

USE OF HERMENEUTIC TECHNIQUES AND METHODS FOR FORMING RESEARCH COMPETENCIES OF TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7603690>

Abstract. *The article examines the use of hermeneutic techniques and methods, in particular, the hermeneutic circle, for the correct understanding of texts. It is indicated that the concept of "text" should not be understood only as a verbal (linguistic) text, but also in its other forms. The work consistently traces the development of the concept of "hermeneutic circle" which was introduced into scientific circulation by Schleiermacher, and then his ideas were further developed in the scientific works of Dilthey, Heidegger, Gadamer and others. The authors consider how the content of the hermeneutic circle changed in different ways with its unchanged form. Based on empirical material, the authors show their experience in the formation of research competencies among students of a technical university.*

Keywords: *hermeneutics, hermeneutic circle, understanding, interpretation, text, schleiermacher, dilthey, heidegger, gadamer.*

Introduction

Nowadays, we live in an ever-growing flow of diverse information that requires timely processing and understanding. The problem of correct understanding is of particular importance today. "In the conditions of the information environment, an important source of obtaining an information advantage, according to Andreev A.A., is the ability of a person to optimally and qualitatively evaluate and understand incoming information" [18]. One of the main aspects in the structure to the professional training of future specialists is the research component. The issue of the formation and expansion of research competencies is becoming one of the relevant and basic requirements for graduates of technical universities in this regard. Teaching the use of hermeneutical techniques and methods can greatly contribute to the formation of students' research competencies.

There are many studies in the scientific literature regarding issues related to the emergence and development of hermeneutics, so we will mention only some authors whose works have been published recently. In the article by Matushanskaya [15], philosophical hermeneutics is considered as an alternative to dialectical materialism, which is the methodological basis of the modern university course of philosophy. Evgrafova [7] considers such procedures of cognitive process as explanation and understanding forming the "hermeneutic circle" in the process of cognition. The work of E.V. Chepkasova [6] is written about hermeneutical and phenomenological methods of text analysis, their essence and specificity. There are works containing not only theoretical issues, but also an empirical component [1]. Among foreign authors, one can note the work of P. Heelan [9]. The article is devoted to natural sciences from the perspective of Heidegger's analysis of meaning and interpretation. The hermeneutic orientation is contrasted with the explanatory tradition which in the English-speaking world is simply called "science" aims at the construction (theoretical) variables, to be accepted or rejected by reason of its ability under laboratory circumstances to predict and control the causal outcomes of assigned initial conditions. Such is in

general the methodological profile of the natural sciences [9]. Robert Piercy's article [17] is devoted to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. Shapiro [21] considers these philosophers as symbols of modern philosophy and theorists of modern art. Poggeler's work [19] is dedicated to the life and work of the great philosopher, a founder of modern hermeneutics. Certainly, these are not all authors dealing with hermeneutics. The volume of the article does not allow mentioning all researchers on this topic.

Research tools and Methods

The experience of the authors of this article in the use of various pedagogical techniques is wide. It allows us to consider the hermeneutic approach as one of the most effective methods in teaching students. In the process of forming the skills of correct understanding of the text, we should consider not only verbal (language) text, but also its other forms - paintings, movies, music. Some techniques for "understanding the text" are illustrated in this article by the empirical material of the authors.

Hermeneutics is one of the most influential trends in modern philosophy. Hermeneutic phenomenology is a combination of theory, reflection and practice that interweaves vivid descriptions of lived experience (phenomenology) with reflective interpretations of their meanings (hermeneutics) [3]. The term "hermeneutics" comes from the Greek word meaning "I explain, interpret." The core problem of hermeneutics is the "problem of understanding." Since Heidegger, the figure of the "hermeneutic circle" has found wide acceptance among students of all humanities disciplines, especially in philosophy and religion, who considers it the best way to interpret ancient and foreign texts [12].

Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher, Wilhelm Dilthey, Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer and others made a significant contribution to the development of hermeneutics. It is difficult to deny that the unusual form that hermeneutical philosophy took in the XX century was formed under the influence of Martin Heidegger's thought. Of course, at first it took the efforts of Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey to breathe new life into the art of interpretation, which dates back to the ancient technique of deciphering divine divination. . . Thanks to Schleiermacher, hermeneutics is transformed from an exegetical practice into a general theory of understanding capable of developing its universal principles, and thanks to Dilthey, who proclaimed understanding as a method for comprehending the "conquests of the spirit" in contrast to the explanatory techniques of the natural sciences, it even claims to take the place of the methodology of humanitarian knowledge. But only with the appearance of Heidegger . . . hermeneutics reaches the level of serious philosophizing [14].

