ruso es la educación de estudiantes extranjeros en universidades rusas. En consecuencia, la búsqueda de nuevos enfoques para la enseñanza del ruso como lengua extranjera cobra relevancia. La práctica ha demostrado que la literatura es una guía para comprender las características del idioma ruso y el desarrollo del habla oral. El objeto del estudio es un texto literario en el sistema de enseñanza del idioma ruso. El propósito de este trabajo es buscar formas y métodos efectivos de enseñar a los estudiantes extranjeros el idioma ruso sobre la base de un texto literario. Los resultados del estudio mostraron que la forma más eficaz de formación es el uso de tecnologías educativas basadas en aspectos de la semiótica orientados a la práctica. En el material del poema "Dead Souls" de Gogol se muestra la técnica de trabajar con texto literario.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Ruso como lengua extranjera. Educación moderna. Semiótica. Gogol. El poema "Dead Souls".*

Introduction

At the beginning of the new century, there have been tendencies in an anthropocentric approach to the study of humanities. Semiotics plays the great role of the methodological basis of research in various humanitarian fields (MECHKOVSKAYA, 2004).

The actual problem of semiotics in the education system is the problem of understanding. For this, it is very important to comprehend semiotics as a “method of handling signs” (MAMARDASHVILI; PYATIGORSKIY, 1997, p. 108-112). Thus, a new direction of the science of signs in the modern conditions of the development of the educational system is developing. Work with the foreign audience requires the search for effective forms of training that would correspond to the peculiarities of the students' perception and thinking. Such form was the inclusion of literature in the system of teaching Russian as a foreign language (MAKRISHINA *et al.*, 2019; SHTYRLINA, 2019; SALAKHOVA; BURTCEVA, 2016; MAKLEEVA; AKHMETZYANOVA, 2018). and work with literary text as a tool for creating the semiotic space of Russian literature. Literature has special advantages for the study of national perception and the transformation of the world: this sociocultural phenomenon occupies a special place in the life of the nation and humanity. Literature has another quality, which makes it an important element of modern learning. Researcher G. Glotova believes that “a person has another image of the world - the proper sign, in which the world is represented [...] in the texts of a literary work” (GLOTOVA, 1990).

Features of the national mentality, perception of foreign literature writing through aesthetic pictures have a significant passionate effect on the peruser, acquaints him with another reality. Here semiotics of the content can assume an enormous job (PLOTNIKOV, 1992). When working with text, uncommon accentuation is put on appreciating the way of thinking of the

verifiable period under investigation, profound information on the historical backdrop of production of work, and comprehension of the creator's good and philosophical position. A significant function in understanding the possibility of a contemplated work is played not just by the utilization of current methods for visual expressiveness, yet additionally by new ways to deal with jargon and phraseological work, in which the quest for supporting and, in particular, representative words mirrors work having a semantic importance.

Methods

The following methods were used in the work: contextual, linguoculturological, lexico-semantic, descriptive, analytical and cognitive.

Results and discussion

Students should know that the historical period of Gogol is an era of a huge historical turning point in the life of Russia at the turn of the XVIII-XIX centuries, which was characterized by longing for the past, rejection of the present, and an attempt to combine dream and reality. At the same time, for Russia, this is the time for the search for national identity, the era of answers to a lot of questions.

Scientists believe that Gogol has a special place in Russian literature (VOROPAEV, 2002). All his work allows us to conclude that Gogol was the "most semiotic writer" in Russian literature. Indeed, each image is a symbol. In the architectonics of the author's writings, we see not only Danton reminiscences from *The Divine Comedy*, but also numerous allusions from the works of other Russian (Pushkin "Eugene Onegin", Lermontov "Hero of Our Time") and foreign writers (Homer "Odyssey", Cervantes "Don Quixote", Byron "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage", etc.). In the title of the Gogol's poem is the ambivalence of life itself: life is death, light is dark, the semiotic space of Russia is seen here. The author wrote that his goal is to "show the whole of Russia". The holistic image of Russia takes a form with Gogol's image as a result of material (the life of Russia), spiritual (the idea of "mighty space" of Russia), historical (the war of 1812, captain Kopeikin), modern (Chichikov's wanderings), but the Russian reality takes on new forms in creating a gallery of landowners and in a description of their estates.

Gogol is a master of portraitures, details and unique language style. The appearance of the main character of the poem by Chichikov takes us to the era of Gogol, full of drama, which

was reflected in the portrait of the hero: In the britchka was situated such a man of honor — a man who, however not attractive, was not tragic, not over-fat, and not over-slim. Additionally, however not over-old, he was not over-youthful. This uncertainty is reinforced by the urban landscape in a memorable color scheme: Where the gazing yellow of stone structures didn't welcome his eye he wound up went up against with the more unobtrusive dim of wooden ones. (GOGOL, 1996). The description of the city N, where Chichikov arrives, creates a semiotic space of inferiority, emptiness, spiritual devastation, coupled with the mimicry of the hero.

