

V International Forum on Teacher Education

Comparative Study of Literature as a Method of Scientific Research Training of Language and Literature Teachers in the Multicultural Environment of the Republic of Tatarstan

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Abstract

The article is devoted to comparative literary studies as a factor in the scientific research training of language and literature teachers in the multi-ethnic environment of the Republic of Tatarstan. The purpose of the article is to determine the place and essence of comparative literary study as a method of research training of future language and literature teachers, to clarify the methods of its representation in the educational process. The study confirmed that in the context of the bi- and multilingual environment, the most valuable is the study of the comparative poetics of the Russian, Tatar and modern Russian-language literature of the Tatars. The paper summarizes the results of experiments aimed at studying the foreign perception of the poem by G. R. Derzhavin “The Harp” and the 66th sonnet by William Shakespeare. It was concluded that the methods of the comparative study of works of Russian and foreign classics among bi- and multilingual Tatar students make it possible to enrich their cultural horizons and cultivate a tolerant attitude towards the world of the “foreigner” in them. The study of the system of special concepts of comparative poetics (multiplicity of literature, aesthetic interference, the principle of complementarities, etc.) as one of the stages of research training of future language and literature teachers contributes to the education of the personality, ready to successfully integrate into the modern sociocultural space in the context of expanding inter-ethnic and inter-linguistic contacts.

Keywords: comparative study; language and literature teacher; bi- and multilingual audience; national identity; scientific research work.

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Published by Kazan Federal University and peer-reviewed under responsibility of IFTE-2019 (V International Forum on Teacher Education)

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Introduction

In the modern world of humanitarian and pedagogical training of future language and literature teachers, it is relevant to use in practical experience those scientific methods that are aimed at finding and deepening the research potential of future language and literature teachers. A special place among them is occupied by the comparison of literature or the comparative method. Its value is noticeable mostly in the Republic of Tatarstan as a multi-ethnic region; it is here that it actualizes its essence – the study of the unique (original) properties of multilingual literature in their dialogue and communication.

It should be noted that the applied and theoretical significance of this method in the system of scientific research of philological training of future teachers has not been studied enough in pedagogical science. The issues of comparing Russian and native literature were mainly considered in the aspect of the methodology of teaching Russian literature in a multi-ethnic environment (Artemenko, 2007; Mukhametshina, 2007). At the same time, the priority was given to the method of comparing literature, aimed at finding common in the works of national writers and “aligning” literature among themselves (Cherkezova, 2011).

Nowadays, issues of bilingual education are widely discussed not only in Russia (Galimullin, Galimullina, & Mingazova, 2014; Rakhimova, Yusupova, & Korneyeva, 2016), where representatives of different nationalities live in tolerance but also in the world (Baker, 1996; Kroll, Bobb, Misra, & Guo, 2008; Van Assche, Duyck, Hartsuiker, & Diependaele, 2009). Thus, much attention is paid to the problem of training representatives of other linguistic and cultural formations in Catalonia (Fukuda, 2018) and China (Gao & Ren, 2019).

However, with all that sufficient attention paid to the problem of bilingual and multilingual education, the issue of the use of innovative teaching methods in the training of language and literature specialists in the institutions of higher education is still topical.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the article is to determine the place and essence of comparative literary study as a method of research training of future language and literature teachers of the Republic of Tatarstan, to clarify the methods of its representation in the educational process.

Literature Review

The reference to the comparative method in the research training of future language and literature teachers, which in the Republic of Tatarstan is conducted mainly on the material of Russian classics, works of Tatar and Russian-language literature of Tatar writers, allows philology students to understand better the complex and relevant phenomena of multilingual literature. These include issues of transculturality and ethnocultural identity, multilingualism, the dialogue of literature, aesthetic interference, literary translation, intercultural communication, and the plurality of literature (Amineva, Ibragimov, Nagumanova, Khabibullina, & Yuzmukhametova, 2015).