Schleiermacher introduced the concept of the "hermeneutical circle" into scientific circulation. The essence of this concept is as follows: to understand the meaning of the whole text, it is necessary to understand the meaning of its parts, in turn, understanding the meaning of each part of the text is possible only with a correct understanding of the meaning of the entire text. That is, a part of the text, for example, even one word, can be understood only in the context of the entire phrase (the entire text). The phrase can be understood if all parts (words) of the phrase are correctly understood. Thus, the process of understanding moves as if in a circle.

Hermeneutics was selected as an appropriate research approach since the research goal was to interpret how people understand the construct and practice of judgment artistry. We argue that professional practice entails judgment artistry beyond the simple application of technical knowledge; that judgment artistry in professional practice can be better studied through an interpretive lens compared to an empirical lens; and that hermeneutics is an interpretive approach

that is useful for studying judgment artistry of professional practice [16]. Hermeneutics refers to the shared understandings that we already have with each [13] and this sharing occurs through language. This viewpoint is embodied in the Gadamer metaphor of merging horizons, through which different interpretations of the phenomenon under study (in this case, professional practice and artistry) are combined through dialog to achieve a common understanding.

As an example, we can give an understanding of homonyms (polysemous words) in the Russian language. «Какая длинная у тебя коса (волос)» и «Какая острая у тебя коса (сельскохозяйственный инструмент)». “What a long braid (hair) you have” and “What a sharp scythe (agricultural tool) you have.”

We consider another example for analyzing, confirming the importance of understanding each word of the text. In our opinion, the literary work by M.A. Bulgakov “The Heart of a Dog” is very well suited for demonstrating the analysis of hermeneutical techniques of the text to students. Let's take an episode - a conversation between Preobrazhensky and Bormental at the table:

«– Доктор Борменталь, умоляю вас, оставьте икру в покое! И, если хотите послушаться доброго совета, налейте не английской, а обыкновенной русской водки. Красавец тятнутый передернул широкими плечами, вежливо ухмыльнулся и налил прозрачной водки.

– Новоблагославенная? – осведомился он.

– Бог с вами, голубчик, – отозвался хозяин. – Это спирт. Дарья Петровна сама отлично готовит водку.

– Не скажите, Филипп Филиппович, все утверждают, что очень приличная. Тридцать градусов.

– А водка должна быть в сорок градусов, а не в тридцать, – это, во-первых, – а во-вторых, бог их знает, чего они туда плеснули» [5].

“I beg you, Doctor Bormenthal, leave the caviar alone. And if you want a piece of good advice, don't touch the English vodka but drink the ordinary Russian stuff. The handsome Bormenthal - who had taken off his white coat and was wearing a smart black suit - shrugged his broad shoulders, smirked politely and poured out a glass of clear vodka.

– What makes is it? (Novoblagoslavennaya?), he enquired.

– Bless you, my dear fellow, replied his host, it's pure alcohol. Darya Petrovna makes the most excellent homemade vodka.

But surely, Philip Philipovich, everybody says that 30-degree vodka is good enough.

– Vodka should be at least 40 degrees, not 30-that's firstly, Philip Philipovich interrupted him didactically, and secondly - God knows what muck they make into vodka nowadays” [4].

Students are invited to answer the question “What kind of vodka is Novoblagoslavennaya”? As a rule, they cannot answer right away, but after conducting a more detailed analysis of the available sources, they give the correct answer. “The story “The Heart of a Dog” was written at the beginning of 1925, and it means vodka of the December 1924 sample, the so-called “rykovka,” named after the then chairman of the Council of People's Commissars A. I. Rykov. So in Bormental's question, the definition of “novoblagoslavennaya” seems dictated by the ironic attitude of the doctor (Preobrazhensky) to the new government, which «благословила» “blessed” the production of vodka. However, it has a double meaning. Anyone who has ever drunk vodka from the Moscow factory “Crystal” read on the label that the factory is located at the address: 4th Samokatnaya Street. But in the 20s the street was still called in the old way -

Novoblagoslovennaya, and was there in the house No. 4 “Wine Warehouse No. 1,” from where the production of Soviet vodka came from”[2].

Thus, it is not by chance that Bulgakov uses this word in his work. He shows the ironic attitude of Professor Preobrazhensky to the new (the Soviet regime). Schleiermacher's hermeneutic circle confirmed by this example, without understanding a part of the text (at least one word), it is impossible to correctly understand the entire text.

Schleiermacher's ideas were further developed in the writings of Wilhelm Dilthey. “Dilthey transferred the philological model of interpretation to historical science. Unlike the text, which is a complete work and objectified by us, the story is not complete, and the interpreter himself belongs to it and is defined by it. Consequently, the researcher cannot go beyond the limits of history, cannot turn it into an object. As a subject of history, the researcher is a part of his own object” [22].

Let us enclose Dilthey's idea within the hermeneutical circle. According to Dilthey, consciousness is historically conditioned. Since the text is a manifestation of the "creative spirit" of the author, its correct understanding is possible only with a correct understanding of the spirit of the era in which this author lived and created. In turn, understanding the spirit of the era in which the author lived and created is possible with a correct understanding of the text, which is a manifestation of the "creative spirit" of the author. We again see the movement of the process of understanding as if in a circle, but differing in content from the hermeneutic circle of Schleiermacher. Understanding the "creative spirit" of the author leads to the need for a thorough historical study of the era in which the author lived and created. An understanding of this historical epoch, i.e. the conditions in which the author lives, will give an understanding of the text (work) and vice versa, an understanding of the text (work) will give an understanding of the epoch. Our example of "newly blessed vodka" is also appropriate here, since it refers to the reader (interpreter) to the period when this work was written, to the era in which the author lived and created.

Philosophical hermeneutics as a special direction in the philosophy of the XX century was developed in the works of Martin Heidegger [10]. Understanding for Heidegger "Is a fundamental way of being human. Such a fundamentally ontological turn became the basis of Heidegger's concept of hermeneutical interpretation and fundamentally changed the vision of the problematic itself, presenting the interpretation of texts as a way of "questioning" being" [22]. Heidegger proceeds from the fact that human being is an "understanding being" from the beginning, i.e. a person (the subject of cognition) tries comprehending the meaning of being, the understanding of which is inherent in him initially.

Heidegger's ideas can also be considered through the interpretation of the hermeneutic circle. Understanding the text (interpretation) is an unwinding tangle of new understandings, where each turn is the receipt and comprehension of a new understanding based on the previous understanding.

H.G. Gadamer speaks about hermeneutics as a special philosophy of understanding. “The fundamental attitude of hermeneutics is the truth cannot be known and communicated by anyone alone. The soul of hermeneutics is to maintain a dialog in every possible way, give a dissenter a say, be able to assimilate, what he says” [8]. Then, the meaning of the hermeneutic circle according to Gadamer looks like “the one who wants to understand the text is constantly sketching out the meaning. As soon as some meaning begins to become clear in the text, he makes a preliminary sketch of the entire text as a whole, but this first meaning, in turn, becomes clear only because from the beginning we read the text, expecting to find one or another definite meaning in it” [8].

In other words, when starting to analyze the text, the researcher already has some “pre-understanding” of the text. It is determined by the already existing interpretations of this text (traditions of interpretations), but each subsequent act of interpretation is included in the tradition, forming its link. We can know authorial intentions only through the meaning of texts, but we can know the meaning of texts only through authorial intentions. If one holds that the meaning of a text is determined by the author's intentions, knowledge of those intentions becomes indispensable for understanding the meaning of the text [20].

Discussion

Let's give another example of Bulgakov. In the scene, we have already mentioned at the table, Professor Preobrazhensky advises Bormenthal to have a vodka snack with «этой штучкой» ("this thing"), according to the text:

« – ... доктор Борменталь умоляю вас: мгновенно эту штучку, и, если вы скажите, что это... я ваш кровный враг на всю жизнь! Сам он с этими словами подцепил на лапчатую серебряную вилку что-то похожее на маленький темный хлебик. Укушенный последовал его примеру» [5].

