

Aesthetic Reading of Francophone Youth Literature in Lower Secondary Education: Potential and Handling of Scaffolding in Heterogeneous Learning Groups

Need for Action

The status of literature in the foreign language classroom has been called into question since the paradigm shift to competence orientation, especially in lower secondary education. Literary texts are mainly used to support elementary reading competences as well as to provide sociocultural knowledge.

However, only on rare occasions do we make full use of the actual potential of literary texts. There are some critical voices regarding the initiation of aesthetic reading processes. In their opinion, students risk to be overwhelmed by analysing possible effects of aesthetic devices. This applies particularly to the increasingly heterogeneous learning groups in lower secondary education at *Oberschulen* (comprehensive school) as well as at *Gymnasien* (grammar school).

Other scholars in the field however, argue that pupils pass up an opportunity to the use of literature in lower secondary education and to set up the basis of a profound examination of literary texts in higher secondary education. Besides curricular and teaching reservations, the question of how aesthetic reading processes could be prepared and systematically supported remains a desideratum.

Design-Context

Due to their particular structures, literary texts require unique reading strategies and text knowledge (cf. Hallet 2007: 31). Promoting aesthetic reading is meant to focus on its different aspects and has to support its different steps. Therefore the design context consists of the following theoretical approaches:

- Reception theory/Reception-orientated literary education (i.e. cf. Bredella 2007)
- Cognitive Narratology/ cognitive literary education (cf. Stockwell 2002, Hallet 2007)
- Narratology/Narrative Competences (i.e. cf. Nünning/Nünning 2007)
- Scaffolding (i.e. cf. Rod 2003, Thürmann 2013)

Research Questions

Main Research Question:

- How can a differentiated scaffolding concept be structured, so that it contributes to aesthetic reading processes in heterogeneous learning groups in lower secondary education?

Sub-questions:

- What other needs of pupils must be considered to promote aesthetic reading in lower secondary education ?
- How can teaching and learning arrangements be designed in order to develop aesthetic reading competences?
- How do (highly-efficient and low-performing) pupils work in the new-designed teaching- and learning arrangement? How do they use the benefits offered by scaffolding?

Design-Subject

Aesthetic reading is a very complex and highly individualized process which has to take into account the complexity of literary texts by

- understanding aesthetic reading as cognitive process
- (re)considering the narrative competence
- emphasizing the event character in aesthetic reading processes.

Design-Conception

Learning and teaching arrangement

- In an arrangement of four double lessons, class 9 learners will work on the short story *Tu fais quoi mercredi?* by Dominique Dyens, a French author of youth literature. Through the use of three different levels of text and scaffolding materials supporting elementary reading as well as aesthetic reading, the learners will focus on their individual reading process, the planning and their individual ideas of the textual world.

Design Principles:

- To prepare for aesthetic reading processes combining the levels of narratology, cognitive text representation and emotional response the pupils are meant to use a variable scaffolding model, which supports the different steps of both elementary and aesthetic reading.
- For that, texts of youth literature should be brought in which are characterised by their narrative complexity, by activating previous knowledge and experiences as well as by allowing plural receptions.



Current Francophone Youth Literature

Design-Testing

The learning and teaching arrangement will be tested as follows in class 9 at a Bremen Oberschule:

- cycle 1 laboratory setting - 2x3 learners class 9 2014/15
(following a revision of the design ideas)
- cycle 2 class 9 2015/16 – teacher A (following a revision of the design ideas)

The data will consist of the researcher's field notes, reflection sheets on each of the lessons filled out by the learners, the collection of learner artefacts and guided interviews with only a few learners in the aftermath of each cycle.

Design-Theory

The following research results are to be expected:

- a tested reference design to promote aesthetic reading processes in lower secondary education by scaffolding
- a tested scaffolding concept to promote aesthetic reading processes
- a local theory to promote aesthetic reading processes in lower secondary education by scaffolding

References

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