



## METHODS FOR DEVELOPING STUDENT'S COMPARATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH TEACHING FOREIGN DRAMATIC WORKS

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**Abstract.** This article examines the theoretical and methodological foundations of teaching dramatic works from world literature. It also analyzes tasks related to the purposeful and systematic integration of students' classroom activities, independent learning, and extracurricular work.

**Keywords:** World literature, drama, "student," "spectator," explanatory–illustrative method, W. Shakespeare, Hamlet, plot, composition, motivational discussion.

**Introduction.** Dramaturgy is generally associated with the theater. Indeed, as N. Gogol stated, "drama lives on the stage"; however, watching a drama cannot fully replace reading it, since stage performance represents a historically and socially conditioned interpretation that concretizes only certain possible meanings. Moreover, not all dramatic works can be staged in theaters, yet this should not signify their "death," as dramatic works are of exceptional importance for the spiritual life of society.

In all dramatic works, dialogue and monologue play a crucial role as the primary means of representing life and expressing the author's perspective. In a dramatic text, these forms of verbal expression differ noticeably from their use in epic and lyric genres. The author's expression of attitude toward the depicted reality through genre selection is also a distinctive process. As means of conveying the author's position, the characters' traits expressed through language, the significance of the dramatic composition, the role of dialogue and authorial remarks, artistic details, and subtext in expressing the central idea of the work are of great importance. Furthermore, understanding the meaning of verbal expressive devices in a dramatic text, comprehending its central idea and conveying it through role-based reading and directorial interpretation of the stage, creating one's own dramatic work using various methods of expressing ideas, and reflecting on the ideological and artistic originality of dramatic composition all contribute significantly to a deeper understanding of dramatic works.

**Literature review.** The earliest scientific studies in the history of literature teaching methodology were presented in the research works of S. Dolimov, Q. Ahmedov, N. Mallayev, A. Zunnunov, and T. Boboyev. Subsequently, issues related to the development of artistic and aesthetic thinking were explored in the works of B. To'xliyev, T. Boboyev, M. Yo'ldosh, Q. Yo'ldosh, S. Matchonov, Sh. Botirova, U. Xodjamkulov and Sh.



Botirova, Q. Husanboyeva and R. Niyozmetova, D. Quronov, as well as V. Qodirov, N. Yo'ldosheva, and Q. Yusupov.

In the studies conducted by these methodological scholars, research has focused on issues such as the renewal of pedagogical thinking, organization of independent learning activities, a systematic approach to the analysis of literary works, the role of problem-based learning in fostering independent thinking, educating students in the spirit of patriotism, and the effective organization of teaching dramatic works.

**Research methodology.** The study employed methods such as the review of philosophical, pedagogical, psychological, and methodological literature; theoretical analysis of state educational standards for general secondary education, curricula and syllabi, as well as instructional and methodological materials; pedagogical experience related to the research problem; empirical methods (pedagogical observation, interviews, assessment); descriptive research methods (analysis, comparison, generalization, practical experience, empirical data, synthesis); and pedagogical experimentation (experimental teaching, testing the effectiveness of the proposed methodology, and mathematical-statistical processing of the results).

**Analysis and results.** In drama studies, it cannot be denied that not only a culturally educated reader but also a spectator is implicitly cultivated. Comparing drama with its stage concretization and studying the history of drama clearly demonstrate one of the most important principles of dramatic literature its orientation toward the stage. Drama lessons cannot be separated from extracurricular activities connected with theater in one way or another (such as attending performances, writing reviews of plays, attempts at staging scenes, meetings with actors, and visiting backstage areas). However, in order to form the idea of the inseparable unity of the cultural positions of the “reader” and the “spectator” in students’ consciousness, it is necessary to distinguish between these roles. Systematic educational work aimed at cultivating a cultured spectator is not explicitly included in curricula; nevertheless, a unified approach in classroom and extracurricular activities significantly increases the effectiveness of instruction and makes the learning process more conscious and active.

In the Grade 10 Literature textbook, William Shakespeare’s tragedy Hamlet is included. When beginning to teach Hamlet in the classroom, it is necessary to analyze whether the audience is prepared for the selected methodology. Teaching methods should be implemented with consideration of students’ interests and prior knowledge. When working with classes specialized in literature, it is possible to familiarize students with the text through several stages prior to reading. At this stage, the use of various artifacts and



multimedia tools to introduce the historical period, setting, and characters depicted in the play proves to be highly effective (To'gonova, 2024).

Providing information about feature films, documentaries, operas, and musical works based on Hamlet produced abroad serves as a bridge between the reader's existing knowledge and the literary text. The American scholar William Henk also emphasized the importance of tools that enhance pre-reading knowledge, arguing that when students encounter new information, supplementary background knowledge is essential (Henk, 1993).

According to scholars, comprehension of a literary text depends on the reader's purpose for reading. For example, Tompkins emphasizes that reading should be based on clearly defined objectives. Any reader who begins reading without a purpose or reads a literary work solely for aesthetic pleasure may quickly lose interest in the text (Mirzayeva, Jalilov, 2020).

When teaching "Hamlet", it is advisable to implement the following stages:

Stage	Teaching Method	Content of Implementation	Outcome
Lesson introduction	Motivational discussion	Brief information about Shakespeare's life, the title of the play, and its central problem	Students' interest is aroused
Familiarization with the text	Reading in parts	Sequential reading of selected scenes	Understanding of the plot
Dramatic analysis	Role-based reading	Performing speeches of Hamlet, Ophelia, and the King	Insight into characters' psychological states
Character analysis	Question– answer	Discussion of Hamlet's character and inner experiences	Development of analytical thinking
Identifying the central idea	Problem- based questions	Identifying issues of justice, betrayal, and conscience	Understanding of the work's idea
Consolidation	Group work	Brief interpretation or comparison of scenes	Consolidation of knowledge

As Qozokboy Yo'ldoshev notes, the study of any literary text begins with reading. The manner of reading shapes the student's attitude toward the literary work. A literary text gains value only when it is read in a way that conveys the human emotions and feelings reflected in it to the reader. Otherwise, even the most artistic text remains merely a collection of letters or sounds. Therefore, expressive reading is of paramount importance in literary education. The issue of studying dramatic works by foreign authors in school is one of the most engaging yet challenging problems in literature education. This is due to several significant factors, including the lack of developed instructional materials on the theory and poetics of this literary genre for school teaching, as well as the difficulty of



perceiving, analyzing, and interpreting dramatic texts. Moreover, compared to national literature, foreign literature receives less attention in literary education, and it has often not been examined comprehensively within the context of world culture and the global literary process. At the same time, dramatic works—which strive to explore human individuality as deeply as possible, penetrate the mysteries of humanity’s “eternal” problems, vividly express the spirit of their era, and serve as a bridge between history and modernity—are particularly significant for students in Grades 9–11 in terms of their age and psychological characteristics.

**Conclusion.** Understanding, interpreting, and evaluating dramatic art contributes to the literary development of school students and to the formation of their aesthetic and moral orientations. At this stage of development, it is especially important for adolescents to feel their connection to the treasury of world culture, to compare facts from their own biographies with the vicissitudes and conflicts of classical dramatic characters, and to enrich their spiritual and emotional worlds with new impressions. This approach helps expand students’ literary horizons; forms a more comprehensive understanding of dramaturgy as a type of verbal art; creates conditions for engaging with the worlds of theater and cinema; enhances students’ tolerance skills; and has a positive impact on their emotional and intellectual development, as well as on the formation of their speech abilities and competencies.

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