“Doctor Bormenthal, please drink that at once and if you ask me what it is, I am your enemy for life. From Granada to Seville... With these words he speared something like a little piece of black bread on his silver fish-fork. Bormenthal followed his example” [4]. We determine with the students what Professor Preobrazhensky and Bormenthal were eating. Further along the text there are several hints, for example, the professor says that it is «горячая закуска» (a hot snack, hors d'oeuvres): «Заметьте, Иван Арнольдович: холодными закусками и супом закусывают только недорезанные большевиками помещики. Мало-мальски уважающий себя человек оперирует с закусками горячими» [5]. “Kindly note, Ivan Arnoldovich, that the only people who eat cold hors d'oeuvres nowadays are the few remaining landlords who haven't had their throats cut. Anybody with a spark of self-respect takes his hors d'oeuvres hot” [4]. Then, the professor says «...из горячих московских закусок это первая», и наконец, что «когда-то их великолепно приготавливали в «Славянском базаре» [5].” And of the hot hors d'oeuvres in Moscow it is the best. Once they used to do them magnificently at the Slavyansky Bazaar restaurant.”

So, we know that «закуска горячая» (the snack is hot, hors d'oeuvres), «их» (they) were prepared in the “Slavyansky Bazaar” (one of the famous Moscow restaurants) [11], it can be picked up with «лапчатой вилкой» ("a fish-fork ") and it looks like a «маленький темный хлебик» (“a little piece of black bread”).

Note that this issue is of considerable interest to researchers today. There are different interpretations of the question. Some believe that the snack was a julienne. These authors refer to the film adaptation of Vladimir Bortko's “The Heart of a Dog” (1988). In the film, the characters are holding devices similar to cocottee in their hands. But Bulgakov's text clearly says «их» (“them”), which means a julienne, is not suitable. Several authors believe that the snack was bone marrow, boiled or fried, which was then served on pieces of dark bread (there are many recipes on the Internet on this topic). However, in our opinion, it does not fit because the snack was only like «маленький темный хлебик» (“a little piece of black bread”).

To answer this question, let us turn once again to the hermeneutical circle. In our opinion, the meaning of Bulgakov's work lies in the fact that the author shows, as it were, two main lines of the work – the “transforming” of the yard dog by the operation into a person and the “transforming” of society as a whole by revolution and subsequent events. Both in the first and in

the second case, we see “transformation” by changing the brains. In the case of a dog is surgical intervention; in the case of society is revolution, building a new society, a new ideology.

Bulgakov with cynical irony shows throughout the whole work that it is impossible to make a new person by “transforming” brains. Therefore, in our opinion, bone marrow is used as snacks (in this case beef or pork). Thus, he makes it clear that it is not necessary to give “magical abilities” to brains and hopes for a miraculous transformation of an individual and society as a whole, bone marrow is just a good snack to vodka.

Thus, having understood the meaning of a part of the work (a scene at a table, a snack), one can understand the meaning of the whole work and vice versa. By the way, it is not the only work of Bulgakov, where he refers the reader to the brains. The story “Brain Inflammation,” in which a hungry author is unable to write a story for a weekly magazine until, having received an advance, he goes to a restaurant. He talks to his brains now and then, which come to life for creativity only after a “big mug of beer” [2].

Results

Currently, hermeneutics is not limited to the interpretation and understanding of written texts. Today we can say “everything is a text.” Hermeneutics is understood today in at least three senses: as an art of understanding, comprehension of meanings and signs; as a theory and general rules of interpretation of texts; finally, as a philosophical doctrine on the ontology of understanding and epistemology of interpretations [22].

The objects of hermeneutical analysis in the study of the philosophy course with students of our university are, for example, the films of A.A. Tarkovsky “Stalker.” The purpose of the analysis penetrates the director's idea, his vision of the work of art (“Picnic on the Roadside” by the Strugatsky brothers), which is taken as the basis of Tarkovsky film, but differs from the filmed version. So, students' task was to watch the movie “Stalker” and answer the question – “What is the meaning of the final scene of the film?” Recall that in the final frames of the picture, the girl called Monkey - the daughter of the Stalker, moves the objects standing on the table “by the power of sight, thought.” Here are some answers of students to the question posed “I believe that Tarkovsky associated two glasses and a jar on the table with the Stalker's family. A glass of dark liquid is the Stalker, the father of the Monkey. The jar is her mother. An empty glass is the Monkey herself. The glass of “father,” she pushed to the edge of the table, indicates that her father is on the verge of his mental state. She left the jar of “mom” in the middle of the table, since mom is the most mentally healthy of them. And the glass “Monkey,” she pushed. This means, I think, that she considers herself a burden to her loved ones and wants her torment to end.”

