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Interpreting English Fiction

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Практикум предназначен для студентов старших курсов, обучающихся по специальности «Зарубежная филология».

Цель практикума – познакомить студентов с характеристиками и категориями художественного текста, сформировать умения интерпретации и анализа прозаического текста на английском языке в объеме фрагмента или рассказа в соответствии с заданными параметрами (сюжет, композиция, характеры, проблемы и идея произведения), а также умения выразить собственное отношение к содержанию и художественным достоинствам произведения.

Практикум состоит из трех частей и включает основные теоретические сведения по анализу и интерпретации текста, практические материалы (тексты и задания к ним), примеры эссе.

Материалы пособия апробированы авторами на занятиях со студентами факультета филологии и коммуникации.

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THEORETICAL PRELIMINARIES¹

Plot and Plot Structure

The **plot** is a series of interlinked events in which the characters of the story participate. The events are arranged in a definite sequence to catch and hold the reader's interest.

Stories and poems describing nature might have no plots. It is difficult to trace the plots in the so-called 'novels of ideas' and stories presenting the stream of consciousness, since the thoughts of the character are set down as they occur regardless of their logic. Yet the events in a plot need not always involve physical movement, the movement might be psychological, revealing the dynamics in the psychological state of a character.

Every plot is a series of meaningful events. Each event is logically related to the message, the theme, the conflict, and to the development of the characters.

The plot of any story involves character and conflict. **Conflict** in fiction is the opposition (or struggle) between forces or characters. Conflicts are classified into **external** and **internal** ones.

External conflicts are usually termed in the following way:

1. Man against man, when the plot is based on the opposition between two or more people, as in *The Outstation* by S. Maugham, or *The Roads We Take* by O'Henry.

2. Man against nature (the sea, the desert, the frozen North or wild beasts, etc.), as in *The Old Man and the Sea* by E. Hemingway, or *The Hunter* by J. Aldridge.

3. Man against society or man against the established order in the society, when the individual fights his social environment openly, or when there is a conflict between the individual and the established order: a conflict with poverty, racial hostility, injustice, exploitation, inequality.

4. The conflict between one set of values against another set of values. These sets of values may be supported by two groups or two worlds in opposition. For example, the conflict in *The Fall of Edward*

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Barnard by S. Maugham is between ambition and prosperity, on the one hand, and a keen sense of beauty, on the other hand.

Internal conflicts, often termed as ‘man against himself’, take place within one character. The internal conflict is localized in the inner world of the character and is rendered through his thoughts, feelings, intellectual processes. The character is torn between the opposing features of his personality. For example, the tragedy of Soames Forsyte in *The Man of Property* is his conflict with himself: the sense of property, on the one hand, and a keen sense of beauty, on the other hand. The internal conflict within an individual often involves a struggle of his sense of duty against self-interest.

The plot of a story may be based on several conflicts of different types, it may involve both an internal and an external conflicts.

Conflicts in fiction are suggested by contradictions in reality and affected by the writer’s personality and outlook.

The events of the plot are generally localized, i.e. they are set in a particular place and time. The place and time of the actions of a story form the **setting**. In some stories the setting is scarcely noticeable, in others it plays a very important role. The functions of the setting may vary (there may be one or several simultaneous functions):

1. The setting helps to evoke the atmosphere (mood), appropriate to the general intention of the story, e.g. an atmosphere of gloom and foreboding as in *Rain* by S. Maugham, or a mysterious atmosphere as in *The Oval Portrait* by E. A. Poe.

2. The setting may reinforce characterization by either paralleling or contrasting the actions. Thus in *Rain* by S. Maugham the description of the unceasing rain parallels the actions of Mr. Davidson. The setting here suggests similarity between his actions and the merciless rain.

3. The setting may be a reflection of the inner state of a character, as in *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte. The function of the setting in *King Lear* by William Shakespeare is identical. The raging storm reflects King Lear’s emotional state.

4. The setting may place the character in a recognizable realistic environment, increasing the credibility of the whole plot. Such a setting may include geographical names and allusions to historical events.

5. The setting, especially domestic interiors, may serve to reveal certain features of the character, which may be illustrated by the role Mr. Bounderby's house plays in *Hard Times* by Ch. Dickens.

6. When the theme and the main problem involve the conflict between man and nature, the setting becomes in effect the chief antagonist whom the hero must overcome, as in *The Old Man and the Sea* by E. Hemingway.

The setting is generally established at the beginning of the story, in the **exposition**, which is the first component of plot structure. In the exposition the writer introduces the theme and the characters. The exposition, therefore, contains the necessary preliminaries to the events of the plot, casts light on the circumstances influencing the development of characters and supplies some information on either all or some of the following questions: Who? What? Where? When?

The exposition may be compressed into one sentence or extended into several paragraphs. Fairy tales usually begin with an extended exposition that provides the reader with exhaustive information about when and where the events are set, who the characters are and what the story is about. Such is the exposition in *The Magic Fish-bone* by Ch. Dickens. If the characters and backgrounds are not special, not much exposition is required. Such is the case in D. Parker's story *Arrangement in Black and white*. There may even be no exposition at all and the descriptions of the setting may be scattered in the other structural components of the story. The reader has to collect the directly and indirectly expressed information about the characters and the setting, gradually constructing the world of the story himself while he reads on. Such is the case in *The Lady's Maid* by K. Mansfield.

The second structural component which follows the exposition is **complications**. Complications generally involve actions, though they might involve thoughts and feelings as well. As a rule, there are several events (or **moments** of complications). They become tenser as the plot moves toward the moment of decision – the climax. Such a direct scaling upwards in the moments of complications occurs in *The Cop and the Anthem* by O'Henry. In some stories there may be a good deal of fluctuation in intensity among the moments of complications, although the general tendency is upward. Each of these moments is re-

lated to the theme of the story, the message or to the development of characters.

The third structural component is the **climax** – the key event, the crucial moment of the story. It is often referred to as the moment of illumination for the whole story, as it is the moment when the relationship of the events becomes clear, when their role in the development of characters is clarified, and when the story is seen to have a structure. In *The Cop and the Anthem*, for example, the climax is Soapy's arrest.

The **denouement** (or **resolution**) is the fourth structural component of the plot. It is the unwinding of the actions; it includes the events in the story immediately following the climax and bringing the actions to an end. It is the point at which the fate of the main character is clarified. The denouement suggests to the reader certain crucial conclusions.

A story may have no denouement. By leaving it out the author invites the reader to reflect on all the circumstances that accompanied the character of the story and to imagine the outcome of all the events himself. Such is the case in *The Cop and the Anthem*.

Novels may have two more components of plot structure: the **prologue** and the **epilogue** (e.g. *Angel Pavement* by J. Priestley). The prologue contains facts from beyond the past of the story, the epilogue contains additional facts about the future of the characters if it is not made clear enough in the denouement.

Sometimes the author rearranges the components of the structure, beginning the story with complications, or even with the denouement (as in *The Apple Tree* by J. Galsworthy). Any shift in the organization of the plot structure is meaningful. It may affect the atmosphere and introduce the necessary mood. It may increase the tension and the reader's suspense, and in this way affect the reader's emotional response to the story.

A story may have

a) a straight line narrative presentation, when the events are arranged as they occur, in chronological order;

b) a complex narrative structure when the events are not arranged in chronological order and when there are flashbacks to past events;

c) a circular pattern, when the closing event in the story returns the reader to the introductory part;

d) a frame structure, when there is a story within a story. The two stories may contrast or parallel.

The intensity of impression depends on **presentational sequencing**, i.e. the order in which the writer presents the information included in the story. The writer may hold back some information and keep the reader guessing. Most stories contain an enigma, or a number of them. The withholding of information until the appropriate time is called **retardation**. Retardation heightens suspense and is a widely used technique of presentational sequencing.

The **flashback** technique is another device of presentational sequencing. A flashback is a scene of the past inserted into the narrative (e.g. the narrative in *The Lady's Maid* contains flashbacks to Ellen's childhood and youth).

Foreshadowing is a look towards the future, a remark or hint which prepares the reader for what is to follow. The title in *Mistaken Identity* by M. Twain is a case of foreshadowing. It hints at the outcome of the event and in this way intensifies suspense.

Presentational sequencing can be traced on different levels. It may also involve sequencing of literary representational forms, such as narration, description, reasoning, direct speech (monologue, dialogue), interior speech, represented speech, quotations, the author's digressions. It may also include the sequencing of viewpoints of the story.

System of Images Means of Characterization

An image in art is a subjective reflection of reality. It is affected by the writer's power of imagination. Though every image is inspired by life, the writer reflects reality as he sees it. Moreover, he may create images of scenes which he could have never observed (as in historical novels).

An image is, on the one hand, a generalization and is never a complete identity of a person, thing or phenomenon. There is always something left out by the writer, and something that is emphasized or even exaggerated. On the other hand, an image in art is concrete with its individual peculiarities.

Since images reflect the author's subjective attitude to them, they are always emotive. Literary art appeals to the reader through all the senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste. In the reader's mind images also arouse feelings, such as warmth, compassion, affection, delight, or dislike, disgust, etc. Our emotional responses are directed by the words with which the author creates his images, so any change of a word affects the reader's response.

The images of a literary work form a system which comprises a hierarchy of images, beginning with micro-images (formed by a word or a combination of words) and ending with synthetic images (formed by the whole literary work). Between them there are images which may be termed "extended images".

In literature attention is by far centered on man, human character and human behaviour. That explains why the character-image (synthetic image) is generally considered to be the main element of a literary work; the images of things and landscape are subordinated to the character-image. Yet, landscape-images and animal-images may become central characters of stories, too (e.g. in *The Old Man and the Sea* and in *The Jungle Book* by R. Kipling).

In most stories one character is clearly central and dominates the story from the beginning up to the end. It is through his fate that the message is conveyed. Such a character is generally called the **main**, **central**, or **major character**, or the **protagonist**. The main character may also be called **hero** or **heroine**. The **minor** characters are subordinate, they are generally introduced to reveal some aspects of the main character, or his relationship with people. The **antagonist** is the personage opposing the main character. The **villain** is the character with marked negative features.

Sometimes in a literary work the author will give us two characters with distinctly opposing features, we then say that one character serves as a **foil** to the other, sharply accentuating his important characteristics. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are designed as foils for each other.

When a character expresses the author's viewpoint directly, he is said to be the **author's mouthpiece**. Dr. Watson is considered to be Conan Doyle's mouthpiece.

If a character is developed round one or several features, he becomes a type or a caricature. A **type** is characterized by qualities that are typical of a certain social group or class. A **caricature** is a character so exaggerated that he appears ridiculous and distorted, yet recognizable. For example, M. Twain's story *Mistaken Identity* contains masterfully created caricatures. The conductor's and the porter's slavish politeness and eagerness to dance attendance on a man whom they took for a general are exaggerated to the utmost.

Characters may be **simple (flat)** or **complex (well-rounded)**. Simple characters are constructed round a single trait. Complex characters undergo change and growth, reveal various sides of their personalities. Hamlet is a complex character, as he is brave and hesitant, sensitive and unyielding. Contradictory features within a character make it true-to-life and convincing.

The author selects and describes only those actions, thoughts and feelings of the characters that have special meaning in relation to the message of the story. Moreover, a full and photographic description is often substituted by a detail. One should distinguish between the so-called artistic details and particularities.

An **artistic detail** is always suggestive, it implies a great deal more than it expresses directly. It acquires expressive force and stimulates the reader's imagination. At the same time an artistic detail contributes to individualization and verisimilitude. A few artistic details may suggest a life-story. Thus, the "swollen" face, feet and hands with "fingers worked to the bone", which Priestley mentions about Mrs. Cross (in *Angel Pavement*), tell us just as much of her hard life as a whole page of her life-story would.

Particularities are details that cannot be treated as poetic representations of the whole. They are incidental in the sense that it is difficult or impossible to explain the writer's choice of this or that particular colour, shape, etc. Both artistic details and particularities contribute to verisimilitude and credibility of the story as they individualize, particularize and specify the characters, objects and events, thus representing actual life in all its diversity. They encourage acceptance on the part of the reader and increase convincingness of what is described.

The characters may be described from different aspects: physical, emotional, moral, spiritual, social. The description of the different aspects of a character is known as **characterization**. There are two main types of characterization: direct and indirect. When the author rates the character himself, it is **direct** characterization. Direct characterization may also be made by another character. But when the author shows us the character in action, lets us hear him, watch him and evaluate him for ourselves, it is **indirect** characterization.

The various means of indirect characterization are as follows:

1. Presentation of the character through action. Action includes a thought, a word, a decision, an impulse, and a whole event. It is the main means of characterization.

2. Speech characteristics reveal the social and intellectual standing of the character, his age, education and occupation, his state of mind and feelings, his attitude and relationship with interlocutors.

When analyzing speech characteristics, one should be alert for:

1) style markers, such as (a) markers of official style (as “I presume”); markers of informal conversational style: contracted forms, colloquialisms, elliptical sentences, tag constructions (as “you know”), initial signals (as “Well”, “Oh”), hesitation pauses, false starts – all of which normally occur in spontaneous colloquial speech and often remain unnoticed, but in ‘fictional conversation’ they may acquire a certain function, as they create verisimilitude and may indicate some features of the speaker’s character, his state of mind and his attitude to others;

2) markers of the emotional state of the character: emphatic inversion, the use of emotionally coloured words, the use of breaks-in-the-narrative that stand for silence (e.g. “and I asked her if she’d rather I... didn’t get married”), the tailing off into silence which reflects deep emotions or doubt, the use of italics, interjections; hesitation pauses and false starts if they are frequent may be a sign of nervousness, irresoluteness or great excitement;

3) attitudinal markers: words denoting attitude (as “resent”, “adore”), intensifiers (as “very”, “absolutely”);

4) markers of the character’s educational level: bookish words, rough words, slang, vulgarisms, deviations from the standard;

5) markers of regional and dialectal speech which define the speaker as to his origin, nationality and social standing: foreign words, local words, graphons;

6) markers of the character's occupation: terms, jargonisms;

7) markers of the speaker's idiolect (i.e. his individual speech peculiarities).

3. Psychological portrayal and analysis of motive. The penetration into the mind of the character, descriptions of his mental processes and subtle psychological changes that motivate his actions – all that is an effective means of characterization that writers very often resort to. To this end, the author often resorts to inner represented speech in the form of either free indirect speech or free direct speech.

4. Description of the outward appearance. The writer often marks some suitable feature in the character's portrait which is suggestive of his nature.

5. Description of the world of things that surround the character.

6. The use of a foil.

7. The naming of characters. The name may be deliberately chosen to fit a certain character (as Dickens's Mr. and Mrs. Murdstone).

Narrative Method

The narrative method involves such aspects as (a) who narrates the story and (b) the way the narrator stands in relation to the events and to the other characters of the story. The author may select any of the four types of narrators:

1. The **main character** – the events of the story are presented to the reader through his perception (e.g. *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. Salinger).

2. A **minor character** (e.g. *The Pawnbroker's Wife* by M. Spark).

3. The **omniscient (analytic) author** reproduces the characters' thoughts and comments on their actions (e.g. *Angel Pavement* by J. Priestley). The story is narrated anonymously.

4. The **observer-author** merely records the speech and actions of the characters without analyzing them (as it is often done in E. Hemingway's stories).

When the story is told by the main character or by the omniscient author, the events are analyzed **internally**, reflecting the main character's point of view. When the narrator is either a minor character or the observer-author, the story is an **outside observation** of events. When told by a character, the story is a **first-person** narrative. When told by the author, it is a **third-person** narrative.

Any story reveals the author's point of view, though not always directly. The character's and the author's viewpoints may not coincide. The point of view of the author may even be contrary to that of the narrator (as in *The Lady's Maid* by K. Mansfield). To understand the implied objective version of a story the reader should take into account whether the narrator is a **reliable** or an **unreliable** one. The narrator may misinterpret some events, which he sometimes cannot fully understand.

Each narrative method has its advantages. A **first-person** narrative is a very effective means of revealing the personality of the narrator. The character becomes clear and visible to the reader, and this first-hand testimony increases the immediacy and freshness of the impression. The narrator's statements are more readily accepted by the reader, for they are backed by the narrator's presents in the described events. Besides, a story told by a first-person narrator tends to be more confiding. The narrator often assumes the informal tone, addresses the reader directly and establishes a personal relationship with him. However, the possibilities of the first-person narrator are limited. He can see and hear only what would be possible for a person to see and hear in his situation.

There are no limitations on the freedom of the **omniscient** author. He can follow any character to a locked room or a desert island. He can get inside his characters' minds, add his own analysis of their motives and actions. The omniscient author may wander away from the subject of the narrative to state his personal view or to make a general statement – the **author's digression**. A digression usually involves a change of tense from the past to the generic 'timeless' present.

The omniscient author may also assume a detached attitude and tell the readers all about his characters, concealing his own point of view (as in *The Pleasures of Solitude* by J. Cheever). In many modern short stories the author appears partially omniscient. He chooses one

character, whose thoughts and actions are analyzed, giving no analysis of the other characters.

The **observer-author** lets the reader see, hear and judge the characters for himself. Stories told by the observer-author may be presented in either the dramatic or the pictorial form. A story is said to have a **dramatic** form, when one scene follows another and the characters act and speak as in drama (nobody comments and explains the scenes). *Arrangement in Black and White* by D. Parker and *The Killers* by E. Hemingway serve as examples. A story is considered to have a **pictorial** form when the observer-author pictures the scenes, but he tells of what anyone might see and hear in his position without entering into the minds of any of the characters (as in *Indian Camp* by E. Hemingway).

In one and the same story the author may vary the narrative method.

The narrative method determines the **dominant point of view**. Depending on who tells the story, it may be either that of a character or of the author. If a number of viewpoints are presented as independent, the story is said to be 'polyphonic'.

Tonal System

In every literary work the author's feelings and emotions are reflected in the tone, attitude and atmosphere.

Atmosphere is the general mood of a literary work. It is created by the plot, setting, characters, details, symbols and language means.

The **author's attitude** is his view of the characters and actions, which the reader is expected to share. The author's attitude establishes the moral standards according to which the reader is to make his judgements about the problems raised in the story.

The attitude of a writer to his subject matter determines the **tone** of the story. The tone is the light in which the characters and events are depicted. It may be sympathetic or impassive, cheerful or serious, vigorous or matter-of-fact, humorous or melancholy, etc. On the other hand, tone expresses the relationship between the author (or narrator) and the reader. Hence the tone may be familiar or official. In written speech the tone is conveyed verbally, primarily by emotionally coloured words. Stylistic devices and rhythm are also important.

Tone-shifts often occur in fiction and may accompany not only a change in the subject, but also a change in the narrative method or in the style (as in *The Oval Portrait* by E. Poe).

Humour and irony require special attention. **Humour** is a device intended to cause laughter. The essence of humour is generally warmth, sympathy, fellow feeling. The object of humour may be a funny incident or an odd feature of human character. A humorous tone is created by an apt usage of deliberate exaggerations (or hyperbole), a round-about way of naming things (or periphrasis), unexpected comparison (or simile), jargonisms, dialectal words, words which sound amusing in the particular situation because they do not belong to it. Some writers use a mock-serious tone, maintaining all the while a perfectly “straight face”.

Humour is also achieved extra-linguistically, through situation and character. The writer may use special literary techniques with an amusing effect, such as an unexpected turn of events, retardation, surprise ending, etc.

Irony is generally defined as a double sense based on contrast between the explicitly expressed and the implied meaning. The implied is always the direct opposite of what is actually said. A word or a statement in a particular context or situation may acquire a meaning opposite to what it has as a rule. In oral communication it would be marked by ironical intonation, whereas in writing it might be marked by means of italics, inverted commas, or it might not be marked at all.

One should distinguish between three types of irony in fiction: verbal irony, irony of situation, and dramatic irony.

Verbal irony is a figure of speech in which the literal meaning of a word or statement is the opposite of the intended meaning (e.g. “This is *beautiful* weather!” when the weather is bad).

Irony of situation (irony of fate) is a literary technique based on the discrepancy between what is intended when one acts and what the result is. For example, in *The Cop and the Anthem* by O’Henry the actions that the main character intentionally undertakes to get into prison fail, whereas the final scene, when he decides to reform, results in an unexpected arrest.

Dramatic irony is a literary technique in which the reader understands the actual meaning of what is happening, but the character does

not (as in *Mistaken Identity* by M. Twain). Dramatic irony may be created by the contrast between the point of view of the author and that of the narrator (as in *The Lady's Maid* by K. Mansfield).

When irony is developed verbally, it affects the tone of the narrative and gives it an ironic ring. But when it is developed by extra-linguistic means, the tone need not be ironical.

One should also distinguish between the **prevailing tone** of a literary work and emotional **overtones**, which may accompany particular scenes in the story. They all form a **tonal system** of the story.

The Message of a Literary Work

The plot with its characters, actions and setting forms the so-called 'surface content' of a literary work. To understand all the implications encoded in the story, the reader should go into the 'underlying thought content'.

The **theme** of a story is the main area of interest treated in it. The theme of the story implies the **problem** which the writer raises. His view and attitude to the problem are revealed in the way he develops the theme of the story.

The most important idea that the author expresses in the process of developing the theme is the **message** of the story. The message is generally expressed implicitly and has a complex analytical character. It is created by the interaction of numerous implications which the different elements of the literary work have.

Implication may be conveyed by different techniques, such as parallelism, contrast, recurrence of events or situations, artistic details, symbols, arrangement of plot structure, etc. Parallelism is deeply suggestive, inviting the reader to compare the actions or situations. The circling of the action back to its beginning usually implies that nothing has changed and this may be the whole point. Parallelism and contrast may be conveyed on different levels: linguistic and extra-linguistic.

Recurrence (repetition) is another means of conveying implication. Among the repeated linguistic elements there may be stylistic devices, or emotionally coloured words, or even neutral words, but when repeated the latter may acquire special semantic relevance. The repeated word or phrase may acquire emotional charge and become a key-word, important for the understanding of the message of the story.

There often occurs semantic repetition, when one and the same idea is repeated, though every time it is formulated differently.

Recurrence may be traced in the plot of any story. Though the events in the plot generally vary among themselves, they have a similarity in function, as each of them recalls the reader to the central problem. In this sense writers fulfil contradictory demands: the demand for variation and the demand for recurrence. If a writer fails to fulfil the former, his story will be monotonous and uninteresting. If he fails to fulfil the latter, it will seem aimless and not directed at any definite message. Implication is often conveyed by the similar features in the varying scenes and by the varying features in the similar scenes.

When an artistic detail is repeated several times and is associated with a broader concept than the original, it develops into a personal **symbol**. For example, in *Rain* by S. Maugham the rain is a symbol of the primitive powers of nature before which man is powerless and all his efforts are useless and hopeless. The symbol is generally recognized only after the story is read.

Presupposition is also a means of conveying special implication. For example, it is a characteristic feature of modern fiction to begin a story at a point where certain things are already taken for granted. The reader has to work out the setting and the identity of the characters as he reads on, which arouses his interest.

The author's message is not always a solution to the problems raised in the story as the problem may hardly admit solution. The writer may only intend to raise the problem and reveal its relevance. Moreover, the message depends on the author's outlook, and the reader may either share the writer's views or not.

When analyzing the message, one must also take into consideration the **title** of the story. The title is the first element to catch the eye, but its meaning and function can only be determined retrospectively. The story may clarify the meaning of one of the components of the title (as in *Winter in July* by D. Lessing where "winter" turns out to be a period of decline). The title may even acquire a meaning contrary to what its components generally mean (as in *Mr. Know-All* by S. Maugham where the derogatory connotation gives way to the positive meaning). The title may become symbolic, as *The Moon and the Sixpence* by S. Maugham.

The title may have the following functions:

1. It may serve as a means of conveying the author's message, e.g. *Say No to Death* by D. Cusak.
2. It may serve as a means of cohesion, uniting the components of the story, as in *The Apple-Tree* by J. Galsworthy, where the "apple-tree" links all the scenes.
3. The title may serve as a means of focusing the reader's attention on the most relevant characters or details, e.g. *Hamlet* by W. Shakespeare.
4. The title may characterize the protagonist, e.g. *The Man of Property* by J. Galsworthy.
5. It may serve as a means of foreshadowing (e.g. *Mistaken Identity* by M. Twain), or it may be deliberately misleading (e.g. *The Pleasures of Solitude* by J. Cheever).

All the elements which make up a literary work are relevant to its message. The message and the theme unify all the elements of the work into an artistic whole.

TEXTS FOR PRACTICAL ANALYSIS

Questions for interpreting a text

1. Speak about the author. What do you know about his world outlook, his philosophical and aesthetic principles?
2. Give the gist of the passage/story. (Summarize the content of the passage/story.) Divide it into logically complete parts and suggest titles to each.
3. Point out the composition parts of the passage/story: exposition, story, climax, denouement. Is there a clear exposition or does the narration start abruptly? Are time, place and background stated or only implied?

Analyze the use of the articles, pronouns and adverbs. Say whether their specific usage creates the implication of precedence. What is the function of this implication? How does the action move: slowly or fast? What part of speech prevails: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc.? What is the effect of their use?

4. What is more important: the events that make the plot or the implication? What is implied? How does the passage/story end: in a clear or ambiguous and vague way?

5. What does the passage/story present: narration, description, dialogue, monologue, inner monologue of a character, the author's argumentation? What is the prevailing narrative form?

6. In whose name is the story narrated? Is it a first-person (a third-person) narration? Outline the character of the narrator, if there is any. What is the function of the narrator?

7. What mood (key, vein, slant) is the passage/story written in? Does the mood change as the narration proceeds?

8. What is the author's method of presenting characters? Does the author resort to direct characterization? Point out instances of direct characterization. Is it ample or sparing? What are the other ways of portraying characters (through their actions and speech, other characters' perception)? Are the characters represented statically or dynamically? What direction do they change in? What stages in the development of their personalities can be singled out? What character is the most picturesque and vivid? How does the author achieve the vividness of portraits? Does the main character happen to be in conflict with himself (with other characters, circumstances of life)? Are there any background characters? What is their role in the story? Can we feel the author's attitude towards his characters?

9. Speak about the language means employed in the passage/story. What episodes abound in various tropes? What is their effect? Are there any places which are devoid of any imagery? What does this dry manner of writing contribute to? Does the author contrast expressiveness of some parts of his story? Why? What layer words are mainly used in the passage/story: formal, bookish, colloquial? Does the author resort to stylistically coloured vocabulary: terms, archaisms, neologisms, barbarisms, foreign loans, slangy words, jargonisms, professional and dialectal words, vulgarisms? What is their function? Are there any discrepancies between the plot and the language means used to reproduce it?

10. Analyze the syntactical structures employed in the text. Which places are written in long, complex sentences? Where do short and simple structures prevail? What effect do these syntactical structures

create? Are there abrupt changes in syntax, in style in general? Why does the author resort to such contrasts?

11. What is the author's message? Interpret the title of the story. What is your attitude towards the characters, ideas and style of the text? What feelings and thoughts does the text arouse?

A DAY'S WAIT

By Ernest Hemingway

Hemingway, Ernest (1899–1961): a prominent American novelist and short-story writer. He began to write fiction about 1923, his first books being the reflection of his war experience. "The Sun Also Rises" (1926) belongs to this period as well as "A Farewell to Arms" (1929) in which the antiwar protest is particularly powerful.

During the Civil War Hemingway visited Spain as a war correspondent. His impressions of the period and his sympathies with the Republicans found reflection in his famous play "The Fifth Column" (1937), the novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls" (1940) and a number of short stories.

His later works are "Across the River and into the Trees" (1950) and "The Old Man and the Sea" (1952) and the very last novel "Islands in the Stream" (1970) published after the author's death. In 1954 he was awarded a Nobel Prize for literature.

Hemingway's manner is characterized by deep psychological insight into the human nature. He early established himself as the master of a new style: laconic and somewhat dry.

He came into the room to shut the windows while we were still in bed and I saw he looked ill. He was shivering, his face was white, and he walked slowly as though it ached to move. "What's the matter, Schatz?"¹

"I've got a headache."

"You'd better go back to bed." "No, I'm all right."

"You go to bed. I'll see you when I'm dressed."

But when I came downstairs he was dressed, sitting by the fire, looking a very sick and miserable boy of nine years. When I put my hand on his forehead I knew he had a fever.

"You go up to bed," I said, "you're sick." "I'm all right," he said.

When the doctor came he took the boy's temperature. "What is it?" I asked him.

"One hundred and two."²

Downstairs, the doctor left three different medicines in different colored capsules with instructions for giving them. One was to bring down the fever, another a purgative, the third to overcome an acid condition. The germs of influenza can only exist in an acid condition, he explained. He seemed to know all about influenza and said there

was nothing to worry about if the fever did not go above one hundred and four degrees. This was a light epidemic of flu and there was no danger if you avoided pneumonia.

Back in the room I wrote the boy's temperature down and made a note of the time to give the various capsules.

"Do you want me to read to you?"

"All right, if you want to," said the boy. His face was very white and there were dark areas under his eyes. He lay still in the bed and seemed very detached from what was going on.

I read aloud from Howard Pyle's³ *Book of Pirates*, but I could see he was not following what I was reading.

"How do you feel, Schatz?" I asked him. "Just the same, so far," he said.

I thought perhaps he was a little light-headed and after giving him the prescribed capsules at eleven o'clock I went out for a while.

It was a bright, cold day, the ground covered with a sleet that had frozen so that it seemed as if all the bare trees, the bushes, the cut brush and all the grass and the bare ground had been varnished with ice. I took the young Irish setter for a little walk up the road and along a frozen creek.

I sat at the foot of the bed and read to myself while I waited for it to be time to give another capsule. It would have been natural for him to go to sleep, but when I looked up he was looking at the foot of the bed, looking very strangely.

"Why don't you try to go to sleep? I'll wake you up for the medicine." "I'd rather stay awake."

After a while he said to me, "You don't have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you." "It doesn't bother me."

"No, I mean you don't have to stay if it's going to bother you."

At the house they said the boy had refused to let any one come in to the room.

"You can't come in," he said. "You mustn't get what I have." I went up to him and found him in exactly the position I had left him, white-faced, but with the tops of his cheeks flushed by the fever, staring still, as he had stared, at the foot of the bed.

I took his temperature. "What is it?"

"Something like a hundred," I said. It was one hundred and two and four tenths. "It was a hundred and two," he said.

"Who said so?" "The doctor."

"Your temperature is all right," I said. "It's nothing to worry about." "I don't worry," he said, "but I can't keep from thinking."

"Don't think," I said. "Just take it easy."

"I'm taking it easy," he said and looked worried about something. "Take this with water."

"Do you think it will do any good?" "Of course, it will."

I sat down and opened the Pirate Book and commenced to read but I could see he was not following, so I stopped.

"About what time do you think I'm going to die?" he asked. "What?"

"About how long will it be before I die?"

"You aren't going to die. What's the matter with you?" "Oh, yes, I am. I heard him say a hundred and two."

"People don't die with a fever of one hundred and two. That's a silly way to talk!"

"I know they do. At school in France the boys told me you can't live with forty-four degrees. I've got a hundred and two."

He had been waiting to die all day, ever since nine o'clock in the morning.

"You poor Schatz," I said. "Poor old Schatz, it's like miles and kilometers. You aren't going to die. That's a different thermometer. On that thermometer thirty-seven is normal. On this kind it's ninety-eight."

"Are you sure?"

"Absolutely," I said. "It's like miles and kilometers. You know, like how many kilometers we make when we do seventy miles in the car?"

"Oh," he said.

But his gaze at the foot of the bed relaxed slowly. The hold over himself relaxed too, finally, and the next day it was very slack and he cried very easily at little things that were of no importance.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

¹ **Schatz** (*Germ.*): darling.

² **102 °F (Fahrenheit)** correspond to 38.9 °C (Centigrade), The Fahrenheit thermometer is used throughout the British Commonwealth and in the United States. The boiling point of the Fahrenheit thermometer is 212°, the freezing point — 32°, the normal temperature of a human body is about 99°. The Centigrade thermometer, used in Russia, France and other countries, has 0° (zero) for its freezing point and 100° for the boiling point.

³ **Pyle, Howard** (1853-1911): an American illustrator, painter and author

NOTES ON STYLE

A. The terms **style**, **stylistic** are generally used in two different meanings. In lexicology the term **functional style** is used which may be defined as a system of expressive means peculiar to a specific sphere of communication. Otherwise speaking, the choice of words and of modes of expression depends on the situation in which the process of communication is realized, whether it is a friendly talk, an official letter or report, a poem, a scientific article, etc. According to the situation (or the sphere of communication) we may distinguish formal (bookish, learned) and informal (colloquial) words. The former are peculiar to fiction, scientific prose, lectures, official talks; the latter are used in everyday talks with friends and relatives. One should also keep in mind that there are a great number of words that are independent of the sphere of communication, i. e. that can be used in a lecture, in an informal talk, in a poem, etc. Such words are stylistically neutral (e.g. bread, word, book, go, takes, white, etc.).

Students should be warned against taking the term *colloquial* as a kind of encouragement to use words thus marked as much as possible. The term implies that the words called *colloquial* are limited by their sphere of usage and, if used in a wrong situation (e.g. in a student's composition, in a conversation with an official acquaintance or with one higher in authority), may produce the impression of impoliteness or even rudeness.

E. g. He is a jolly chap. = Он парень что надо, (**chap** *n*, *coll.*; **jolly** *adj*, *coll.*) The stylistically neutral way of putting it is: He is a good (fine) man.

How are the kids? = Как ваши ребята? (**kid** *n*, *coll.*) The stylistically neutral way How are your children?

I'm all right. = Со мной все нормально. (**all right** *coll.*) The stylistically neutral way I feel (am) quite well.

Compare:

<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Colloquial</i>	<i>Bookish</i>
begin	start	commence
continue	go on	proceed
end, finish	be over (through)	terminate
buy	get	purchase

Note also that such abbreviations as *I'm, I've, I'll, you'd, you're*, etc. are characteristic of colloquial style. Therefore, students will be well advised to avoid them in their compositions, essays, precis, etc.

B. The term **style** may be also used with reference to the manner of writing of some particular author. *E. g.* Hemingway's style is characterized by laconism and lack of detail. The syntax of his sentences is very simple, the dialogues are almost monosyllabic and seemingly unemotional. Yet, through the austere form the author manages sometimes to create a narration of great tension.

EXERCISES

Read the text and the Notes on Lexicology and Style and talk on the following points (A. Grammar, B. Word usage, C. Style):

A. 1. Why does the author use or drop the definite article before the word *bed* in the sentences: "We were still in bed." "You'd better go back to bed," "I sat at the foot of the bed."

2. Why is the Infinitive used with or without the particle *to* in the sentences: "Do you want me to read to you?" "I heard him say a hundred and two."

3. In the sentence "It's nothing to worry about" *it* is a personal pronoun. What noun does it stand for? (Note: The English for «Нечего беспокоиться» would be "There is nothing to worry about.")

4. Tick off the sentences with the Infinitive used as an attribute.

5. Tick off all the complex sentences with clauses joined without the conjunction *that*, *e.g.* "I know (that) he is ill."

B. 1. What did the father mean when he said "You'd better go back to bed"? (Add some words to show the implication.)

2. Paraphrase the sentences: "I'd rather stay awake" and "just take it easy."

3. What is the difference between the boy's words "...if it bothers you" and "...if it's going to bother you." (Translate the sentences with these phrases into Russian.)

4. How and why did the boy paraphrase his question "about what time... I'm going to die?"

5. The boy lay with his eyes fixed at the foot of the bed. What synonyms and why did the author use to describe the situation?

C. 1. Comment on the choice of words in Hemingway's story from the point of view of their stylistic colouring. What style prevails, formal or informal?

2. What can you say about the dialogues in the story and their stylistic peculiarities?

3. Comment on the syntax of the story and the stylistic effect achieved by it.

4. What is the general atmosphere of the story? Is the tension gradually increased? How is the effect achieved? What is the point of the highest tension (climax)?

HOW WE KEPT MOTHER'S DAY

By Stephen Leacock

Leacock, Stephen (1869- 1944) - a famous Canadian writer of the 20th century. His stories, full of humour and sarcasm, expose the contradictions of life in modern bourgeois society.

Leacock says that the basis of humour lies in the contrasts offered by life itself, but "the deep background that lies behind and beyond what we call humour is revealed only to the few who by instinct or by effort have given thought to it."

So we decided to have a special celebration of Mother's Day. We thought it a fine idea. It made us all realize how much Mother had done for us for years, and all the efforts and sacrifice that she had made for our sake.

We decided that we'd make it a great day, a holiday for all the family, and do everything we could to make Mother happy. Father decided to take a holiday from his office, so as to help in celebrating the day, and my sister Anne and I stayed home from college classes, and Mary and my brother Will stayed home from High School.

It was our plan to make it a day just like Xmas¹ or any big holiday, and so we decided to decorate the house with flowers and with mottoes over the mantelpieces², and all that kind of thing. We got Mother to make mottoes and arrange the decorations, because she always does it at Xmas.

The two girls thought it would be a nice thing to dress in our very best for such a big occasion and so they both got new hats. Mother trimmed both the hats, and they looked fine, and Father had bought silk ties for himself and us boys as a souvenir of the day to remember Mother by. We were going to get Mother a new hat too, but it turned out that she seemed to really like her old grey bonnet better than a new one, and both the girls said that it was awfully becoming to her.

Well, after breakfast we had it arranged as a surprise for Mother that we would hire a motor car and take her for a beautiful drive away into the country. Mother is hardly ever able to have a treat like that, because we can only afford to keep one maid, and so Mother is busy in the house nearly all the time.

But on the very morning of the day we changed the plan a little bit, because it occurred to Father that a thing it would be better to do even than to take Mother for a motor drive would be to take her fishing; if you are going to fish, there is a definite purpose in front of you to heighten the enjoyment.

So we all felt that it would be nicer for Mother to have a definite purpose; and anyway, it turned out that Father had just got a new rod the day before.

So we got everything arranged for the trip, and we got Mother to cut up some sandwiches³ and make up a sort of lunch in case we got hungry, though of course we were to come back home again to a big dinner in the middle of the day, just like Xmas or New Year's Day. Mother packed it all up in a basket for us ready to go in the motor.

Well, when the car came to the door, it turned out that there hardly seemed as much room in it as we had supposed.

Father said not to mind him, he said that he could just as well stay home; and that he was sure that he could put in the time working in the garden; he said that we were not to let the fact of his not having had a real holiday for three years stand in our way; he wanted us to go right ahead and be happy and have a big day.

But of course we all felt that it would never do to let Father stay home, especially as we knew he would make trouble if he did. The two girls, Anne and Mary, would gladly have stayed and helped the maid get dinner, only it seemed such a pity to, on a lovely day like this, having their new hats. But they both said that Mother had only to

say the word, and they'd gladly stay home and work. Will and I would have dropped out, but unfortunately we wouldn't have been any use in getting the dinner.

So in the end it was decided that Mother would stay home and just have a lovely restful day round the house, and get the dinner. It turned out anyway that Mother doesn't care for fishing, and also it was just a little bit cold and fresh out of doors, though it was lovely and sunny, and Father was rather afraid that Mother might take cold if she came.

So we all drove away with three cheers for Mother, and Father waved his hand back to her every few minutes till he hit his hand on the back edge of the car, and then said that he didn't think that Mother could see us any longer.

Well, — we had the loveliest day up among the hills that you could possibly imagine.

It was quite late when we got back, nearly seven o'clock in the evening, but Mother had guessed that we would be late, so she had kept back the dinner so as to have it just nicely ready and hot for us. Only first she had to get towels and soap for Father and clean things for him to put on, because he always gets so messed up with fishing, and that kept Mother busy for a little while, that and helping the girls get ready.

But at last everything was ready, and we sat down to the grandest kind of dinner — roast turkey and all sorts of things like on Xmas Day. Mother had to get up and down a good bit during the meal fetching things back and forward.

The dinner lasted a long while, and was great fun, and when it was over all of us wanted to help clear the things up and wash the dishes, only Mother said that she would really much rather do it, and so we let her, because we wanted just for once to humour her.

It was quite late, when it was all over, and when we all kissed Mother before going to bed, she said it had been the most wonderful day in her life, and I think there were tears in her eyes. So we all felt awfully repaid for all that we had done.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

¹ **Xmas:** an abbreviated form of Christmas. In England Christmas day (the 25th of December) is one of the biggest holidays, devoted especially to family reunion and merry-making with its traditional Christmas tree and Christmas pudding.

² **mantelpiece**: a structure of brick, wood or marble above and around a fire-place —an open grate where a coal fire burns. Most old English houses have no central heating. Up to now a great number of flats are warmed by coal fires. Sometimes instead of a coal fire a gas fire or an electric fire may be used, which is more convenient, as it can be lit in a second and turned off as soon as it is not needed.

³ **sandwich**: two slices of buttered bread with meat, egg, cheese or tomato, etc. between them (cf. the Russian бутерброд). The word has one more meaning: a sandwich (or a sandwich-man, a sandwich-boy) is a man walking along the street with two advertisement-boards hung one in front of him and one behind.

NOTES ON STYLE

1. In Leacock's story "How We Kept Mother's Day" you will find numerous words and phrases of informal functional style, *e.g.* *all that kind of thing* (cf. the Russian «и все такое»), *awfully* (in "awfully becoming", cf. the Russian «ужас как идет; потрясающе к лицу»), *a little bit* («чуть- чуть»), *have a big day* («здорово провести время»), *get messed up* («перемазаться, вывозиться в грязи»), *the dinner... was great fun* («весело было за обедом»), etc.

Note also the interjection *well* introducing some of the passages (which normally occurs in oral speech), the omission of the conjunction *that* and the syntax imitating that of oral communication by its free and careless structures.

2. The story presents an interesting example of the indirect method of characterization. The author does not say directly that the members of the family were selfish, callous and hard-hearted people (that would be the direct method of characterization) but makes them act and lets the reader draw his own conclusion.

3. "How We Kept Mother's Day" is a humorous story. Humour in fiction may be of two principal types. It may be humour of situation when the author makes us laugh at certain funny or absurd facts, *e.g.* the members of the family buying presents for themselves on Mother's Day, but buying nothing for their mother. There is also humour of words when the reader does not laugh at what is happening in the story but at how it is put by the author. *E. g.* But of course we all felt that it would never do to let Father stay at home, especially as we knew he would make trouble if he did.