It is known that the Republic of Tatarstan is a distinctive multilingual and transcultural environment in which the multiplicity of languages, cultures and literature is one of the forms of the spiritual life of its peoples. In this aspect, consideration of the “own” cultural world through the prism of the “alien” one can become the basis for creating a new educational paradigm. According to Amineva (2017), “possession of two or more languages, reading artistic texts belonging to different national cultures, in the original, contributes to the perception of their culture in collision and unity with the cultures

of other nations. The juxtaposition of “one’s own” and “of someone else’s” arising in the minds of the reader can become the basis for building new educational paradigms”. Mastering by bachelors, who receive a pedagogical specialty, the basics of comparative literary criticism is the main task facing teachers of the philological department of the Kazan Federal University.

In our study, we proceed from the fact that the comparative method included in the educational process is one of the forms of opposition to globalization, which changes both the linguistic personality and the national literature of Russia. Thus, the phenomenon of “multiple” or “hybrid” identity as a factor of globalization takes place in relation to contemporary Russian-language works of Tatar writers: R. Bukharaev, I. Abuzyarov, G. Yakhina, Sh. Idiatullin, and others. Despite the fact that the Tatar language did not become for them the language of artistic creativity, the value of their works for the national literature of the Tatars is quite large. Some of them – G. Yakhina, I. Abuzyarov, Sh. Idiatullin – became laureates of prestigious literary awards (Ibragimov, 2018).

The current theories of transculturality of the modern linguistic personality and artistic consciousness also contribute to a more attentive attitude to the research training of language teachers in the Republic of Tatarstan. “Transculturalism or transculturality implies a simultaneous existence in different cultures while preserving the imprints of each of them. The result of transculturality is a gradual change in culture, including through hybridization” (Proshina, 2016). The fact that a “hybrid” identity (or “multiple” identity) changes the subject’s attitude to national roots, destroys or “blurs” his ability to self-identity in the space of his native culture and language, reinforces the priority of those methods in humanities, in which the idea of identity of different literary phenomena and cultural structures acts as the main one.

Methodology

In the research process, the following methods were used:

1) *The comparative method in literary criticism* as one of the methods of modern comparative studies, which was developed in Russian literary criticism at the end of the 20th century (Amineva, 2018).

2) *The method of description*. The main condition under which its scientific value is revealed is that the description should be carried out using such terms and concepts that are consistent with the nature of the literature described. As a rule, the description of multilingual artistic phenomena is carried out without reference to the “alignment” of national literature; on the contrary, it reveals the features of the identity of each of them included in the research circle.

3) *The method of a scientific experiment* aimed at studying the foreign perception of Russian and foreign classics (Khabibullina, 2012). The Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of the Kazan Federal University has become an experimental base of research.

4) *A contrastive method* based on the search for a single (common) basis in the works of multilingual authors.

5) *Genetic method*. This method allows from the surface of the considered phenomena in multi-national literature to go deep into, to a sufficient and equilibrium ratio, on the one hand, fact, history, premises, and on the other – the genre form itself. So, it is the genesis that plays a key role in the concept of a comparative study of genres of Russian and Tatar literature as one of the sections of comparative poetics. The latter is studied by bilingual and polylingual students as part of their research training and

assumes consideration of the history of genres, the characteristics of their formation in the field of dialogue between Russian and Tatar literature.

6)

Results

Comparison of literature as a scientific method

Comparison of literature differs from the comparative method in literary criticism, which has its rich history in the national science of literature. The comparison involves the preservation of the uniqueness of each of the literature included in the circle of research. According to Safiullin (2017), “the general, in this case, is not a goal, not a unity in the generally accepted sense of the word, in which different cultures should merge into one, but a constant dialogue. Co-participation in this dialogue is unity in the renewed meaning of this word”.

The value of the comparative method is that it allows a deeper understanding of the national identity and originality of Russian and Tatar literature, which in the context of the dialogue complement each other, giving rise to new semantic structures. Thus, the representation of the comparison as a scientific method in the process of research training of philology students, both Russian-speaking and Tatar-speaking, assumes the assimilation of special concepts and categories: a plurality of literature, aesthetic interference, cultural identity (Ibragimov, 2018), complementarity principle (Safiullin, 2010), homologous ratio (Panikkar, 2017). They are objectively necessary for both research and pedagogical activities of students as future language and literature teachers. The concept of comparative literary studies helps to better understand the foreign world, where there is another “structure of thought”, and also to understand more deeply “one’s own” world through “someone else’s” one.

