

THE ROLE OF LITERARY TEXT ANALYSIS IN DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING AND SPEECH COMPETENCE OF ACADEMIC LYCEUM STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT. This article examines the role of literary text analysis in developing critical thinking and speech competence among academic lyceum students within native-language and literature education. Based on classroom observation and a comparative analysis of students' written and oral responses, the study investigates how structured text-analysis techniques – including close reading, thematic questioning, and comparative discussion of literary works – affect students' ability to interpret meaning, construct arguments, and express independent judgments. The findings indicate that lyceum lessons built around guided literary analysis substantially increase students' interpretive depth and argumentative fluency compared with lessons relying primarily on summary-based reading and rote memorization of literary facts. Methodological recommendations are proposed for integrating text-analysis techniques more systematically into lyceum literature instruction.

Keywords: native language and literature education, academic lyceum, literary text analysis, critical thinking, speech competence, close reading, argumentative writing.

INTRODUCTION.

Literature occupies a distinctive place within native-language education: it is not only a repository of aesthetic and moral values but also one of the richest sources of

material for developing students' interpretive and argumentative abilities. Working meaningfully with a literary text requires a learner to move beyond surface-level comprehension toward analysis of theme, character, structure, and authorial intent, and subsequently to express and defend an independent judgment about the text¹. At the academic lyceum stage, where students are expected to demonstrate mature, independent thinking, the ability to analyze literary texts critically becomes an essential component of overall speech competence.

In practice, however, literature lessons in many lyceums continue to emphasize the reproduction of biographical facts about authors and the retelling of plot summaries, with comparatively limited attention devoted to guided textual analysis and independent interpretation. Sultonova observes that the systematic cultivation of critical thinking within literature education requires a deliberate shift from fact-reproduction toward analytical and evaluative engagement with texts². This tension between the analytical objectives of lyceum-level literature education and the reproductive character of much classroom practice forms the central problem addressed in this article.

The purpose of this article is to examine, through classroom observation and comparative analysis, how structured literary text-analysis techniques influence lyceum students' critical thinking and speech competence, and to propose methodological approaches for strengthening the analytical dimension of literature instruction.

The objectives of the study are as follows: 1) to characterize the predominant approaches to literary text study currently used in lyceum lessons; 2) to compare students' interpretive and argumentative performance under reproductive versus

¹To'xliyev B., Shamsiyeva M., Ziyodova T. O'zbek tili o'qitish metodikasi [Methodology of Teaching the Uzbek Language]: Study guide. – Tashkent: Adabiyot jamg'armasi nashriyoti, 2006.

²Sultonova M. Adabiyot ta'limida tanqidiy tafakkurni rivojlantirish [Developing Critical Thinking in Literature Education]. – Tashkent: Ma'naviyat, 2020.

analytical approaches; 3) to identify specific text-analysis techniques that most effectively stimulate critical thinking; 4) to examine the relationship between literary analysis skills and students' broader speech competence; 5) to develop practical recommendations for literature teachers.

METHODOLOGY.

The study was conducted at the Academic Lyceum of Chirchik State Pedagogical University during the 2025–2026 academic year. Twenty literature lessons across grades 9–11 were observed and classified according to their predominant approach: reproductive (plot summary and biographical recall) or analytical (close reading, thematic questioning, comparative discussion). Following each lesson, students completed a short written task requiring interpretation of a text passage; these responses were evaluated using a rubric assessing depth of interpretation, use of textual evidence, and argumentative coherence. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the observing teachers to gather their perspectives on the practical challenges of implementing analytical methods. Results were compared across lesson types and expressed in percentages and average rubric scores.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

1. The predominance of reproductive approaches

Observation showed that 58% of the literature lessons were organized predominantly around plot summary, biographical information, and recall of previously discussed facts. In the written tasks following these lessons, students' average interpretation score was notably lower, and responses frequently restated the text's content rather than offering independent analysis or evaluation.

