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# TIME PERSPECTIVE AND PERSONALITY IN ANSHLAV EGLITIS NOVEL THE SHAMELESS OLD MEN

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## ABSTRACT

Literacy and understanding of time perspective are essential prerequisites for high-quality education, as they enhance students' ability to critically analyse texts, perceive historical and cultural context, as well as reflect on personality development and future opportunities. In contemporary education, literacy involves not only text comprehension, but also the ability to interpret value conflicts, intergenerational relationships, and existential issues embedded within it. In this context, the paper "Time Perspective and Personality in Anshlav Eglitis Novel *The Shameless Old Men*" reveals how literacy can be strengthened in upper-secondary education by implementing an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the novel *The Shameless Old Men* by Anshlav Eglitis. The aim of the paper is to present theoretical insights and research results obtained by integrating the theory of time perspective, existentialist philosophy and aspects of personality development into the analysis of Latvian exile literature. The study was conducted in Grade 12 through the analysis of theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical-psychological literature, as well as by evaluating the results of teacher-student collaboration, students' immersion in the novel's content, and their interpretations.

The results indicate that focusing on the gradual progression of task complexity, age-appropriate text selection, meaningful reading purpose, and approaches are essential for fostering reading skills. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary approach contributed to a deeper development of literacy competence, awareness of cultural identity, and argumentative skills, by grounding judgements in the content and historical context.

At the same time, the study revealed challenges related to students' competence to conduct an in-depth analysis of the literary characters' future time perspective, and to identify factors that could significantly influence it, leading to the conclusion that more purposeful methodological support is needed in this aspect. Overall, the study confirms that methodologically, psychologically and historically grounded literature teaching significantly contributes the development of deeper literacy competence in secondary education.

***Keywords:*** *Anshlav Eglitis, novel The Shameless Old Men, literacy, time perspective, personality, exile literature, literary pedagogy*

## Introduction

Literature plays a significant role in the development of students' personalities, emotional intelligence, and value systems. (Stikute, 2011) However, contemporary pedagogy and literacy studies face considerable challenges due to changes in 21st-century information consumption habits. The dynamic modern environment and the rapid development of digital technologies have fostered a preference for immediate results and fast-paced visual information, making it increasingly difficult for young people to patiently read extensive literary texts in their entirety. Therefore, to make the analysis of classic literary narratives more engaging and to strengthen text literacy, it is essential to implement an interdisciplinary approach.

This study integrates literary analysis with psychological and philosophical frameworks, focusing specifically on Latvian exile literature. Following World War II, a significant part of the Latvian population sought refuge abroad for ideological and political reasons, leading to the emergence of exile literature. (Daukste-Silasproģe, 2024; Rozītis, 2005; Wyman, 1998)

Anshlav Eglitis's (2000) novel *The Shameless Old Men* (*Bezkaunīgie veči*) provides rich material for exploring the reality of exile, existential questions, intergenerational differences, and the preservation of Latvian cultural identity. (Hausmanis, 2005; Struka, 2022) To analyse the characters' behavioural motivations and interpersonal conflicts, the study employs the Time Perspective Theory, originally developed by K. Lewin (1951) and further expanded by P. Zimbardo and J. Boyd (2008), as well as principles of existentialist philosophy that examine concepts of freedom, responsibility, and the search for meaning in an absurd world. (Kūle & Kūlis, 2020)

The research problem addresses how to organise Grade 12 literature lessons in a way that promotes students' in-depth understanding of A. Eglitis's personality and literary work within its historical context, while also identifying the subjective factors that influence human existence, intergenerational relationships, historical events, and future time perspectives. Consequently, the aim of this study is to develop and implement a literature sequence based on an interdisciplinary approach for the topic "Time Perspective and Personality in Anshlav Eglitis's novel *The Shameless Old Men*".

### