

TEACHING RUSSIAN SHORT STORIES IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM OF PHILOLOGY IN VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT

Russian short stories are an important part of the general education curriculum of Philology in Vietnam, contributing to the development of aesthetic thinking, outlook on life and literary appreciation for students. The article focuses on analyzing the genre characteristics of modern Russian short stories, selecting some typical works in current Philology textbooks to point out their unique content and artistic values. On that basis, the article proposes a number of measures to improve the effectiveness of teaching Russian short stories in the general education curriculum of Philology, including promoting the ability to read and understand texts, exploiting Russian cultural elements and using active teaching methods.

Keywords: Teaching foreign literature, Russian literature, short stories, general education curriculum of Philology, genre characteristics.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of The Problem

Russian literature, with its depth of thought and unique artistic beauty, has long been an indispensable part of the foreign Philology curriculum in Vietnam. In particular, short stories are a typical genre, reflecting the typical content and form values of Russian literature. However, teaching practice shows that teachers and students still have difficulties in approaching foreign texts, especially Russian short stories, without appropriate methods. Based on these practical requirements, this article focuses on clarifying the theoretical and practical basis of teaching Russian literary short stories according to genre characteristics, thereby proposing some orientations and teaching organization forms suitable for students.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

In the article, text analysis method is employed to determine genre characteristics, structure, viewpoint, characters and expressive values. Besides, synthesis method is used on theoretical documents on teaching modern Philology, especially the approach to developing capacity and genre characteristics. Survey method is used to collect data on current textbook programs for Philology in schools in Vietnam.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Concept of short story and genre characteristics

According to M. Gorky - one of the typical giants of modern Russian literature, short story is "a moment of life". In short stories, all artistic elements are distilled to create immediate but profound aesthetic effects. According to Lai Nguyen An in 150 literary terms, "Short stories are small narrative genres, often written in prose, covering most aspects of human life and society. The outstanding feature of short stories is the limitation of capacity... Short stories often aim to depict a phenomenon, discover a characteristic in human relationships or in human spiritual life. Short stories often have few characters, few complex, overlapping events. The plot of short stories is often limited in time and space. The structure of short stories often does not include many layers and many lines but is often built in a contrasting or associative style. From the above viewpoints, we can conclude the characteristics of the short story genre, such as condensed capacity and content; concentrated structure; concise characters; highly expressive and evocative language; flexible narrative point of view.

3.2. Theory of teaching according to genre characteristics

There is a general principle when studying any literary work that it should be taught according to the characteristics of the genre. Teaching Philology according to genre characteristics is an approach that helps students recognize, explore, and use genre rules as a tool to organize the content and form of the text. According to Martin & Rothery's (1986) theory of *Genre-based Pedagogy* in literature, genre is not only a means of expression but also a conceptual framework that helps learners orient their analysis and creation of texts. Applied to teaching short stories, this approach will help students approach the text not only at the content level but also at the form - structure - language level. At the same time, it will train students the skills of systematic literary analysis, instead of emotional perception and support students to develop theoretically based literary thinking, towards the ability to write and interpret creatively based on genre.

3.3. Characteristics of the Russian short story genre

Russian literature, especially the short story (skaz), stands out with its storytelling style imbued with elements of social satire, profound analysis of character psychology and profound humanity. High artistic genre, clear structure, and clear symbols are the basis for organizing teaching according to genre characteristics. Therefore, exploiting Russian short stories in this direction is not only suitable in terms of content but also has the ability to expand learners' ability of literary reception and creation. The 2018 General Education Program for Philology in Vietnam identifies the requirements for teaching foreign literary texts to develop students' literary, aesthetic and critical thinking abilities. In the new program, a number of Russian short stories are included in textbooks such as: "A Little Joke" (Anton Chekhov), "Night Car" (K. Paustovski), "The First Teacher" (Chinghiz Aitmatov), "How I Studied" (Maksim Gorky) and "Danko's Heart" (Maksim Gorky).

Russian short stories have all the characteristics of the short story genre in general. These characteristics are reflected in the specific works mentioned above. First, modern Russian short stories are often built on the foundation of condensation in both volume and artistic content. Each selected detail is highly general, rich in symbolic value and capable of suggesting many layers of meaning. For example, in the story A Little Joke by A. Chekhov, the entire plot focuses on an event, the skiing of the two main characters. Through each seemingly innocent and carefree

conversation, Chekhov skillfully interweaves the subtle emotions, inner vibrations and the torment and regret of the character "I" about many things that he has not dared to confess. A short moment contains psychological depth and a philosophy of life about indifference and responsibility in emotional behavior.

