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Synopses

著者 (英)	The Literary Association Doshisha University
journal or publication title	Doshisha University Jinbungaku (Studies in Humanities)
number	85
page range	110-118
year	1966-02-15
URL	http://doi.org/10.14988/pa.2017.0000002623

SYNOPSIS

STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF D. G. ROSSETTI'S POETRY

Sanechika Kodama

Most of the studies of D. G. Rossetti have been done either on his life which may probably be called a romantic tragedy and so has attracted a number of readers for more than three quarters of a century, or on the many-sided characteristics of his works mostly discussed horizontally, so to speak, regardless of the sequence of their composition. The purpose of this essay is to pursue vertically, so to speak, the stylistic development of his works and discuss it parallel with his mental development.

It is very interesting to note that the original version of "The Blessed Damozel," one of his most important works, is quite largely improved twice (though he improved it several times through his life) after its publication: in 1856 and in 1870. For, if his whole works can be divided into three periods (1844-1852, 1853-1867, 1868-1881) from the point of view of the author's productive energy, each exhibiting its own stylistic features (such as in stanza, diction, syntax, figures of speech, imagery, rapidity, sound pattern and so forth), those features nearly correspond to what we find in three different versions of "The Blessed Damozel." In the first stage, we can clearly see some directness, hardness, simplicity and immaturity in his style. The second stage of his development is marked by his efforts and contrivances toward technical mastery. And the third stage characteristically impresses us with its maturity, ambiguity, thought-laden symbolism and increasingly darker atmosphere. A similar pattern of development is also found in his paintings.

The interrelation between his stylistic development and his mental experiences and growth is obvious. The first stage in the development of his styles reflects his adolescent pure idealism; the second, agony from various experiences both as a man and as an artist; and the third, his mental and creative regeneration, which ends in his last psychophysical decline.

This essay will, I hope, suggest the importance of the double-sided approach toward the works, particularly of Rossetti, since hidden meanings in his works are, and can be, brought into light by its application.

THOUGHTS AND HUMOR OF O. HENRY

Yutaka Shimizu

O. Henry loved New York and led his latter life there. He was much interested in the poor common citizens in the flats and had deep sympathy towards their bitter lives. However, we must pay attention to the fact that his interest and sympathy were mainly directed to the private lives of the citizens and not to the social or political cause in general.

He described the poor dwellers in furnished rooms as follows; "it was like a monstrous quicksand, shifting its particles constantly, with no foundation, its upper granules of to-day buried to-morrow in ooze and slime." ("The Furnished Room") Poor people, to O. Henry, were only an aimless crowd "shifting" and changing all the time. He tried neither resistance nor protest against the injustice to society, but gave a tender smile to console the miserable.

Therefore, we can derive the following characteristics of O. Henry's humor from this standpoint of life.

1. One speciality in his humor is that of mutual consolation mingled with tears, pathos and a smile in domestic life: friendly sympathy or love among individual daily life, as in "A Service of Love", "The Gift of the Magi" and "The Pendulum".

2. O. Henry often described persons who wished to enjoy a happy separate life by escaping from this uneasy bitter world, and his humor arose from the unbalance between the world of reality and his dream-land far away, as in "Transient in Arcadia" and "A Ramble in Aphasia".

3. The writer also found humor among the people who lived in this vulgar and distorted world. They did not try to escape, but lived

on shamelessly and impudently, and sometimes they were even as foolish as their society appeared to be. In this case, O. Henry humorously—somewhat satirically—laughed at the foolish and nonsensical individuals, neither criticizing nor blaming society which made them so. Examples: “A Comedy in Rubber”, “Jeff Peters as a Personal Magnet” and “Shoes”.

4. The writer often employed unexpected conclusions in his plots, which are now popularly known as “surprise ending”. Readers burst into laughter at the ending, while they are apt to feel a mannerism in his way of making plots after reading some of his stories, and often forget what he really meant to appeal to. Examples: “The Lost Blend”, “The Love-Philister of Ikey Schoenstein” and “Mammon and the Archer.”