Here we can note that students do not see objects on the table, but associate them with the characters of the film. Moreover, the author of the above quote is not alone, here is another example: “This whole scene shows that the girl is not moving glasses. If you compare them with the heroes, then the glass she broke is her father, and the passing train shows that she is angry or cursing her father.”

Several students saw anger, hatred and cruelty in the final scene – “the Monkey starts moving glasses because of anger toward the world, which made her so helpless and unable to fulfill her desires,” “She hates the gift and glasses symbolize her parents, and she is an empty glass. Because of her hatred, she broke it, leaving the other two” and “She curses her gift, and the subsequent shakeup is her anger.” Some works indicate the supernatural and even diabolical origin of the Monkey's abilities – “The abilities of the Monkey are associated with supernatural powers that she received from the zone. These are the forces of that diabolical world in which the “gloomy,

dim fire of desire” burns, “Such powers of the girl are unclean, diabolical,” “Her ability is proof of the existence of something higher than man, maybe the existence of a superman (like Nietzsche).” Some authors consider the girl's abilities to be a punishment or a curse, “I believe that Tarkovsky inserted this scene into the final part of the film because he wanted to show the curse that affected the Stalker's family. After all, the Stalker thus pays for fulfilling desires, because these desires are fulfilled only by sacrificing the Stalker's daughter.”

For some students, the scene caused conflicting feelings: “Her image evokes compassion, but I also feel fear. Fear of something unknown and incomprehensible.”

When analyzing this scene, students used techniques (described above) related to the hermeneutical circle. “It is possible that the final scene is a reference to the beginning of the film. After all, there is also a moment when the glass moves, though because of a passing train. It's something like a loop.” Some authors to make the final scene (part of the film) tried linking it with other parts of the film and with the whole film as a whole, which also indicates the use of a hermeneutic circle. Here are some examples: “A girl is a link between the Stalker and his wife, this world and the Zone.” And this finale is the connection of the two worlds; “The Stalker is focused on himself and the daughter does not feel love from the father. The power of love has turned into a miracle”; “The meaning of the last scene is that you need to be able to see a miracle in your ordinary life, in the people who surround you, and not go for a miracle far away”; “The final scene shows that unusual things, the miracle that people need, are next to them, surrounds them, you should see it, believe it.”; “I believe that the meaning of the final scene lies in the fact that you do not need to look for a miracle somewhere, go for it in the so-called room, but you need to turn around, take a closer look and understand that the miracle is already surrounding us”; “You do not need to go and look for a room, the miracle is nearby. Love, family, children – this is a miracle, it all makes you happy”; “I believe that the meaning of the final scene is that “miracles” happen in the real world”. The Stalker should look at the world and his daughter differently. It is not necessary to go to the “wish fulfillment room”, to know yourself, to become happy, you can do it here.” Note that answers of this kind are often found in students’ works.

Without claiming to be the “ultimate truth,” these answers are the closest to a correct understanding of the final scene of the film “Stalker.” The Stalker tried believing himself and helped people. With this hope, he leads the main characters of the film – the Professor and the Writer into the Zone. He believed that this time he had chosen worthy companions, and the fulfillment of their desires benefit humanity. But they refused the miracle. As a result, it turns out that people do not need the Zone. But instead of a distant miracle, there is a miracle nearby. It is the love of a wife and daughter. Moreover, love is “sacrificial” because they suffer from the Stalker's attachment to the Zone. The Stalker's daughter, reading Tyutchev's poems “I love your eyes,” moves the objects standing on the table with her gaze. The miracle was there all the time and people didn't have to follow him far to believe it.

Conclusion

Hermeneutics is the interpretation of texts and phenomena specially. We presented an interpretation of the film “Stalker” by Tarkovsky with hermeneutics. In our opinion, Andrei Tarkovsky was not only a director, but also a philosopher who had his own understanding of the world. He embodied this own understanding of the world in his films, and this is also a kind of hermeneutics. Each generation, reviewing his films repeatedly, will understand them in its own way, but the questions that he raises and the topics that he makes people think about, even if only

a few viewers, but still lead to spiritual enlightenment, to an understanding of important life truths. This means that hermeneutics, as a path to understanding, will continue to develop.

Thus, we can conclude that the use of hermeneutical techniques and methods allows us to better understand the “text,” to go deeply into its very essence. To understand the essence, the meaning of the “text” under study is the goal of any interpreter. The acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities (competencies) that help the correct understanding of the “text” will greatly contribute to the emergence of students' interest in research activities in general.

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