PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

35

The Expository Text. Structure and Characteristics

El texto explicativo. Estructura y características.

§

NOVIEMBRE DE 2026

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.

Índice

1. INTRODUCTION

2. THE EXPOSITORY TEXT: DEFINITION AND PLACE AMONG TEXTS

- 2.1. What is an expository text?
- 2.2. Text types, genres and registers
- 2.3. Textuality: what makes a text a text

3. STRUCTURE OF THE EXPOSITORY TEXT

- 3.1. Macrostructure: introduction, development and conclusion
- 3.2. Rhetorical patterns of organisation
- 3.3. Rhetorical Structure Theory

4. LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS

- 4.1. Cohesion
- 4.2. Coherence and information flow
- 4.3. Lexico-grammatical features

5. VARIETIES AND PRODUCTION OF EXPOSITORY TEXTS

- 5.1. Common varieties
- 5.2. Stages in writing an expository text

6. PEDAGOGICAL AND DIDACTIC IMPLICATIONS

7. CONCLUSION

Fuentes

1. INTRODUCTION

"If a speaker of English hears or reads a passage of the language which is more than one sentence in length, he can normally decide without difficulty whether it forms a unified whole or is just a collection of unrelated sentences." With these words Halliday and Hasan open Cohesion in English (1976), and they name the intuition on which this whole topic rests: we recognise a text when we see one, and we recognise an explanation when we meet one, even if we cannot say why. Welcome to Topic 35: The Expository Text. Structure and Characteristics. The task of a teacher of English is precisely to turn that intuition into knowledge that pupils can use, both to understand the explanatory texts that surround them, from textbooks to encyclopaedia entries, and to write their own. In order to address the topic, I will divide it into five main sections. Firstly, I will define the expository text and place it among text types and genres. Secondly, I will describe its structure, from its macro-organisation to the rhetorical patterns that give it shape. Thirdly, I will examine the linguistic characteristics of expository writing, namely cohesion, coherence and the lexico-grammatical choices that typify it. Fourthly, I will look at the most common varieties of the expository text and the stages of writing one. Finally, I will reflect on the pedagogical and didactic implications of all this within our current educational framework.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted for the preparation of this topic. These include: Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion in English, de Beaugrande and Dressler's Introduction to Text Linguistics, Swales' Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings, Hoey's On the Surface of Discourse and Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad and Finegan's Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English, as well as the online sources of the Simon Fraser University Rhetorical Structure Theory website and the Council of Europe. I have also drawn on the LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 December), Real Decreto 217/2022 and 243/2022, and Decreto 110/2022 and 109/2022 of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura, with their later modifications.