EXERCISES

Read the Text and the Notes on Style and talk on the following points (A. Grammar, B. Word usage, C. Style):

A. 1. Which verbs used in the text are modal verbs? Comment on their meanings and translate the sentences in which they are used.

2. What are the meanings of the verbs *to get*, *to make*, *to keep*, *to take* in the text? (Translate the sentences with these verbs.)

3. *Mother* and *Father* are capitalized and used without articles in the text. How would you use the words in reported speech (oral and written)?

B. 1. In the phrases *to decorate the house* and *to trim the hats* we have two different equivalents of «украшать». What can be trimmed or decorated?

2. We say *in the morning (evening, afternoon)*, but in the phrase "on the very morning of the day" *on* is used. Why? (Cf: *on that evening, on the morning of his arrival.*)

C. 1. Point out as many colloquial words and phrases as you can find. Supply their Russian equivalents if possible. What is the author's purpose in introducing so many units of informal style?

2. Point out the passages which characterize the members of the family and their real attitude to the mother. What is the method of characterization used by the author?

3. Which sentences or passages bear touches of humour? Try to explain how the humorous effect is achieved in each case. Which type of humour prevails in the story? (See Notes on Style.)

A FRIEND IN NEED

By William Somerset Maugham (abridged)

Maugham, William Somerset (1874-1965): an English writer. He achieved a great success as a novelist with such novels as "Of Human Bondage", "The Razor's Edge" and others, as a dramatist with his witty satirical plays "Our Betters", "The Circle", etc., but he is best known by his short stories.

At the beginning of his literary career Maugham was greatly influenced by French naturalism. Later on, his outlook on life changed. It became cool, unemotional and pessimistic. He says that life is too tragic and senseless to be described. A writer can't change life, he must only try to amuse his reader, stir his imagination. And this is where Maugham achieves perfection: his stories are always fascinating. Maugham's skill in depicting scenes and characters with a few touches is amazing and whether he means it or not his novels, stories and plays reveal the vanity, hypocrisy and brutality of the society he lives in. So does the story "A Friend in Need". Burton, a prosperous businessman, is not in the least concerned about the troubles and needs of those who have failed in life. Without a moment's hesitation he sends a man to death just because his presence bores him, and later on he remembers the fact with a "kindly chuckle".

When Maugham described people and places in his short stories, he did it mostly from his personal experience.

"It's rather a funny story," he said. "He wasn't a bad chap. I liked him. He was always well-dressed and smart-looking. He was handsome in a way, with curly hair and pink-and-white cheeks. Women thought a lot of him. There was no harm in him, you know, he was only wild. Of course he drank too much. Those sort of fellows always do. A bit of money used to come in for him once a quarter and he made a bit more by card-playing. He won a good deal of mine, I know that."

Burton gave a kindly little chuckle. I knew from my own experience that he could lose money at bridge with a good grace.

"I suppose that is why he came to me when he went broke, that and the fact that he was a namesake of mine. He came to see me in my office one day and asked me for a job. I was rather surprised. He told me that there was no more money coming from home and he wanted to work. I asked him how old he was.

"Thirty-five," he said.

"And what have you been doing hitherto?" I asked him. "Well, nothing very much," he said.

I couldn't help laughing.

"I'm afraid I can't do anything for you just yet," I said. "Come back and see me in another thirty-five years, and I'll see what I can do."

He didn't move. He went rather pale. He hesitated for a moment and then told me that he had had bad luck at cards for some time. He hadn't been willing to stick to bridge, he'd been playing poker, and he'd got trimmed. He hadn't a penny. He'd pawned everything he had. He couldn't pay his hotel bill and they wouldn't give him any more credit. He was down and out. If he couldn't get something to do he'd have to commit suicide.

I looked at him for a bit. I could see now that he was all to pieces. He'd been drinking more than usual and he looked fifty. The girls wouldn't have thought so much of him if they'd seen him then.

"Well, isn't there anything you can do except play cards?" I asked him. "I can swim," he said.

"Swim!"

I could hardly believe my ears; it seemed such an insane answer to give. "I swam for my university."

I got some glimmering of what he was driving at. I've known too many men who were little tin gods at their university to be impressed by it.

"I was a pretty good swimmer myself when I was a young man," I said. Suddenly I had an idea.

Pausing in his story, Burton turned to me. "Do you know Kobe?" he asked.

"No," I said, "I passed through it once, but I only spent a night there."

"Then you don't know the Shioya Club. When I was a young man I swam from there round the beacon and landed at the creek of Tarumi. It's over three miles and it's rather difficult on account of the currents round the beacon. Well, I told my young namesake about it and I said to him that if he'd do it I'd give him a job. I could see he was rather taken aback.

"You say you're a swimmer," I said.

"I'm not in very good condition," he answered.

I didn't say anything. I shrugged my shoulders. He looked at me for a moment and then he nodded. "All right," he said. "When do you want me to do it?"

I looked at my watch. It was just after ten.

"The swim shouldn't take you much over an hour and a quarter. I'll drive round to the creek at half past twelve and meet you. I'll take you back to the club to dress and then we'll have lunch together,"

"Done," he said.

We shook hands. I wished him good luck and he left me. I had a lot of work to do that morning and I only just managed to get to the creek at Tarumi at half past twelve. But I needn't have hurried; he never turned up."

"Did he funk it at the last moment?" I asked.

"No, he didn't funk it. He started all right. But of course he'd ruined his constitution by drink and dissipation. The currents round the beacon were more than he could manage. We didn't get the body for about three days."

I didn't say anything for a moment or two, I was a trifle shocked. Then I asked Burton a question. "When you made him that offer of a job, did you know he'd be drowned?"

He gave a little mild chuckle and he looked at me with those kind and candid blue eyes of his. He rubbed his chin with his hand.

"Well, I hadn't got a vacancy in my office at the moment."

EXPLANATORY NOTES

¹ **to swim for one's university**: to take part in swimming races held between one's university team and some other teams. Practically every school, college and university in Great Britain has its own sports clubs, and there are various outdoor sports competitions held annually within each school, as well as between different schools, colleges, and universities. These are, as a rule, attended by spectators drawn from all sections of the public, and the Oxford and Cambridge boat races, in which crews from these two universities compete every spring on the Thames, arouse national interest.

NOTES ON WORD-FORMATION

The verb *to land* was made from the noun *land* by means of **conversion** which is a very productive way of making new words in modern English.

In conversion, a new word and the one from which it is produced have the same phonetic shape but always belong to different categories or parts of speech, so that verbs may be produced from nouns or adjectives (*e.g.* to hand вручать; to comb причесывать; to pocket класть в карман; to pale бледнеть), nouns from verbs (*e.g.* break перерыв; drive поездка; find находка), etc.

The other two main ways of word-building are **affixation** (or so called derivation) and **composition**.

In affixation new words are produced with the help of affixes (that is suffixes and prefixes), *e. g.* beautiful, swimmer, unbelievable.

In composition new words are produced from two or more stems, *e.g.*: classroom, wall newspaper, good- for-nothing, blue-eyed, etc.

EXERCISES

Read the text and do the following (A. Grammar, B. Word usage, C. Word-formation).

A. 1. Pick out from the text all the irregular verbs and give their four forms.

2. Search the text for *-ing*-forms and classify them according to their functions in the sentences.

3. Mark all the cases of Sequence of Tenses in the text and comment on them (explain the rules).

4. Select sentences with the verb *go* used as a link verb; what other verbs can be used in the same function?

B. 1. Pick out from the text words and phrases describing appearance.

2. Tick off all introductory phrases used by Burton; use them in sentences of your own.

3. Pick out all the sentences with the word *rather* and translate them into Russian.

4. Paraphrase all the sentences with the verb *get*.

C. 1. Pick out from the text all compound words and identify their type.

2. Construct some compounds modelling them after *well-dressed* and *smart-looking*.

3. Search the text for verbs and nouns formed by means of conversion.

THE APPLE-TREE

By John Galsworthy (*extract*)

John Galsworthy (1867–1933), a prominent English novelist, playwright and short-story writer, came from an upper middle-class family. He was educated at Harrow and Oxford and was called to the Bar. His first novel "From the Four Winds" was published in 1897, but it was "The Man of Property" that won him fame. Among his numerous novels "The Forsyte Saga" and "A Modern Comedy" are the most prominent. They give a truthful picture of English, bourgeois society at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. "The Apple-Tree" (1917) is one of the most popular long short stories written by John Galsworthy.

On the first of May, after their last year together at college, Frank Ashurst and his friend Robert Garton were on a tramp. They had walked that day from Brent, intending to make Chagford¹, but Ashurst's football knee² had given out, and according to their map they had still some seven miles to go. They were sitting on a bank beside the road, where a track crossed alongside a wood, resting the knee and talking of the universe, as young men will. Both were over six feet, and thin as rails³; Ashurst pale, idealistic, full of absence; Garton queer, round-the-corner⁴, knotted, curly, like some primeval beast. Both had a literary bent; neither wore a hat. Ashurst's hair was smooth, pale, wavy: and had a way of rising on either side of his

brow, as if always being flung back; Garton's was a kind of dark unfathomed mop. They had not met a soul for miles.

"My dear fellow," Garton was saying, "pity's only an effect of self-consciousness; it's a disease of the last five thousand years. The world was happier without."

Ashurst did not answer; he had plucked a blue floweret, and was twiddling it against the sky. A cuckoo began calling from a thorn tree. The sky, the flowers, the songs of birds! Robert was talking through his hat⁵. And he said:

"Well, let's go on, and find some farm where we can put up." In uttering those words he was conscious of a girl coming down from the common just above them. She was outlined against the sky, carrying a basket, and you could see that sky through the crook of her arm. And Ashurst, who saw beauty without wondering how it could advantage him, thought: "How pretty!" The wind, blowing her dark frieze skirt against her legs, lifted her battered peacock tam-o'-shanter; her greyish blouse was worn and old, her shoes were split, her little hands rough and red, her neck browned. Her dark hair waved untidy across her broad forehead, her face was short, her upper lip short, showing a glint of teeth, her brows were straight and dark, her lashes long and dark, her nose straight; but her grey eyes were the wonder — dewy as if opened for the first time that day. She looked at Ashurst — perhaps he struck her as strange, limping along without a hat, with his large eyes on her, and his hair flung back. He could not take off what was not on his head, but put up his hand in a salute, and said:

"Can you tell us if there's a farm near here where we could stay the night? I've gone lame."

"There's only one farm near, sir." She spoke without shyness, in a pretty, soft, crisp voice.

"And where is that?"

"Down here, sir."

"Would you put us up?"