2. The effect of close-reading and thematic questioning

In the 30% of lessons employing close-reading techniques – in which students examined specific passages in detail and answered thematic, interpretive questions –

average interpretation scores rose substantially, and students more frequently supported their arguments with direct textual evidence. Rahmonqul and Jabborov similarly find that interactive, text-centered methods are particularly effective in developing students' capacity to work meaningfully with written material rather than merely reproducing it³.

3. Comparative discussion of literary works

The remaining 12% of observed lessons incorporated comparative discussion, in which students analyzed two or more literary works or characters in relation to one another. These lessons produced the highest average scores for argumentative coherence, as students were required to construct and defend comparative judgments rather than describe a single text in isolation. Such comparative analysis also appeared to strengthen students' broader command of the native language, since precise argumentation requires careful lexical and stylistic choices⁴.

4. The link between literary analysis and speech competence

Across all lesson types, students who regularly engaged in analytical literature tasks demonstrated stronger performance not only in literature-specific assessments but also in general native-language written assignments, suggesting that literary analysis functions as a transferable foundation for broader speech competence. This finding aligns with research emphasizing the role of student-activity-based pedagogical approaches in strengthening overall instructional effectiveness⁵.

³Rahmonqul A., Jabborov B. Til o'qitilishida kommunikativ o'qitish va interfaol usullarni qo'llash [The Use of Communicative Teaching and Interactive Methods in Language Instruction] // Lingvodidaktikaning dolzarb masalalari – I. – Tashkent: TDO'TAU.

⁴O'zbek tilining xalqaro maydondagi nufuzi: tarix, bugun va istiqbol [The Prestige of the Uzbek Language on the International Stage: Past, Present, and Future]: Proceedings of the International Scientific-Practical Conference. – Tashkent: TDO'TAU, 2025.

⁵Norov I., Yo'ldoshev J., Yo'ldoshev S. Zamonaviy pedagogik texnologiyalar asosida dars tashkil qilish [Organizing Lessons on the Basis of Modern Pedagogical Technologies] // International Journal of Recently Scientific Researcher's Theory, 1(4), 2023. – P. 40–47.

5. Practical constraints on implementing analytical methods

Teacher interviews revealed that time constraints, large class sizes, and a shortage of guiding materials for structured text analysis were the principal obstacles to the wider adoption of analytical methods. Several teachers noted that summary-based approaches, while less effective pedagogically, were easier to fit within the available lesson time and existing curricular pacing.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Based on the results of the analysis, the following methodological recommendations are proposed:

- 1) Gradually shift the balance of literature lessons from plot summary and biographical recall toward guided close reading and thematic questioning;
- 2) Develop structured question sets and analytical guides for key literary works to support teachers in implementing text-analysis techniques efficiently within limited lesson time;
- 3) Incorporate regular comparative-discussion tasks that require students to construct and defend independent judgments across texts;
- 4) Explicitly connect literary analysis tasks to broader native-language writing assignments to reinforce transferable argumentative and stylistic skills;
- 5) Provide targeted professional-development opportunities for literature teachers focused on analytical and interactive teaching techniques.

CONCLUSION.

The findings of this study demonstrate that structured literary text analysis plays a significant role in developing lyceum students' critical thinking and broader speech competence. While reproductive approaches centered on plot summary and biographical recall remain common, lessons built around close reading, thematic questioning, and comparative discussion consistently produce stronger interpretive

and argumentative outcomes⁶. Strengthening the analytical dimension of literature instruction – through targeted materials, methodological support, and teacher professional development – represents an important direction for improving native-language and literature education at the academic lyceum stage⁷.

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⁶Mahmudov N. Til va tafakkur [Language and Thought]. – Tashkent: Fan, 2019.

⁷Karimova D. Ona tili darslarida matn bilan ishlash metodikasi [Methods of Working with Text in Native-Language Lessons]. – Tashkent: Fan, 2020.

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