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

An interpretation of Flannery O'Connor's
 "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"

Muneharu Kitagaki

Four questions may be raised when we try to approach the total meaning of "A Good Man Is Hard to Find." 1) Why does The Misfit kill Bailey and his family who are completely innocent? 2) What does the discussion between Grandmother and The Misfit mean? To what extent does it suggest a "view of man" along the lines of orthodox Christian tradition? 3) To what extent does the title "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" define the total meaning of the story? 4) How should we evaluate Grandmother, the heroine of this story?

Through the process of answering these questions a key to a proper interpretation of the story is revealed. The circumstances in which this tragic incident takes place are symbolic, and even abstract: the blue sky with no sun and no clouds (by repetition the abstractness of the scene is emphasized) suggests that the hollow place into which the automobile fell is a valley of the shadow of death, where a new standard of value is established both for the family and for The Misfit.

The only "good man" in this story is the Grandmother. She is a lady of the South, and she is proud of it. She is a good-natured woman, because she tries to believe in the innate goodness of man. This philosophy, however, does not work effectively. The Misfit's view of man is perhaps more realistic, and is almost the same as the Christian view of man, i. e. a sinner. He has two "existential" problems: why was his punishment not corresponding to his crimes? and why did Christ resurrect Himself, and why does He resurrect others? The

Misfit and Grandmother have a unique communication of their own, perhaps the only visible and significant communication in the whole story. Apart from the tragic death of Grandmother, the serious conclusion this story presents is that The Misfit chooses to reject Christ and to remain in *his* "valley of the shadow of death."

THE USE OF THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY IN THE UNIVERSITY

— Especially for the First and Second Year
Required English Course —

Shohei Atsumi

The language laboratory is now recognized by language teachers as an effective tool for providing increased experience in hearing and speaking a foreign language. In fact a large number of language laboratories have already been established in Japanese schools and universities. Despite its many advantages, the laboratory does not settle all the questions in the teaching of English confronted by some Japanese universities under unfavorable conditions.

This article tries to solve some of those questions regarding the use of the language laboratory as an integral part of the required university English course :

1. Which type of laboratory will best meet the requirements?
2. What should be the major objective for teaching English in the lab?
3. What teaching technique is best adapted to the language laboratory?

The audio-active type of laboratory is here recommended.

The aim of English teaching with the use of the language laboratory should be to attain "passive proficiency" in Morris' terminology.

To achieve the above-mentioned objective we have to devise a teaching technique best suited to the language laboratory. The so-called audio-lingual method is considered to be the most effective way of learning foreign languages. But some of its features are psychologically incompatible with effective learning processes for university students. The audio-lingual method leaves room for modification when

applied to the language laboratory at the university.

When it comes to teaching English in the laboratory, it will be a great help to the students to teach them to use the written symbols as an aid to their memory, *e. g.* international phonetic alphabet, intonation marks, *etc.*

The careful programming and preparation of material, both aural and visual, are important because without them all the language laboratory facilities are of no use. There are commercially available teaching materials for language laboratory use, but some teachers are faced with the necessity of making their own to meet their own requirements though it is very time-consuming for them.

Now that university education in the language laboratory still remains in the remedial stage of elementary language training, we must make every possible effort to raise the academic level by improving the existing unfavorable conditions.

ON SOME POINTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

Hajime Fukumoto

In the task of teaching and correcting the pronunciation of English, care has to be taken of the difference of phoemic structure between English and the native language—Japanese. Especially in sound segments, as separated from rhythm and intonation, some allophonic differences are so important in distinction of English from the Japanese language that they should be taught in the classroom, in a later stage, as the target of the speech clinic which should be held with careful planning so as to be effective and limited to a determined period of time.

Thus, some allophones of

- (1) /p t k/ are presented with regard to their aspiration;
- (2) /l/ are to be taught with regard to their voice quality;
- (3) /t/ are to be explained because of their varieties in the same phoneme; and
- (4) /æ/ are to be shown in relation to the duration of time and inflection of intonation, which many Japanese students find difficult to put into practice. Fairly many English words containing this vowel sound are commonly used in Japanese as [a] sound, in which of course the original value is lost.

Another problem in the pronunciation of English is particularly concerned with the movements of the lower jaw. It is considerably difficult for the Japanese students to pronounce diphthongs such as [au] [ai]. Instead of the glide of the jaw, they are apt to utter them with the jaw movements going up stepwise. To prove this, the difference of the movements between a native speaker and a Japanese senior high school boy is shown graphically. The data are taken by means of a movie film.