Comparative poetics as a factor in the scientific work of students

The research training of philology students is most often realized through an appeal to the questions of comparative poetics. Comparative poetics of Russian and Tatar literature is a new area of theoretical research, the subject of which is revealed in the process of comparative analysis of works belonging to different national literature, differences in their compositional and architectural forms that are not identical and unique to each other (Amineva, 2018). It is the sphere of poetics, in which the features of the artistic language, forms, style, and genres of works are clarified, leading to the clarification of the differences between Russian and Tatar literature. Establishing them has a value: the features of something dissimilar, original create the basis for inter-literary dialogue, contributing to the education of tolerance in future language and literature teachers.

Thus, bilingual and multilingual students representing different cultures and languages are invited to study the homogeneous genres of Russian and Tatar folklore (songs, ballads, and baits) and national literature (fable and *məsəl*, story and *khikaya*, excerpt and *kaytga*). The ideas of comparative genre studies, as a rule, are disclosed in reports and discussions within the framework of studies and scientific conferences.

Comparative study of national literature at the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of KFU

A comparative study of Russian, Tatar and foreign literature, their poetics is implemented at the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication in teaching of many academic disciplines: “A History of the Russian Literature”, “A History of the Foreign Literature”, “Literature of the Peoples of Russia”, “Problems of National Identity”, “People’s culture and folklore”, “Russian literature of the XIX, XX centuries and modern literature”. The audience consists of bi- and poly- and trans-lingual students. It

should be noted that these are not only Russian-speaking and Tatar-speaking students who speak the non-native language, but also foreign students – representatives of the PRC, Turkey, Iran and countries of the Near Abroad (mostly former Soviet Republics) who master the Russian language, as well as one or several European languages. Such a rich poly-ethnic and multicultural educational environment perceives works of Russian literature of the 19th century differently. Thus, an experimental study conducted on the material of M. Yu. Lermontov's poem "Na severe dikom stoit odinoko..." written in 1841 confirmed that in the perception of foreign students representing the culture of the Far East, there is *inter-literary communication* as a phenomenon of non-national reception (Shemshurenko, Khabibullina, & Nagumanova, 2018).

At the same time, a comparative study of literature at different levels of the artistic system (genre, tropes, and rhythms) reveals those "new" meanings in the works of Russian classics that are actualized in different national perception, including among Russian Tatar readers.

This is confirmed by the results of a scientific experiment. The experiment was conducted among bilingual students of the Higher School of Tatar and Turkic Studies of G. Tukay[†], who purposefully study the Tatar language and native literature but who have experienced the perception of Russian poetry of the XVIII-XIX centuries. The actual material of the analysis was one of the famous G.R. Derzhavin's poems "The Harp" written in 1798. In the course of the work, the students also turned to its Tatar translation, which was performed by the modern poet R. Kharis.

"The Harp" is one of the poems of the Russian poet, in which Derzhavin speaks about his childhood years spent in Sokury, Derzhavin's homeland, calling this time "the cradle of his original days". The poem is rich in figurative speech and rhythm. It is saturated with sound writing, so, thanks to the abundance of sound, assonance (*shumom budit vdrug ... perunnym*), we hear the melody of the harp, its modulations. The melody of the verse is enhanced by the fact that the poet turns to the six-pointed iambus, thus lengthening the lines. The abundance of outdated vocabulary, mythologists also contribute to the creation of a special figurative structure of the poem.

Results of the Experiment

In the analysis of the poem "The Harp", the recipients identified the compositional features of the work. Students emphasized that the first part of the poem is connected with the image of the harp, the effect on the soul of the lyrical hero of its magic sound; in the second part, the poet creates amazing images of Kazan, Volga, Kama landscapes; in the last stanza, he harmoniously combines the themes of the two parts, there is the resolution of the emotional tension of the verse. At the same time, in the course of the interpretation of this work, readers resorted to other systems of coordinates related to the peculiarities of the Tatar literature.

Let us single out some of the perceptions of Tatar readers that most vividly illustrate this trend of perception:

1) Derzhavin's poem, his motives, meaning are close to Tukay's poetry, the image of the motherland is personified in it.

[†] The experiment involved students of the 3rd grade of the training direction of "Pedagogical Education". In total there are 36 people. All of the participants are Tatar students, who also speak Russian as much as necessary.

2) After reading Derzhavin's poem "The Harp", I recalled the poem "Milli Moңnar" by G. Tukay. It also tells about music, which reminds the main character of his past, of the people.

