

# **An Exploration of Literary and Non-Literary Texts**



**ALINA BUZARNA-TIHENEA (GĂLBEAZĂ)**

**An Exploration of Literary  
and Non-Literary Texts**



**EDITURA UNIVERSITARĂ  
București**

Colecția **FILOLOGIE**

**Coordonator colecție:** Prof. univ. dr. emerit **Petre Gheorghe BĂRLEA**, Universitatea „Ovidius” din Constanța

**Referenți științifici colecție:**

**Acad. prof. univ. dr. emerit Gheorghe CHIVU**, Președinte – Secția de Filologie-Literatură a Academiei Române; Universitatea din București; Institutul de Lingvistică „Al. Rosetti-Iorgu Iordan” al Academiei Române

**Prof. univ. dr. Lucian CHIȘU**, Director – Institutul de Istorie și Teorie Literară „George Călinescu” al Academiei Române; Universitatea „Valahia” din Târgoviște

**Prof. univ. dr. Alexandru GAFTON**, Facultatea de Litere, Universitatea „Al. I. Cuza” din Iași

**Prof. univ. dr. Adrian CHIRCU**, Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca; Director – Școala Doctorală de Filologie

**Referenți științifici carte:**

**Prof. univ. dr. Lavinia NĂDRAG**, Universitatea Ovidius din Constanța

**Conf. univ. dr. Carmen Liliانا MĂRUNȚELU**, Universitatea Ovidius din Constanța

**Conf. univ. dr. Alina-Daniela POPESCU**, Universitatea Ovidius din Constanța

**Lect. univ. dr. Alexandra-Lavinia ISTRATIE-MACAROV**, Universitatea Ovidius din Constanța

**Redactor:** Laura Nicolescu

**Tehnoredactor:** Ameluța Vișan

**Coperta:** Monica Balaban

Editură recunoscută de Consiliul Național al Cercetării Științifice (C.N.C.S.) și inclusă de Consiliul Național de Atestare a Titurilor, Diplomelor și Certificatelor Universitare (C.N.A.T.D.C.U.) în categoria editurilor de prestigiu recunoscut.

Descrierea CIP a Bibliotecii Naționale a României

**BUZARNA-TIHENEA, ALINA**

**An Exploration of Literary and Non-Literary Texts / Alina Buzarna-Tihenea (Gălbează).** -

București : Editura Universitară, 2025

Conține bibliografie

ISBN 978-606-28-1947-7

82.09

DOI: (Digital Object Identifier): 10.5682/9786062819477

© Toate drepturile asupra acestei lucrări sunt rezervate, nicio parte din această lucrare nu poate fi copiată fără acordul Editurii Universitare

Copyright © 2025

Editura Universitară

Editor: Vasile Muscalu

B-dul. N. Bălcescu nr. 27-33, Sector 1, București

Tel.: 021.315.32.47

www.editurauniversitara.ro

e-mail: redactia@editurauniversitara.ro

Distribuție: 021-315.32.47/ 0745 200 718/ 0745 200 357

comenzi@editurauniversitara.ro

www.editurauniversitara.ro

## Table of contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Foreword .....   | 7   |
| Introduction .....   | 9   |
| Chapter 1. Roaming through the Fictional Shadows of<br>Literary Texts.....                     | 17  |
| 1.1. Glancing at the threads of paramount terms .....  | 17  |
| 1.2. Probing into the Obscurities of Fictional Texts .....                                     | 25  |
| 1.3. Disentangling the Classifications of Literary Texts.....                                  | 41  |
| Chapter 2. Delving Deeper into Literary Texts: Hiking<br>Through Narrative/ Prose Fiction..... | 55  |
| 2.1. Shedding Light upon the Elements of Narrative<br>Fiction/ Prose Fiction.....              | 55  |
| 2.2. A Foray into the Classification of Narrative Fiction<br>Genres and Subgenres.....         | 92  |
| Chapter 3. The Enlightening Path of Non-Literary Texts.....                                    | 193 |
| 3.1. Shedding Light upon the Main Features of Non-<br>Literary Texts.....                      | 193 |
| 3.2. Hiking into the Vertiginous Classification of Non-<br>Literary Texts.....                 | 205 |
| Chapter 4. Exploring the Knowledgeable Universe of<br>Informational/ Informative Texts.....    | 233 |
| 4.1. Tackling the key features of informational texts.....                                     | 233 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 4.2. Shedding Some Light upon the Obscurity of Informational and Informative Text Labels .....                                 | 259 |
| Chapter 5. A Comparative Analysis of Literary and Non-Literary Texts. Case Study: Delving into the Underworld of Vampires..... | 283 |
| 5.1. General data about the samples .....  | 286 |
| a. The literary text samples.....  | 288 |
| b. The encyclopaedia entry on vampires .....   | 289 |
| c. The newspaper article .....   | 289 |
| d. The blog article.....   | 290 |
| 5.2. The structures of text samples .....  | 291 |
| a. The literary text samples.....  | 291 |
| b. The encyclopaedia entry .....   | 296 |
| c. The newspaper article .....   | 298 |
| d. The blog article.....   | 299 |
| 5.3. The Purposes of Text Samples.....   | 302 |
| 5.4. Features of the language employed in the text samples   | 303 |
| 5.5. Readability indices of the text samples .....   | 337 |
| 5.6. Final remarks.....  | 340 |
| Conclusions .....  | 345 |
| References .....   | 349 |

## Foreword

Alina Buzarna-Tihenea (Gălbează) brings to the table a multifaceted approach on literary and non-literary texts, born from her experience as an associate professor teaching English for specific purposes and researching various topics from the areas of translation studies, ESP, specialized terminology, sociology, British and American literature and cultural studies, in conjunction with her experience as a translator. Her roles as educator, researcher and translator with practical outlook and outreach have helped her form a unique perspective on literary and non-literary texts, which is versatile, multidisciplinary and pragmatic.

The author experiments with text typology. The content is both technical in nature and romanticized in form. The chapters are uniquely worded to give the impression of a work of fiction, while treating the subject of literary and non-literary texts with technicality and precision. The chapters propose thorough syntheses of typologies, similarities and differences of literary and non-literary texts, which are often presented in tabular form. Nevertheless, the book flows like a story, so the reader never loses interest, while there is the possibility to skip to a section of more interest based on the well-structured and logical organization of ideas.

The first chapter focuses on the classification of literary texts, while the second chapter probes deeper into the subcategory of narrative fiction. Following the same pattern, the third chapter makes a characterization of non-literary texts, while the fourth chapter highlights informational and informative texts as types of non-literary texts. The study comes together in the fifth chapter, which is an applied analysis and comparison of several literary and non-literary text samples on the topic of vampires.

The author's endeavors culminated in showing how sometimes the boundaries between literary and non-literary texts and between the different types of such texts may become blurred. Her case study shows, for instance, that a literary text may be adapted to resemble an interview, with various adaptations in terms of lexical density, tone, and use of pronouns. At the same time, non-literary texts such as a newspaper article or a blog article may resemble literary texts in tone and focus. Therefore, the final chapter brings literary and non-literary texts together as exponents or reflections of the world.

This study may very well be the most thorough roadmap to literary and non-literary texts to date and may stir the interest of teachers, researchers, students and literature enthusiasts alike.

Lavinia Istratie-Macarov

## Introduction

The entangled network of social and cultural contexts delineated by texts often tackles exhilarating, appealing and mesmerising issues or topics, enriching social discourses, and enhancing cultural awareness development and the understanding of the relationship between fiction and the factual world. By approaching the particularities of literary and non-literary texts and studying their similarities and differences, researchers can glimpse the power and flexibility of language, investigate genre-specific conventions, and illustrate the interdependence between texts and their real-life contexts.

This study which is structured in five chapters is daringly entitled *An Exploration of Literary and Non-Literary Texts*. It emerged from the need to broaden the comprehension of literary and non-literary texts, explore their differences from multiple perspectives and scrutinize the ways in which they contribute to the development of communication, culture and knowledge, shedding some light into the intricate realms of fiction and non-fiction.

Mirroring social values, mentalities, customs and history, and furnishing insights into time frames that contributed to their design, literary texts often epitomize cultural identity fragments and provide the opportunity to explore a wide array of cultures, initiate intercultural exchanges and pave the way towards intercultural

understanding. The exploration of literary texts refines the readers' personal development and deepens their comprehension of both themselves and the surrounding world. The first chapter, "Roaming through the Fictional Shadows of Literary Texts", glances at the threads of certain paramount terms, such as "text", "discourse", "genre" and "type", as dealt with by several scholars, to delineate some general ideas and guidelines regarding their intricate usage and even shadowy meanings. Moreover, this chapter also scrutinizes several definitions of, and perspectives on literary texts, endeavouring to shed some light on the obscurities shrouding the realm of fiction, in general. The journey into this labyrinthic realm is scattered with a wide array of approaches, some of them even positioned at the blurred frontiers of disciplines. Features typically associated with literary texts, such as the intention to convey aesthetic communication, literary language, and the delineation of an original fictional world – among many others – will also be tackled. In addition, this chapter will also deal with several classifications of literary texts, in an attempt to highlight those features that play a key role in the differentiation of literary texts, and that contribute to the particularization of some taxonomies.

The ardent human curiosity and yearning for thrills and wonder interweave into mesmerizing fictional universes, where the power of narrative fiction makes human minds and imagination thrive. The attempts to grasp the meaning of various events and feelings permeating the surrounding world are also reflected by narrative fiction. The second chapter, "Delving Deeper into Literary Texts: Hiking Through Narrative/ Prose Fiction", starts by tackling the difference between "narrative" and "narrative fiction"/

“prose fiction”, focusing on the scope and applications of these terms. Furthermore, the attempt to shed some light upon the shadowy nature of narrative theory will materialize in the brief presentation and clarification of the main elements that characterize narrative fiction, such as story, plot and narration; other elements inhabiting the fictional realm of narratives, such as character, conflict, narrator, point of view, setting, subject, theme and tone will not be left aside.

Perhaps one of the greatest endeavours carried out in this chapter is represented by the foray into the classification of the genres and subgenres of narrative fiction. The attempts to shed some light on the overwhelming chaos and obscurity enveloping the endless flow of narrative fiction will materialize in the review of several classifications and the fusion of some categorization perspectives. Thus, comprehensive categorizations of fantasy, historical fiction, horror, thriller and romance genres will be delineated in the last section of this chapter. Nevertheless, attention will be drawn to the fact that these genres are continuously evolving and expanding and that this baffling diversity entails many overlaps between both genres and their subgenres and sometimes it even spawns defiance in terms of strict classification (as there are pieces of narrative fiction that intermingle elements typical of multiple sub-genres).

The intricate web of non-literary texts overwhelms the contemporary world with information, and an adequate understanding of their nature and main features is felt to be necessary. These texts illustrate – among many others – various language functions and their analysis provides data on the linguistic means employed in communication,

persuasiveness, and knowledge dissemination. The third chapter, “The Enlightening Path of Non-Literary Texts”, delves into the murky non-literary textual universe, to shed some light on its quite complex nature, with a special focus on the definitions, purpose, structure, tone and language particularities characterizing non-literary texts. Moreover, this chapter will also tackle and compare several classifications of non-literary texts, based on various criteria such as form, content, function and communication situation, objectives, structure, and morpho-syntactic features. Non-literary texts are deeply entrenched in everyday personal and professional contexts, bearing the burden of multiple functions, influencing behaviour patterns, attitudes and decisions, and boosting knowledge in various fields.

Since information permeates all types of contexts and is often associated with power, the ability to grasp it and adequately employ it is paramount. In this regard, informational and informative texts play a vital part in the dissemination of knowledge, lifelong learning, world comprehension and adaptability to constantly evolving environments. By approaching a wide array of (often challenging) topics and providing comprehensive content with practical applications in the real world, these texts contribute to the foundation and development of knowledge, encourage readers to implement it in real-world contexts and look for solutions to the challenges they encounter. The fourth chapter, “Exploring the Knowledgeable Universe of Informational/ Informative Texts”, scrutinizes the key features of such texts and tackles their subtle differences in terms of purposes, structure, tone, style, and targeted readership. In addition, the second

section of this chapter roams into the obscurity of informational and informative texts and attempts to shed some light upon their classifications. Thus, a comprehensive list of examples of informational and informative texts extracted from the specialized literature will be scrutinized and improved in order to contribute to the development of the research in this area.

The last chapter, “A Comparative Analysis of Literary and Non-Literary Texts. Case Study: Delving into the Underworld of Vampires”, will be centred on the comparison of literary and non-literary texts. More specifically, the scrutinized corpus consists of several samples of narrative fiction and informational/ informative texts, focused on the same topic, i.e. the underworld of vampires. This theme represents one of the most enduring myths haunting human imagination, being reshaped and enriched across millennia, engendering a wide array of sources that flood both the fictional and factual works of literature, and permitting the investigation of text-type elements and conventions. The corpus selected for this analysis consists of an excerpt from the first part of Anne Rice’s novel *Interview with the Vampire* (1976), the Prologue of the novel *The Vampire Lestat* by the same author (1985), the entry about vampires in *Encyclopaedia Britannica online* (Elridge, n.d.), the newspaper article “Does a wampyr walk in Highgate?”, published in *Hampstead & Highgate Express* on 27 February 1970, and a blog article, “The Highgate Vampire – Did a 1970s Nosferatu Stalk a London Cemetery?”, published by David Castleton on 9 December 2018.

This contrastive analysis will deal – among many others – with the influence of text purposes upon text organization,

content and language, and will place into the limelight the entangled interconnections between text types, tone, style, language, objectives, audience and various communicative functions. The exploration of how the same theme is mirrored in different types of texts could enhance the comprehension of both their mechanisms and their common topic.

The selected text samples will also be analysed in terms of structure, purposes, and language features. They will be processed by a specialized software, *Analyze My Writing* (n.d.), to allow the exploration of the linguistic devices typically employed by literary and non-literary texts, and tackle their connection to readability indices. Furthermore, this software will provide general statistical data about the text samples (such as total number of words, sentences and syllables, average word length, median word length, standard deviation of word length, average sentence length, median sentence length, standard deviation of sentence length), will analyze text content and provide readability measurements. The specialized software will also extract data about the lexical density of text samples, illustrating the degree of their informative nature. Information about the 20 most common words, 20 most frequent word pairs and 20 most common word triples in each text sample will also be provided and scrutinized.

By corroborating the findings subsequent to the analysis of the above data, the different ways in which information is contextualized, tackled and delivered to various types of readers will be illustrated. Thus, this exploration will reveal the striking ways in which the same topic can be tackled and moulded, depending on targeted readership and contexts, revealing the different parts played by literary and

non-literary texts in cultural development, information dissemination and communication.

When skilfully employed, the power held by words is infinite, as they can shape meanings, convey various perceptions or emotions, spawn thoughts, shape perspectives and engender expectations. Despite their considerable differences as regards their objectives, language, structure and other characteristic elements, both literary and non-literary texts illustrate the world in unique ways. Thus, a better understanding of their striking features could contribute to the awareness and mastery of this ingrained power of lexical items.



# **Chapter 1**

## **Roaming through the Fictional Shadows of Literary Texts**

### **1.1. Glancing at the threads of paramount terms**

Before discussing the entangled shadows of literary texts, it was necessary to glance at some terms relevant to this study. Thus, this section focuses on the intricate notions of “text”, “discourse”, “genre” and “type”, as tackled by several scholars. The purpose is not to immerse into the heated debates stirred by these terms across time, but to provide some general ideas and guidelines regarding their usage and even shadowy meanings.

In a very simplistic way, from a linguistic perspective, the text is defined as “an organized unit larger than a sentence which consists of a sequence of formally (i.e. morpho-syntactically) and semantically linked utterances unified thematically as well” (Gibová, 2012, p. 17). This definition spawns the comparison of the text with a labyrinth of intertwined sentences and paragraphs. Nordquist (2019) adds that, in linguistics, texts are seen as “any example of written or spoken language, from something as complex as a book or legal document to something as simple as the body of an email or the words on the back of a cereal box”.

In line with the communicative pragmatic perspective, De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) tackle the notion of text as a “communicative occurrence”, mandatorily meeting several textuality criteria, such as acceptability, coherence, cohesion, informativity, intentionality, intertextuality, and situationality in order to be labelled as text. However, Nordquist (2019) notices that, across time, the scholars’ perspectives on this notion have changed, the straightforward traditional understanding of texts as “any stretch of language that can be understood in context” has morphed to such extent that it also includes nowadays pictures, emoticons and emojis (Nordquist, 2019). For instance, multimodal texts (such as graphic novels and comics) intertwine written messages and pictures in order to convey messages and require different reading approaches that combine the messages transmitted by pictures with those conveyed by written words.

Barton and Lee (2013) approach the notion of text against the ever-evolving and challenging background of new technologies and pinpoint its fluid nature: “They are more fluid with the changing affordances of new media. In addition, they are becoming increasingly multimodal and interactive. Links between texts are complex online, and *intertextuality* is common in online texts as people draw upon and play with other texts available on the web”. Therefore, not only are texts labyrinths of entangled syntactic whole items, but they can also make up a macro-labyrinth coalesced by intertextuality in the restlessly shifting online environment.

As far as the distinction between text and discourse is concerned, Trosbor (1997) notices that some scholars perceive texts as written language, and discourses - as spoken language, while in others’ perspective, texts may

take both spoken or written forms. In his turn, Virtanen (1990, p. 453) explains that these two words are interconnected, i.e., texts can be perceived as endowed with a static nature (as structures and/or results of a process). At the same time, discourses have a dynamic character (referring to processes whereby texts are produced and understood).

Trosbor (1997) concludes that nowadays, the borders between text and discourse are becoming increasingly blurred, since the former has also encompassed situational factors, which entails a processual nature as well. Thus, in the scholar's perspective, text and discourse can be seen as interchangeable terms, dealing with any language purpose and with any reality type.

The term "genre" originates from the Latin word "genus" and refers to "category" or "class". The *Cambridge Dictionary online* defines it as "a style, especially in the arts, that involves a particular set of characteristics", and as "a particular subject or style of literature, art, or music (Genre, n.d.). Many scholars have also tackled the distinctions between the terms "genre" and "type", in connection with the notion of "text". For instance, in her research, Trosbor (1997) presents various viewpoints of the term "genre" across time, such as Aristotle's understanding of genres as text classes, Swales's (1990) exploration of genres in various areas, *Merriam-Webster Dictionary's* (Genre, n.d.) definition of genres as different types/categories of literary compositions, and the contemporary perspective upon genres as different discourse categories of any type (either spoken or written), of literary or non-literary nature.

In rhetoric, the research focused on genres revolves around the social delineation of non-literary forms, on the

action employed in order to engender a discourse (Miller C., 1984, p. 151). In their turn, ethnographic scholars deal with communication labels implemented to pinpoint sociolinguistically pertinent items of verbal communication (Saville-Troike, 1982), while LSP researchers tackle the sociocultural functions usually associated with disciplinary genres, such as legal and scientific communication (Martin J., 1985).

The research conducted by Swales (1990, p. 10) reveals that genre identity is engendered by the communicative purpose. In line with this statement, Bhatia (1983) also acknowledges the important role played by the communicative goal in the characterization, shape and internal structure of genres, slight modifications thereof engendering distinctions among various sub-genres. However, there are situations when clear differentiations between genres and sub-genres are not feasible.

As far as the distinction between genre and text type is concerned, Biber (1989, p. 6) explains that a genre may include linguistically distinct texts that belong to different text types; at the same time, linguistically similar texts may mirror the same text type but belong to distinct genres. For instance, a descriptive text type may belong to the genre of narrative fiction or poetry, while the narrative fiction genre may include narrative texts as well as descriptive or epistolary ones.

In his turn, Aumüller (2014) differentiates between the notions of genre, which includes entire texts (classified as such based on heterogeneous characteristics), and text type, which refers to “a limited number of different items and aim at a complete set of all possible types that can make up