"Oh! I think we would."

"Will you show us the way?"

"Yes, sir."

He limped on, silent, and Garton took up the catechism⁶.

"Are you a Devonshire girl?"

"No, sir."

"What then?"

"From Wales."

"Ah. I thought you were a Celt, so it's not your farm?"

"My aunt's, sir."

"And your uncle's?"

"He is dead."

"Who farms it, then?"

"My aunt, and my three cousins."

"But your uncle was a Devonshire man?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you lived here long?"

"Seven years."

"And how d'you like it after Wales?"

"I don't know, sir."

"I suppose you don't remember?"

"Oh, yes! But it is different."

"I believe you!"

Ashurst broke in suddenly:

"How old are you?"

"Seventeen, sir."

"And what's your name?"

"Megan David."

"This is Robert Garton, and I am Frank Ashurst. We wanted to get on to Chagford."

"It is a pity your leg is hurting you."

Ashurst smiled, and when he smiled his face was rather beautiful.

Descending past the narrow wood, they came on the farm suddenly — a long, low stone-built dwelling with casement windows, in a farmyard where pigs and fowls and an old mare were straying. A short steep-up grass hill behind was crowned with a few Scotch firs⁷, and in front, an old orchard of apple trees, just breaking into flower, stretched down to a stream and a long wild meadow. A little boy with oblique dark eyes was shepherding a pig, and by the house door stood a woman, who came towards them. The girl said:

"It is Mrs. Narracombe, my aunt."

"Mrs. Narracombe, my aunt" had a quick, dark eye, like a mother wild-duck's, and something of the same snaky turn about her neck.

"We met your niece on the road," said Ashurst, "she thought you might perhaps put us up for the night."

Mrs. Narracombe, taking them in from head to heel, answered:

"Well, I can, if you don't mind one room. Megan, get the spare room ready, and a bowl of cream. You'll be wanting tea, I suppose."

Passing through a sort of porch made by two yew trees and some flowering-currant bushes, the girl disappeared into the house, her peacock tam-o'-shanter bright athwart that rosy-pink and the dark green of the yews.

"Will you come into the parlour and rest your leg? You'll be from college, perhaps?"

"We were, but we've gone down⁸ now."

The parlour, brick-floored, with bare table and shiny chairs and sofa stuffed with horsehair, seemed never to have been used, it was so terribly clean. Ashurst sat down at once on the sofa, holding his lame knee between his hands, and Mrs. Narracombe gazed at him...

"Is there a stream where we could bathe?"

"There's the strame⁹ at the bottom of the orchard, but sittin' down you'll not be covered!"

"How deep?"

"Well, it is about a foot and a half maybe."

"Oh! That'll do fine. Which way?"

"Down the lane, through the second gate, on the right, an' the pool's by the big apple tree that stands by itself. There's trout there, if you can tickle them!"

"They're more likely to tickle us!"

Mrs. Narracombe smiled. "There'll be the tea ready when you come back."

The pool formed by the damming of a rock, had a sandy bottom; and the big apple tree, lowest in the orchard, grew so close that its boughs almost overhung the water; it was in leaf and all but in flower — its crimson buds just bursting. There was no room for more than one at a time in that narrow bath, and Ashurst waited his turn, rubbing his knee and gazing at the wild meadow, all rocks and thorn trees and field flowers, with a grove of beeches beyond, raised up on a flat

mound. Every bough was swinging in the wind, every spring bird calling, and a slanting sunlight dappled the grass. He thought of Theocritus¹⁰, and the river Cherwell¹¹, of the moon, and the maiden¹² with dewy eyes¹³, of so many things that he seemed to think of nothing; and he felt absurdly happy.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

¹ **to make Chagford:** to reach Chagford – a town in Devonshire.

² **Ashurst's football knee:** the knee that Ashurst hurt in playing football.

³ **thin as rails:** It is a stable set-expression, somewhat hackneyed and trite. The list of such similes in English is fairly long. They do not create fresh and vivid images, but are frequently used by the writers as they are easily understood and grasped by the reader.

⁴ **round-the -corner:** absent-minded.

⁵ **was talking through his hat:** was talking nonsense.

⁶ **took up the catechism:** continued questioning smb. closely.

⁷ **Scotch fir:** common North European pine.

⁸ **we've gone down** (at Oxford and Cambridge): we've left the University.

⁹ **strame, sittin', an':** dialectical forms in Devonshire and Wales.

¹⁰ **Theocritus:** 270 B. C. Greek pastoral poet.

¹¹ **the river Cherwell:** a river in Oxfordshire.

¹² **maiden** (chiefly liter.): a girl, a young unmarried woman.

¹³ **He thought of Theocritus, and the river Cherwell, of the moon, and the maiden with dewy eyes:** This is an enumeration, the members of which belong to different spheres. This stylistic device is used by the writer to reveal the character's feelings and meditations.

EXERCISES

Answer the following questions and do the given tasks:

1. In what key is the extract written: is it matter-of-fact, dramatic, lyrical, pathetic?
2. What kind of text is it? Is it a narration, a character-drawing or a dialogue?
3. What is the author's method in portraying personages?
4. What are the predominant figures of speech in depicting nature?
5. What helps to create a vivid picture of spring?
6. What role does the word "maiden" play in conveying Ashurst's state of bliss?
7. Account for different ways of expressing comparisons in the text. Analyse their structure and stylistic function.
8. Find some examples of epithets in the text. Discuss their stylistic value.

9. Point out the features of colloquial speech in the dialogue between the young men and Megan.

10. Point out instances of non-standard speech. Give the correct forms.

11. Point out the adjectives in the text, classifying them according to sense into literal and figurative.

12. Define the stem from which the adjective "curly" is derived. Pick out from the Text the adjectives formed in the similar way.

ART FOR HEART'S SAKE

By Reuben Lucius Goldberg

Reuben Lucius Goldberg (1883–1970), an American sculptor, cartoonist and writer was born in San Francisco. After graduating from the University of California in 1904 he worked as a cartoonist for a number of newspapers and magazines. He produced several series of cartoons all of which were highly popular.

Among his best works are "Is There a Doctor in the House?" (1929), "Rube Goldberg's Guide to Europe" (1954) and "I Made My Bed" (1960].

"Here, take your pineapple juice," gently persuaded Koppel, the male nurse.

"Nope!" grunted Collis P. Ellsworth.

"But it's good for you, sir."

"Nope!"

"It's doctor's orders."

"Nope!"

Koppel heard the front door bell and was glad to leave the room. He found Doctor Caswell in the hall downstairs. "I can't do a thing with him," he told the doctor. "He won't take his pineapple juice. He doesn't want me to read to him. He hates the radio. He doesn't like anything!"

Doctor Caswell received the information with his usual professional calm. He had done some constructive thinking since his last visit. This was no ordinary case. The old gentleman was in pretty good shape for a man of seventy-six. But he had to be kept from buying things. He had suffered his last heart attack after his disastrous purchase of that jerkwater¹ railroad² out in Iowa³. All his purchases of recent years had to be liquidated at a great sacrifice both to his health and his pocketbook.

The doctor drew up a chair and sat down close to the old man. "I've got a proposition for you," he said quietly.

Old Ellsworth looked suspiciously over his spectacles.

"How'd you like to take up art?" The doctor had his stethoscope ready in case the abruptness of the suggestion proved too much for the patient's heart.

But the old gentleman's answer was a vigorous "Rot!"⁴

"I don't mean seriously," said the doctor, relieved that disaster had been averted. "Just fool around with chalk and crayons. It'll be fun."

"Bosh!"⁵

"All right." The doctor stood up. "I just suggested it, that's all."

"But, Caswell, how do I start playing with the chalk — that is, if I'm foolish enough to start?"

"I've thought of that, too. I can get a student from one of the art schools to come here once a week and show you."

Doctor Caswell went to his friend, Judson Livingston, head of the Atlantic Art Institute, and explained the situation. Livingston had just the young man — Frank Swain, eighteen years old and a promising student. He needed the money. Ran an elevator at night to pay tuition. How much would he get? Five dollars a visit. Fine.

Next afternoon young Swain was shown into the big living room. Collis P. Ellsworth looked at him appraisingly.

"Sir, I'm not an artist yet," answered the young man.

"Umph?"⁶

Swain arranged some paper and crayons on the table. "Let's try and draw that vase over there on the mantelpiece," he suggested. "Try it, Mister Ellsworth, please."

"Umph!" The old man took a piece of crayon in a shaky hand and made a scrawl. He made another scrawl and connected the two with a couple of crude lines. "There it is, young man," he snapped with a grunt of satisfaction. "Such foolishness. Poppycock!"⁷

Frank Swain was patient. He needed the five dollars. "If you want to draw you will have to look at what you're drawing, sir."

Old Ellsworth squinted and looked. "By gum"⁸, it's kinda⁹ pretty, I never noticed it before."

When the art student came the following week there was a drawing on the table that had a slight resemblance to the vase.

The wrinkles deepened at the corners of the old gentleman's eyes as he asked elfishly¹⁰, "Weil, what do you think of it?"

"Not bad, sir," answered Swain. "But it's a bit lopsided."

"By gum," Old Ellsworth chuckled. "I see. The halves don't match." He added a few lines with a palsied hand and colored the open spaces blue like a child playing with a picture book. Then he looked towards the door. "Listen, young man," he whispered, "I want to ask you something before old pineapple juice comes back."

"Yes, sir," responded Swain respectfully.

"I was thinking could you spare the time to come twice a week or perhaps three times?"

"Sure, Mister Ellsworth."

"Good. Let's make it Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Four o'clock."

As the weeks went by Swain's visits grew more frequent. He brought the old man a box of water-colors and some tubes of oils.

When Doctor Caswell called Ellsworth would talk about the graceful lines of the andirons. He would dwell on the rich variety of color in a bowl of fruit. He proudly displayed the variegated smears of paint on his heavy silk dressing gown. He would not allow his valet to send it to the cleaner's. He wanted to show the doctor how hard he'd been working.

The treatment was working perfectly. No more trips downtown to become involved in purchases of enterprises of doubtful solvency.

The doctor thought it safe to allow Ellsworth to visit the Metropolitan, the Museum of Modern Art and other exhibits with Swain. An entirely new world opened up its charming mysteries. The old man displayed an insatiable curiosity about the galleries and the painters who exhibited in them. How were the galleries run? Who selected the canvases for the exhibitions? An idea was forming in his brain.

When the late spring sun began to cloak the fields and gardens with color, Ellsworth executed a god-awful smudge which he called "Trees Dressed in White". Then he made a startling announcement. He was going to exhibit it in the Summer show at the Lathrop Gallery!

For the Summer show at the Lathrop Gallery was the biggest art exhibit of the year in quality, if not in size. The lifetime dream of every mature artist in the United States was a Lathrop prize. Upon this

distinguished group Ellsworth was going to foist his "Trees Dressed in White", which resembled a gob¹¹ of salad dressing thrown violently up against the side of a house!

"If the papers get hold of this, Mister Ellsworth will become a laughing-stock. We've got to stop him," groaned Koppel.

"No," admonished¹² the doctor. "We can't interfere with him now and take a chance of spoiling all the good work that we've accomplished."

To the utter astonishment of all three — and especially Swain — "Trees Dressed in White" was accepted for the Lathrop show.

Fortunately, the painting was hung in an inconspicuous place where it could not excite any noticeable comment. Young Swain sneaked into the Gallery one afternoon and blushed to the top of his ears when he saw "Trees Dressed in White", a loud, raucous splash on the wall. As two giggling students stopped before the strange anomaly Swain fled in terror. He could not bear to hear what they had to say.

During the course of the exhibition the old man kept on taking his lessons, seldom mentioning his entry in the exhibit. He was unusually cheerful.

Two days before the close of the exhibition a special messenger brought a long official-looking envelope to Mister Ellsworth while Swain, Koppel and the doctor were in the room. "Read it to me," requested the old man. "My eyes are tired from painting."

"It gives the Lathrop Gallery pleasure to announce that the First Landscape Prize of \$1,000 has been awarded to Collis P. Ellsworth for his painting, "Trees Dressed in White"."

Swain and Koppel uttered a series of inarticulate gurgles. Doctor Caswell, exercising his professional self-control with a supreme effort, said: "Congratulations, Mister Ellsworth. Fine, fine ... See, see ... Of course, I didn't expect such great news. But, but — well, now, you'll have to admit that art is much more satisfying than business."

"Art's nothing," snapped the old man. "I bought the Lathrop Gallery last month."

EXPLANATORY NOTES

¹ **jerewater** (*Am.colloq.*): small, unimportant.

² **railroad** (*Am.*): railway. The lexical differences between the British and American English are not great in number but they are considerable enough to make the mixture of the two variants sound strange and unnatural. A student of English should bear in mind that different words are used for the same objects, such as **can, candy, truck, mailbox, subway** instead of **tin, sweets, lorry, pillar-box** (or **letter-box**), **underground**.

³ **Iowa** : a north central state of the USA. The noun is derived from the name of an Indian tribe. Quite a number of states, towns, rivers and the like in America are named by Indian words, *e.g.* **Massachusetts, Illinois, Ohio, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Michigan**.

⁴ **rot** (*sl.*): foolish remarks or ideas.

⁵ **bosh** (*sl.*): empty talk, nonsense.

⁶ **umph** : an interjection expressing uncertainty or suspicion.

⁷ **poppycock**: foolish nonsense.

⁸ **by gum** (*dial.*): by God.

⁹ **kinda**: the spelling fixes contraction of the preposition ‘of’ and its assimilation with the preceding noun which is a characteristic trait of American pronunciation.

¹⁰ **elfish**: (becoming rare) (of people or behaviour) having the quality or habit of playing tricks on people like an elf; mischievous.

¹¹ **gob** (*sl.*): a mass of smth. sticky.

¹² **admonish**: to scold or warn gently.

EXERCISES

Answer the following questions or do the given tasks:

1. How does the story begin? What does the word “Nope” (repeated three times) suggest? Complaining of Old Ellsworth his male nurse speaks in short abrupt sentences, four of which begin with the pronoun “he”. What effect is achieved?

2. What can you say about the health and spirits of the old man?

3. Do you feel a ring of irony in the sentence “All his purchases of recent years had to be liquidated at a great sacrifice both to his health and his pocketbook”? What other cases of irony can you point out?

4. What interjections does Old Ellsworth use in his speech? What trait of his character do they emphasize?

5. What is the stylistic value of the slang words in the text?

6. Why did the wrinkles deepen at the corners of his eyes as Old Ellsworth spoke to Swain? How do you understand the word “elfishly”?

7. Whom did he call “old pineapple juice” and why?

8. What progress did the old man make in art? Why is he compared with a child playing with a picture book? What is said about the first drawings he made and the painting accepted for the Lathrop

Show? Disclose the stylistic value of the simile “resembled a gob of salad dressing thrown violently up against the side of a house”.

9. How can you account for the inverted word order in the sentence “Upon this distinguished group Ellsworth was going to foist his “Trees Dressed in White”?”

10. What is the implication of the verb “sneak” used to characterize Swain’s appearance at the exhibition?

11. How had Ellsworth changed since he took up art? Can you see any reflection of this change in his speech?

12. What sentences in the second part of the story suggest that Old Ellsworth was up to something? Comment on the sentence “An entirely new world opened up its charming mysteries”.

13. Why was it easy for Old Ellsworth to wind everybody round his finger? Do you think that a story like this could have happened in New York?

14. How is the profession of the author reflected in the story? Speak on the element of the grotesque and satire.

15. Why was the story entitled the way it was? An allusion to what doctrine is present here?

SAMPLE ANALYSES

Read authentic student essays and try to assess them. Use the questions below to guide you.

Is the essay complete? Is anything missing?

Is the essay well-structured?

Are there any mistakes in the essay? If so, what are they?

Does the essay contain a wide range of vocabulary and structures?

Is the overall organization of the essay good?

What would you change in the essay /add to the essay?

Analysis 1. *Groundlings* by Jane Gardam

“Groundlings” is a short story by Jane Gardam, based on a theme of art. The name of Shakespeare runs through the whole story like a golden thread and rises above the world and characters lives.

Aggie Batt, who is a true theatre and Shakespeare lover, comes into the focus of the reader. The narrator, Aggie’s former fellow student, lets us know about her life and behavior. Aggie as well as a nar-

rator belongs to the class of those who can't imagine their life without theatre. It changes their lives. Aggie's beloved character is Enobarbus from "Antony and Cleopatra". He is loyal and devoted friend. This character receives its allegoric significance as it's as loyal as Aggie. Her favorite play is "The Winter Tale" – Shakespeare's tragicomedy. And it is again an allegory on Aggie's life. Her real devotion to art and death strikes us, it is tragic. But her appearance and the way of behavior amaze the reader. She wears a balaclava helmet and men's socks outside and a black dress and very old cracked shoes during a play. Once the narrator's husband thinks of her being a man. She is funny and "a little crazy". She is idealized and christened. She is the first in a queue of all kinds of mongrel English. The mood of the story the plot of which connects with the story of Aggie's life is bright and lyrical. When she dies her beloved play is on stage as in memory for her.

The story is full of allusions (names of plays and theatres, characters and writers). And its language renders the intonation of everyday speech (interjections). They serve to make us believe that this story happens to be.

Aggie is not a talkative type of a person and when she replies to the narrator concerning First Folios: "very fragmented", that induces a whole lot of rhetorical questions. This phrase is brimful of meaning. Everything is very fragmented for Aggie as she is solid and has her specific world outlook. Aggie is ageless and disdains time.

But the narrator is never confident in herself. She is a protagonist. She finds that only in a queue or in a theatre she is at home, but she can't explain her passion for it. Neither her daughter nor her husband are of the same view. They are people of the great procession – money grubbers, bread-winners, "often the dead" (strong metaphor). The narrator finds it "more home than home". Only here among all these theatre obsessed people she is sure about everything. A chain of repetitions, anaphoras and parceling accentuate the vein of the scene. The same devices are used to show Aggie's Batt eagerness for Shakespeare. Elliptic sentences give a vivid sense of her inner world. ("It him. Himself. William the man she comes for").

The structure of the plot plays an important role here. We get to know about Aggie's death in advance. It is enforced by several rhetor-

ical questions – reflection of the narrator. It is her monologue, which reveals us her character. She searches for a miracle in everyday routine life. The story is aid to prove that there is one and it is Aggie's life and death. There is remark that Shakespeare's plots are larger than life. It deserves special attention.

His plays comprise all possible and impossible things, events and adventures. He builds his own universe and connects two worlds (real and unreal). The figure of a man who stands near Aggie when she dies keeps the readers in suspense and becomes a symbol of power (Shakespeare, writer) which unites two worlds at the end of the story ("the people of Shakespeare's parish"). There is a rich simile of medieval diptych with the pictures of heaven and hell (the Procession and the world of pleasure seekers). They are contrasted in a way but arrange a whole picture of the diptych, of the universe. And they are under the power of art.

The protagonist and the main character find what they want and who they are by the help of art. And the author makes us believe that it is the only way to understand the world.

Analysis 2. *Groundlings* by Jane Gardam

Jane Mary Gardam is an English writer of children's and adult fiction. She was born in 1928 in Coatham, North Yorkshire and grew up in Cumberland. After leaving university, Gardam worked in a number of literary-related jobs, starting off as a Red Cross Travelling Librarian for hospital libraries, and later a journalist. Although she did not publish her first book (*A Long Way From Verona*, a children's novel) until she was in her 40s, she has become one of the most prolific novelists of her generation, with 25 books published over the past 30 years and got a number of prestigious prizes to her name. She also writes reviews for *The Spectator* and *The Telegraph*, and works for BBC radio.

Groundlings is a short story included in the book *The Stories of Jane Gardam*. In the early 17th century, groundlings were common people frequently visited the Globe Theatre, standing just below the stage to watch the play. The word is obsolete now and it is used to refer rather to the past than to the actual. Therefore, the title of the story, which is suggestive in its type, seems strange and unusual, making us

ponder of what it is all about. The title does not give us the understanding of the setting, it just provides us with the image of people gathering to watch Shakespeare plays, and that image is the key for comprehending the message of the story.

The plot is episodic and framed. It centers around Aggi Battt who is obsessed with theaters and Shakespeare so much that she has been spending her whole life queuing. Despite the fact, that the events in the story are hardly connected, we feel the beginning and the end being set in one place, telling one episode. This peculiarity creates the feeling of the invariability of Aggi and, at the same time, the rapid change of the queue she has been standing in.

"Is she there?"

"Yes, she is there"

This small dialogue opens the story and we cannot understand at once, who she is. The effect of importance of the situation is achieved through epiphora and, moreover, it intensifies the tension. Later, we learn that she is Aggi Batt. The narrator recalls different periods of this character's life: from the first time she saw Aggi till the day Aggi perished. She characterizes Aggi the following way:

She wore a balaclava helmet and men's socks and grey gloves that looked made out of wire, and shiny brown trousers with flies, and a queer jacket, double-breasted. Her face was sharp and disagreeable with a tight little mouth. She had small hard eyes. She looked a bit mad and she hasn't changed. She has grown no madder. She is just the same. A little mad. A bit bonkers.

The perception of Aggi by the narrator makes Aggi look not life-like because of her clothes, not typical for women, and emphasis on her weirdness, which is achieved by means of synonymic repetition (*mad, bonkers*). The elliptical sentences in the end make the paragraph more sharp and stress words, connected with madness again. She seems to be from the other reality, not belonging to this world. She is static (*Aggi is ageless; she hasn't changed*) and more like a symbol through which later the narrator realizes her attitude towards Shakespeare and reopens herself.

Nevertheless, when Aggi is in the theater, she is different:

She wears a black dress up to the neck, long in the arms, and her hair that is invisible under the balaclava turns out to be long and fine.

<...> Oh and dear me , she is thin.<...> She wears very old, cracked, shoes with broad black ribbons tied in bows, stockings with ladders, and often a pair of socks.

It is also said that Aggi's favorite Shakespeare play is Winter's Tale. It is noticeable because the statue of one of the play's characters, Hermione, became alive at the end of the play. Almost the same happens to Aggi, when she realizes that she has done everything she wanted.

So, at some point, Aggi's existence is mysterious and that is proved at the end of the story where a figure of a man, who may have been Shakespeare himself, disappears. And as the story is told by the narrator, her view of the situation matters. Obviously, the narrator is considered the protagonist of the story as she is a dynamic figure. She is opposed to Aggi: she is married now and quite well-off.

The indirect means of characterization prevail as we can't see anything special in the story, everything is hidden and metaphoric. Even the figure of Aggi Batt is a mystery.

Analysis 3. *The Language of Water* by D. Mackenzie

David Shaw Mackenzie was born in the northeast Scotland. He has had a few careers, including social work, teaching, systems analysis, painting and decoration and fish packing. These activities have led him to various parts of the Middle East, Latin America, mainland Europe and the Island of Mull. His short fiction has appeared in several literary magazines and anthologies, including Stand Magazine, Chapman, Edinburgh Review, New Writing Scotland, News from the Republic of Letters and several editions of Best Short Stories.

"The Language of Water" is a short story told by the young man, Alexander, who reflects on his feelings for Garfield, "an old man of about seventy" and his father's friend. The plot of the story is unconventional and it corresponds to the flashback structure combined with the circular one. So, on the one hand, there is the key event, which is crucial in the main characters' view. For instance, the fishing is not just an outdoor activity for the narrator but a secret way to solve the conflict and forgive Garfield for what the narrator saw in his childhood. On the other hand, there are several flashbacks, which are quite sporadic being put in different parts of the story and serving as the key

to understanding the conflict. Thus, systematically, by means of them we learn who the main characters are and what has brought them together.

As far as the circular composition is concerned, it is aimed to make the story complete, not disrupted by the flashbacks, and to emphasize the idea of the narrator's obsessiveness with the conflict existed. Therefore, we can see the sign of this plot structure through the repetition of the same sentences at the beginning and at the middle of the story. Moreover, putting the characters in the circle helps to create the tension:

I knew we wouldn't catch anything.

"There's a fish in there for us," I said. "Don't worry."

"It looks a bit flat to me." Garfield said.

The most important flashback describing the episode from the narrator's childhood appears right after these sentences. The narrator literally plunges us in the reminiscence: "*We are in the landover*". But who are *we*? By this, he is taking his reader inside the landover making them live that moment, therefore the following story shocks us even more. The effect is also achieved by the narration in the Present Continuous and the Present Simple tense forms.

From the very beginning, we feel something unpleasant that is created by means of epithets: *rutted track, pitted earth, grey leather seat, metal floor etc.* It is followed by the image of mud, intensified by means of epiphora: "*<...> which has swung over a huge area of mud. There seem to be acres of mud*". In addition, hyperbole makes the image even more intense: "*<...> the big barn known as the Outpost is afloat in a sea of it (mud)*". Then we see the contrasting the mud with Alexander's new pair of wellingtons: "*<...> I look down on nothing but brown mud. I am wearing a new pair of wellingtons that I know are meant for such situations but I don't want to get them dirty.*" Although Alexander didn't want it, he did get them dirty, and this mud is mostly a metaphor. It symbolizes the naivety and innocence of the child being plunged in the "mud", which means cruelty and brutality of the adult world. When Garfield kills the baby pigeon that Alexander is fascinated by, Alexander is just saying: "*I am too shocked to cry*". When he sees "*a little red mark on the floor*", left by the dead pigeon, he is trying to "*rub it off with his toe*" and we can understand

that by doing so he is trying to erase that moment and pretend it never happened. Nevertheless, everything is shouting about it, even the door of the barn is “*big red sliding door*”. Here it is important to remember that the mud also has a particular colour in the text, that is brown: “<...> I look down on nothing but brown mud”. Now the following sentence acquires a new sense:

All I do is make the mark bigger – red and brown.

So, it is highly metaphorical, and we realize that the mark of the bird means his connection with the murder; red is for blood and brown is for the brutality of the world he now belongs to. Instead of erasing the moment from his memory, he makes it even bigger. After that, the description of the outside world is even worse: “*It is raining heavily; the mud is deeper*”.

Later we find ourselves in Garfield’s house, where Garfield’s wife asks Alexander to take the boots off and then he says: “*I look round and see all the mud I have brought in on the black and white tiles of the kitchen floor*”.

This flashback is crucial for understanding why this moment was critical for the narrator and what he is trying to forgive Garfield for. It is not just about the dreadful picture he witnessed, but also about Garfield’s interference in his childish view of the world and destruction of it.

Garfield is described by Alexander as “*a solid, heavy-set man, bullish both in his physique and his driving attitude to life*”. He lives, as he wants to live, not caring about other people’s feelings, and the flashback about the book, which Alexander presented to him, proves it. No wonder the following sentences, which appear to be synonymic repetitions, precede the story about the book: “*I find it difficult to like him. I strive to like him*”.

However, when they went fishing, Garfield was absolutely different: “*He has shrunk – almost literally – from the strong, commanding figure he once was, to the slighter, more tentative person that old age and illness had rendered him*». We learn that Garfield has a cancer and he asks Alexander to go fishing together, though he has never been a fan of it. Therefore, the most disturbing question is why he did it. Did he intend to apologize for something?

It is significant that the story starts with the fishing scene as there we can find the answer implied. The epithets like “bright”, “cloudless” in the very beginning help us to be tuned for something good and at the same time the epithet “cold” which is put in the row with them represents the narrator’s attitude towards Garfield and his pessimism is mixed with hope.

Through nature we can feel the tension and suspense as nothing moves waiting for resolving: *“There wasn’t a single ripple on the water and the bushes and trees upon the bank were motionless with not a leaf stirring”*.

Moreover, the title of the story is The Language of Water. It is metaphorical in its type and means inability of the main character to decide for himself and he let it adrift. He probably does not understand the problem completely and wants Gods to decide.

The message of the story is the hardship of forgiveness. Although Alexander is grown-up now and willing to be closer to Garfield, it occurs to be complicated. He finally resolves this conflict inside himself and so does Garfield, we see it in the final sentences placed to a different paragraph, where Garfield, being self-sufficient and independent, let Alexander carry his stuff:

“We walked back through the fields, slowly. Garfield asked me to carry his rod and his bag and I did”.

Analysis 4. The Language of Water by D. Mackenzie

“The language of water” by D.S.Mackenzie is a philosophical short story about a relationship between two people. Ideas and problems implied in the story are left for readers to divine and keep them in suspense, giving a fruitful soil for a discussion.

The story begins with a description of a stunning nature scene. The narrator and the main character are introduced here. Several epithets and similes such as “cold, bright, cloudless morning”, and “flat and lifeless like a huge skein of grey silk” or “mirror-like surface” help to paint a picture of fishing. Though everything seems peaceful and quite we feel uneasiness, as the words “lifeless”, “lie”, “feigned enthusiasm” are used. Water is motionless and flat.

This motionless and water silence call our attention to the title of the story “The language of water”. It doesn’t reply to the protagonist

appeal, who thinks that a caught fish would solve every conflict and problem. "It looks a bit flat to me", - repeat Garfield time after time. But what does this phrase really mean? Does it mean that the water of the pond is flat or maybe it has more profound meaning?

The narrator tries to ensure his friend that he will catch a fish, he feigns enthusiasm and lies, that shows that there is something more than fishing for him. Water doesn't reply for his calling, it is death to it. Some power makes him to choose by himself. Water in the story is the third character and a living being. The conflict begins to reveal and it is closely connected with the plot of the text.

The plot is centered round a relationship between the narrator and the character, Garfield, who is a friend of Sandy's dead father. We can understand or have a slight idea about this relations with the help of a flashback and several Sandy's memories. The flashback is an essential point which makes the plot circular, it is winded into the canvas of the story. We get to know with an episode from Sandy's childhood, when Garfield killed a baby-pigeon in front of him that incident left a mark in the narrator's soul. The child was shocked and the episode is rich in words of one semantic field, which give a certain emotional coloring to this scene (blood, mud, red spot). The highest point is reached by gradation (Sandy has new wellingtons, tries not to soil them and then comes into a kitchen his wellingtons covered with mud). A simile of a barn which is deep into mud "as the Outpost is afloat in a sea of it" creates an atmosphere of something unpleasant and terrible.

The narrator also recalls Garfield's appearance and behavior when being younger. He was "solid, heavy-set man, bullish both in his physique and in his driving attitude to life". He could easily offend and wouldn't feel guilty. But now sandy is "bedeviled by what he has become. He has shrunk", and is going to die as has cancer. He is old and in need, looking for something which could comfort him. May be, that is why he has initiated this fishing with a boy, whom he has offended and wants to apologize subconsciously. Garfield characterization is built on antithesis in his appearance. But something prompts us that changes have nothing to do with his nature. His regular phrase "it looks a bit flat to me" can refer to the character, who has frozen in time, remember the same fears, offences and doesn't know what to do with them. He stands in front of a road stone and doesn't know what

way to choose. (“I find it difficult to like him. I strive to like him”.) He still doesn’t know how to call Garfield and how he should conduct. He strongly believes that a caught fish will be an answer to all his questions. A fish here now acquires symbolic features of reunion and knowledge, assurance. “It would be our fish and something would be saved. I fished hard.”

There could be two or three conflicts in a row. A conflict within Garfield’s soul, Sandy’s mind and the conflict between a beautiful and peaceful nature and men. The role of an old man in the story is hard to understand. Why does he decide to go fishing with Sandy, he “never went fishing with anyone else” except Sandy’s father. He doesn’t even tries to catch any fish but the thing of fishing with Sandy is quite the thing he needs.

The story “The language of the water” is written from the first person, but the most interesting thing here is that even though the character allows us to see some hidden parts of his memory and soul we still can’t absolutely understand him.

The story of fishing has its roots in world literature. Ernest Hemingway’s “The Old Man and the Sea” could influence the writer and be a stem of the idea, where fishing acquires some symbolic meaning.

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