3) It is difficult to understand Derzhavin's poem. The translation into Tatar is not entirely successful, it is literal. The poem "The Harp" inspired me to recall the melody of "Tafkilu" to the work of Tukay.

4) I really liked this interpretation: the translation is exact, the meaning is not distorted.

5) Both of the poems impressed me greatly. When I read the Tatar translation, it was closer to me; the Tatar version is more filled with the feelings of a lyrical hero.

The analysis showed that the Tatar readers' reception of Derzhavin's poem took shape in the light of the values of native literature, and first of all, the poetry of Gabdulla Tukay. In their perception, the sphere of aesthetic interference was noticeable. Thus, in each answer, a spontaneous and sometimes conscious desire to correlate the poem "The Harp" with the Tatar poetry of the beginning of the 20th century was manifested. The latter was traced both at the level of readers searching for those images and motifs that have developed in their native literature, as well as the perception of individual artistic and visual means through the prism of the Tatar language. For example, readers saw the similarity of Derzhavin's work with Tukay's poem "Milli Moңnar" ("National Melodies"), in which the lyrical hero's thoughts about his fate merge with the realization of the tragic fate of his native people. The interference was manifested in the desire of bilingual readers to correlate the cultural stratum associated with Derzhavin's childhood memories, with his aesthetic and linguistic experience, the core of which is connected with Tukay's work.

The experiment also revealed the ambiguity of the Tatar readers' perception of the translation of the original source: a number of students spoke admiringly about the translation of the poem "The Harp"; some called it very literal, not corresponding to the stylistic attitudes of the Russian verse. There were few such arguments; the majority of readers (85%) noted the obvious merits of R. Kharis's translation. In particular, as an example of an adequate transfer of the original features, the recipients cited the last G.R. Derzhavin's stanza:

Звучи, о арфа, ты все о Казани мне!

Звучи, как Павел в ней явился благодатен!

Мила нам добра весть о нашей стороне:

Отечества и дым нам сладок и приятен (Derzhavin, 1957) (in Russian).

Compare:

Үаңра, арфа, сөјлә Казаным һәлләрен!

Сөјлә, ничек безнең якка Павел кайтты!

Жаңга рәһәт туган яктан яһшы һәбәр,

Туган илнең төтене дә һуш һәм татлы (Derzhavin, 2016) (in Tatar).

The Tatar translation recreates the melody of Derzhavin's verse (the 12-complex syllabic size perfectly conveys the features of the six-pointed iambus). R. Kharis finds in the Tatar language such lexical means that are able to recreate the originality of Derzhavin's poetics.

All participants in the experiment also noted that the involvement in the study of elements of the comparison of Russian and Tatar literature, allows a better understanding of Russian classics, its artistic features, poetics in general.

Using the methods of comparing Russian and Tatar literature in a multi-ethnic bilingual environment makes it possible to enrich the cultural horizons of future language and literature teachers and

educate a person who is ready to successfully integrate into the modern socio-cultural space in the context of expanding intercultural and inter-ethnic contacts.

Research work in a multilingual audience

In research work in a multilingual audience, it is necessary to focus on those phenomena that contribute to an increase in contacts between different linguistic minds: the consciousness of the reader and the non-national author. The “encounter” in the reader’s mind of two literature, in which the relations between form and content, part and whole, the external and internal boundaries of the artistic image, are fundamentally different, cause the problem of their inherent stable semantic structures.

Thus, the comparative method in the scientific work of students is applicable while considering the works of William Shakespeare. KFU’s students-philologists (40 people in total), studying in the “The Pedagogical Education: the Native (Tatar) Language and Literature and the Foreign (English) Language” specialization, often refer to different phenomena of dialogue between two cultures and literature. The study of the original poetics of the English sonnet goes through the incorporation of the sonnet form into the Russian and Tatar cultural paradigms. For example, the 66th sonnet of Shakespeare fits easily into the inter-literary context. It is imbued with the same mood of sadness, universal alienation as the tragedy of “Hamlet” (sonnet sounds like a monologue of Hamlet):

*Tired with all these, for restful death I cry
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,*

*And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,*

*And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly doctor-like controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill.*

*Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone*

Each line of Shakespeare’s sonnet asserts its own small model of the imperfection of the world and begins with the conjunction “and”. This gives the rhythm of the sonnet additional despair (at the sound level); the poet very accurately conveys the deep suffering of the lyrical hero.