Other artistic means created a portrait of the first landowner Manilov, whom Chichikov meets: "What a lovely, great tempered individual he appears!" yet during the following second or two one would feel! B slanted to state nothing by any stretch of the imagination, and, during the third second, just to state, "The demon alone realizes what he is (GOGOL, 1996). There is also a lot of uncertainty in the description of Manilov's house and surrounding nature: The house "remained on a confined ascent. On the slant of the ascent lay intently mown turf, while, arranged to a great extent, after the English design, were blossom beds containing bunches of lilac and yellow acacia, an arbor having the engraving "This is the Temple of Solitary Thought." The portrayal of his office talks about the profound degree of the proprietor: "by and large, something appeared to be needing in the foundation. For example, in spite of the fact that drawing-room was loaded up with wonderful furnishings [...] two of the seats needed... to put it plainly, they were what is known as an exceptionally glad couple" (GOGOL, 1996).

The characterization of this hero is completed by a description of the peculiarities of the Russian character, of which this hero became a bright representative:

For each man HAS his interest. One man's might be brandishing canines; another man's might be that of trusting himself to be an admirer of music [...] another's might be that of acting like a specialist of recherche cookery; to put it plainly, pretty much every man has his interest or his inclining; yet Manilov had none such, for at home he talked nearly nothing, and spent most of his time in reflection - however God just realizes what that contemplation involved! (GOGOL, 1996).

Another semiotic space is created when describing the economy of Korobochka: a cramped courtyard, different animals living in this space. The shelves in the house are crowded with different caliber bags. And the hostess herself "packed" in a bonnet, numerous aprons. Trying to bargain "dead souls" from Korobochka for a cheap price, "well-mannered" Chichikov calls the landowner "clubhead", "damned old woman", "strong-assed woman". The semiotic space of this situation is expanding and takes us to Russia in the first half of the 19th century, when there was a "Rank Table", which totaled 14 steps of the social ladder. Chichikovis

allowed to talk so rudely with the mistress, because he is in the “Table of Ranks” occupying the 6th level as a college adviser, and the late husband of Korobochka was 4 levels lower than him and was in the status of a college secretary. Trying to convince Korobochka of a win-win version of his craft, Chichikov gives the only true description of what he does and what all these landowners do: “Think for yourself. They are so much loss to you - so much loss, do you understand?” (GOGOL, 1996). Gogol’s numerous repetitions create a unique effect.

When describing another landowner Nozdrev, Gogol used a contrast technique: “A man of medium height, but well put together, and possessed of a pair of full red cheeks, a set of teeth as white as snow, and coal-black whiskers.” (GOGOL, 1996).

Showing different heroes, Gogol created a gallery of landowners that contained features of Russian character. If Manilov didn’t have “hobby”, then Nozdrev had a different trait: he spread gossip about someone, upset a wedding, a bargain.

Another landowner, Sobakevich, is the opposite of Nozdrev, the personification of primitive simplicity, to which Chichikov gives a well-defined characteristic “What a kulak! And what a brute beast!” (GOGOL, 1996). Yes, and Sobakevich himself gives the city authorities an impartial, but true characterization. The behavioral characteristic most fully describes both heroes at their first meeting. When the two strong opponents met, both have heard of each other, and neither wanted to give in: "For almost five minutes they looked at each other." During this time, Chichikov managed to look around the room and concluded that each object seemed to say: “And I, too, Sobakevich! Or "And I, too, look very much like Sobakevich!" Everything in Sobakevich’s house is monumental, to match the owner. Brown color prevails here with a touch of red-hot iron, starting from the costume of Sobakevich and ending with the description of the buffet.

A completely different semiotic space is created when one gets acquainted with the next landowner Plyushkin, who appeared before Chichikov with the same uncertainty of “either a man or a woman”. A picture of complete chaos, disorder appeared before Chichikov.

When Chichikov opened the entryway being referred to, the display of the chaos inside hit him nearly with surprise [...] On a table stood a battered seat, with, adjacent to it, a clock short a pendulum and secured done with spider webs [...] two ink-encrusted pens, and a yellow toothpick with which the ace of the house had picked his teeth (clearly) in any event before the happening to the French to Moscow (GOGOL, 1996).

Plyushkin’s portrait is even more expressive:

his little eyes were not yet become dull, however shimmered under their overhanging foreheads like the eyes of mice [...] the most observable element about the man was his garments [...] for the two its sleeves and its skirts were so battered and dirty as to oppose depiction, while rather than two back tails, there hung four of those limbs, with, anticipating from them, a torn paper. Likewise, around his neck there was wrapped something which may have been a loading, a fastener, or a stomacher, however was positively not a tie (GOGOL, 1996).

