

Abstract

Literary work as a landscape – interpretation of text as setting a path in it – a didactic interpretation as providing a map. This (largely familiar and well-established) metaphor is at the heart of the work entitled *By the Paths Through the Text: Didactic Interpretation and Interpretive Tasks in Secondary School Literature Teaching*. Even with the help of that image (but mainly underpinned by reception and semiotic literary theories), the text in its first chapters establishes and elaborates such a conception of interpretation (the formulation of meaning in relation to a particular reader) and its didactic attribute (its own potential to teach interpretation), which seems to be advantageous for thinking about interpretation-oriented teaching (and interpretation taking place in dialogue more generally) and about the possibilities to assess (especially with closed tasks) the degree of students' acquisition of the process of interpretation, in the last chapters. To this end, it puts the theoretical concept of 'interpretation skills' – the possibility of segmenting the act of the journey towards interpretation into potential steps that can be intelligibly named, taught and (relatively separately) tested – at the centre, and even attempts a tentative enumeration of these. This list, then, is not meant to be an algorithm of interpretation or a guide to it, but a description of the acts that lead to interpretation hypothetically and only if they are in accordance with a particular text. All of these theoretical concepts are continuously interspersed with application chapters in which (on a variety of material from Czech and world literature, older and newer, poetry, prose and drama) he demonstrates their firm coherence with pedagogical practice. Overall, the dissertation thus attempts both to build a basis for the interpretive teaching of literature in secondary schools, and to elaborate the possibilities of verifying the results of such teaching – but also, more broadly, to promote the belonging of the didactics of literature to the very centre of literary theory itself.

Key Words

interpretation, literary interpretation, didactic interpretation, didactics of literature, interpretation map, teaching worksheets, interpretation skills, oral final exam, dialogic interpretation, dialogic teaching, Dílna Česká knižnice, interpretation testing, objective question types, skills testing

Euripides, Medea, Bob Dylan, Blood on the Tracks, Publius Ovidius Naso, Phaethon, Isaac Babel, Red Cavalry, Bohuslav Reynek, Lip to Tooth, Ladislav Smoljak, Zdeněk Svěrák, Czech Heaven, John Steinbeck, Of Mice and Men, Josef Jedlička, Midway Upon the Journey of Our Life, Jan Čep, Double Being, Emily Dickinson, Sylvia Plath, Ariel, Ursula Le Guin, Buffalo Gals, Margaret Atwood, Good Bones, Květa Legátová, Shell and Other Interception, Han Kang, The White Book, Jhumpa Lahiri, Whereabouts, Marek Toman, The Cross-Eyed Jim Confectionery