This sonnet is considered by Russian-speaking readers in the translation by S. Marshak or B. Pasternak; however, in the Tatar-speaking audience, the interpretation of the Shakespeare’s sonnet can also use material from the native literature. In particular, it is appropriate to refer, along with Russian translations, to sonnet translations into the Tatar language. Shakespeare’s sonnets were translated into the Tatar language by Sh. Mudarris (the translator worked with the original).

The Tatar translator, recreating the poetic world of the 66th sonnet of Shakespeare, with the full transfer of the figurative structure of the poem, breaks the rhyming features of the English sonnet,

subordinating the form of the verse to its internal content. He does not maintain the scheme of Shakespeare's sonnet, and this is due to the fact that Mudarris clearly follows the grammatical features of the native language.

Shakespeare's sonnets, so unequivocally perceived by the Russian interpreters, were translated by Mudarris according to his poetic installations, broadcasting the strengths of the English verse to the Tatar reader. However, in translation, the form of Shakespeare's sonnet underwent a transformation, and the emotional and aesthetic tone of the original also changed.

In the process of studying Shakespeare's sonnet, the use of material related to the native language contributed to a more adequate understanding of the original. Most of the recipients (30 out of 40 respondents) noted that the Tatar translation contributed to understanding Shakespeare's sonnet to a greater extent than the translation made by Sh. Marshak, which is usually used in practical classes while studying sonnets of the English poet.

Thus, the comparative approach used in the practice of research training of multilingual students makes it possible to better master such concepts of the comparative method as national literature, translational transformations, the dialogue between "one's own" and "the alien", the linguistic and aesthetic interference.

Research work of students and the problem of globalization of Russian society

It is fair to say that in the context of the globalization of modern Russian society, turning to the comparative poetics of national literature as a part of the research training of philology students is of great value. It has been established that consideration of the poetics of works of art related to dissimilar cultures, religious traditions and languages actualizes the problems associated with the need to preserve the multiplicity of literature and spiritual life of modern Russia. Comparative poetics, which is aimed at studying the architectonics of multilingual works, agreed upon by the situation of inter-literary dialogue, enrich the ideas of bi- and multilingual students about the life of indigenous peoples of Tatarstan, the identity of their cultures, languages, history and national character.

Discussion

Among the discussion questions of the topic under consideration is the question of the methods and techniques of research work among foreign philological students, whose national and literary identity is formed outside the artistic, linguistic traditions and cultural structures that have developed in Russia. In this regard, it is difficult to implement their scientific work on the theoretical issues of comparative literature, for example, the genre, the rhythms of Russian and Tatar poetry, Russian-Tatar translations. On the other hand, reading the small and medium genres of modern Russian-language Tatar literature (R. Kutuy, R. Bukharaev, I. Abuzyarov), certain fragments of their works will expand the ideas of foreign students about the Tatar national character, ethnic stereotypes, cultural codes of the writer and in general will give an understanding of the uniqueness of such a phenomenon of Russian literature both from the point of view of linguistic embodiment and universal human ideas (Tumanova & Dzholdasbekova, 2018).

At the same time, the analysis of authentic works of art that are difficult for foreign students to understand is necessary to be accompanied by audiovisual teaching aids, for example, watching movies and documentaries, comparing them with the text of a Russian author, listening to audio recordings, national melodies, etc.

Conclusion

In the modern conditions of globalization of Russian society, the concept of a comparative method as a factor in the research training of philological students confirms its priority place among other scientific approaches in literary criticism. The inclusion of a comparative study of literature in the process of research training of language and literature teachers for the bi- and multilingual schools of Tatarstan makes it possible to emphasize the importance of the “own” and “alien” categories. The latter is necessary for comprehending ethnocultural identity, which is in the dialogue of national literature. As a result of the introduction of the techniques of comparative poetics into the educational process, such categories as intersubjectivity, communication, creativity are emphasized.

Acknowledgements

The reported research was funded by Russian Foundation for Basic Research and the government of the Republic of Tatarstan in the framework of a scientific project № 18-412-160006.

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