The fate of this particular hero is the most dramatic, about which Gogol wrote with compassion, sympathy and hidden pain. Gogol: But there was a time when he was married and a family man, and a neighbor stopped by to have dinner with him, to listen and learn from him the household and wise stinginess ... So, what kind of landowner stood before Chichikov! "Such a phenomenon is rare in Russia, where the tendency is rather to prodigality than to parsimony" (GOGOL, 1996). The figure of Plyushkin, the derogatory characteristic that the author gives this hero - "a gap in the body of mankind", leads to the conclusion about the spiritual impoverishment of man in the world of "dead souls" of Russia. The semiotic space of this chapter narrows to a graphic image of a curved line as a symbolic reflection of the essence of a given hero.

In chapter 7 Gogol gives a description of the House of Justice, it is "a large, three-storied building of a chalky whiteness which probably symbolised the purity of the souls engaged within." (GOGOL, 1996). The semiotic image of this chapter is associated with the enlightening Themis, in which the scales became unusable.

The culmination of the poem is the description of the party, to which the governor invited Chichikov as a prosperous person with a bright future. The description of the guests is full of irony and sarcasm, which is enhanced by the contrasting combination of black and white: "Everything seemed suffused with light, and everywhere, flitting and flashing, were to be seen black coats - even as on a hot summer's day flies revolve around sugar." (GOGOL, 1996). The unsteady semiotic space of the hall, where the action took place, foreshadowed the catastrophe, which happened when Nozdrev appeared.

In the final chapter 11 we find some information about Chichikov's life: Our saint's beginnings were both unobtrusive and dark [...] a minuscule stay with little casements which were rarely opened, summer or winter; an invalid dad [...] Never lie, yet comply with your bosses, and esteem prudence in your heart (GOGOL, 1996). The repeated "neither" and "small" reinforce the visual effect of a limited semiotic space as the personification of the wretchedness and ignorance of the being in which it grew. This space narrows to the size of a penny when reading the episode: the following injunctions of his father:

See here, my boy. Do your lessons well, do not idle or play the fool, and above all things, see that you please your teachers. So long as you observe these rules you will make progress, and surpass your fellows, even if God shall have denied you brains, and you should fail in your studies (GOGOL, 1996).

An important role in the poem plays the part, where the writer reflects on the writer's place in society, on the Russian character, on the relationship between people, but most of all, about Russia. Numerous repetitions reinforce the author's emotional attitude towards Russia:

Ok, Russia, and Russia, from my lovely home in an odd land I can in any case observe you! In you everything is poor and confused and unhomely [...] However what mystery, what invulnerable power attracts me to you? For what reason does there perpetually repeat and reecho in my ears the miserable melody which floats all through the length and the broadness of your outskirts? What is the weight of that melody? For what reason does it howl and cry and catch at my heart? What state the notes which in this manner horrendously stroke grasp my spirit, and dance, articulating their languishments around me? What is it you look for of me, O Russia? What is the concealed bond which stays alive between us? (GOGOL, 1996).

Here the semiotic space has power of Russia. Repetitions and questions enhance the emotionality of the narrative, create an opportunity to "see" this space through the keywords of the text "wonderful far away ... open space ... infinite ... far away".

Another lyrical digression that has gained world fame, thanks to the famous symbolic image of the "three birds", gives a sad answer to all the questions of that time that were posed in the poem: "For what Russian does not love to drive fast?... At such moments a great force seems to uplift one as on wings; and one flies, and everything else flies...Ah, troika, troika, swift as a bird, who was it first invented you?" (GOGOL, 1996).

Summary

Thus, a work of art, being a reflection of the political, historical, ideological, literary realities of a particular historical period, becomes a source of new knowledge acquired by foreigners in the process of learning the Russian language. The study of linguistic, colorful images in the text of the Gogol's poem "Dead Souls" enriches students' understanding of the traditions and customs that prevailed in Russia and reflected in the text of this work. Working with adapted text helps foreigners to develop oral speech, improve their speaking skills, and understand the secrets of the Russian language.

Conclusions

Teaching Russian as a foreign language involves not only knowledge of grammar, but also the mastery of such type of speech activity as speaking. This is facilitated by the inclusion of literature in the system of teaching the Russian language. Using the adapted text of a poem as an example of Gogol's "Dead Souls", shows that this work is a huge semiotic space, containing the historical, cultural, and psychological layers of Russia in the first half of the XIX century. This approach enhances the interest of foreigners in the Russian language, improves their oral speech, and develops cognitive and research skills of students.

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