The concentrated structure is another prominent feature in modern Russian short stories, expressed through the fact that the story often revolves around a central conflict or a key situation with high drama. Short stories focus on building a concise plot, aiming to create a clear climax and a thoughtful ending. In the story *The First Teacher* by Chinghiz Aitmatov, the entire work is developed as an emotional flashback of the female protagonist. The structural axis revolves around the growth process of the girl Antunai under the influence of her teacher Duyshen. The climax of the story is pushed when the teacher character, after many years of separation, suddenly appears at a solemn ceremony, causing the pent-up emotions to explode and crystallizing the profound humanistic value of the work.

The next characteristic of short stories is the concise and symbolic character building. Characters in Russian short stories are often portrayed through selected details. Through actions, language and special situations, characters are shown with psychological depth and high symbolism. The character Danko in the short story *Danko's Heart* by M. Gorky represents the spirit of dedication and altruism, becoming an idealized symbol of a leader, ready to sacrifice for the benefit of the community. It is this concise and symbolic character building that has contributed to creating ideological depth for Russian short stories in the general education curriculum of Philology in Vietnam.

Simple but concise language, rich in imagery is also a characteristic of Russian short stories in the general education curriculum of Philology. Russian short story authors often use simple, everyday language but have the ability to deeply express complex layers of meaning and are rich in artistic images. K. Paustovsky's writing style is often gentle, rich in lyricism, subtly expressing human emotions with nature and life. Meanwhile, M. Gorky chose a close storytelling style with a rustic tone, rich in philosophical colors, reflecting the depth of human thoughts and aspirations.

The final characteristic of the short story genre is the flexible narrative point of view that deeply depicts the inner world of the character from many perspectives. The shift in point of view also contributes to depicting the character's psychology and expressing the main inspiration of the work. The short stories selected for inclusion in the Philology program reflect the diverse and clear characteristics of Russian short stories: rich in philosophy, promoting humanity, concise in capacity, and artistically sharp. Through the above examples, it can be seen that Russian short stories have great potential in developing literary thinking and aesthetic perception for students, if exploited on the basis of genre characteristics.

3.4. Some measures to improve the effectiveness of teaching Russian short stories in the general education curriculum of Philology in Vietnam

To improve the quality of teaching Russian short stories in the general education curriculum of Philology, teachers need to apply pedagogical measures appropriate to the genre characteristics, ideological content of the work and the psychological characteristics and receptive capacity of students. Below are some suggestive measures:

3.4.1. Teaching according to the characteristics of the short story genre

Teachers need to guide students to identify the typical elements of short stories such as story situations, narrative viewpoints, suggestive or surprising endings. In particular, it is necessary

to guide students to recognize the conciseness, conciseness and depth of thought expressed through evocative artistic details, helping them to approach the work in a more comprehensive and profound way.

3.4.2. *Applying mind maps and visual tools*

Using mind maps helps students systematize and generalize the relationships between characters, psychological developments or layers of meaning in the work. In addition, using images, videos or film clips illustrating Russia, Russian people and historical - cultural contexts is important in creating a foundation for cross-cultural reception, thereby helping students to understand more deeply the artistic world of Russian short stories.

3.4.3. *Interdisciplinary integration and practical connections*

Connecting Russian short stories with Vietnamese literary works with the same theme or humanistic message will help students broaden their literary perspective and enrich their aesthetic experience. Teachers can also integrate historical, geographical, and social knowledge related to the Russian context to enhance interdisciplinary teaching. At the same time, connecting with personal experiences will help students feel more deeply the life values conveyed in the text.

3.4.4. *Applying technology and digital learning materials*

Applying technology to teaching not only contributes to innovation in methods but also increases the interactivity and attractiveness of lessons. Teachers can use tools such as Padlet, Canva, Quizizz to design diverse learning activities. In addition, creating videos summarizing the story content, character maps, or podcasts discussing short stories will stimulate students' interest and increase their ability to absorb. Encouraging students to learn about Russian authors, eras and culture through online learning platforms is also an approach that fits with modern educational trends.

4. CONCLUSION

Russian literary short stories are a genre rich in artistic potential, containing many humanistic values and having a unique artistic structure, very suitable for exploitation in teaching and developing capacity. Approaching short stories according to genre characteristics helps students not only understand the content but also master the formal and artistic elements of the text, thereby developing literary thinking in a systematic, scientific and creative way. For teaching to be highly effective, teachers need to be trained in depth in genre characteristics and design lessons suitable for the students.

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