PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

32

The Narrative Text. Structure and Characteristics

El texto narrativo. Estructura y características.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"The king died and then the queen died" is a story. "The king died, and then the queen died of grief" is a plot. With these two short sentences, E. M. Forster, in his Cambridge lectures of 1927, captured the difference between simply telling what happened and making sense of it. Human beings have always done the second thing: we do not merely record events, we arrange them, explain them and share them. Welcome to Topic 32: The Narrative Text. Structure and Characteristics.

In order to address this topic, I will divide it into five main sections. Firstly, I will define the narrative text and distinguish it from other text types, together with the key notions of story, plot and discourse. Secondly, I will examine its structure, from Aristotle's beginning, middle and end to the models of Propp, Todorov and Labov. Thirdly, I will analyse its main characteristics as a discourse: narrator, focalization, time and character. Fourthly, I will study its linguistic features in English, with a contrastive look at the problems of the Spanish-speaking learner. Finally, I will reflect on the pedagogical and didactic implications of this content within our current educational framework.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted for the preparation of this topic. These include: Forster's Aspects of the Novel, Genette's Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method, Propp's Morphology of the Folktale, Labov's Language in the Inner City, Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction, and Abbott's The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative, as well as the online source The Living Handbook of Narratology, from the University of Hamburg. I have also drawn on the LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020), Real Decreto 217/2022 and 243/2022, and Decreto 110/2022 and 109/2022 of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura.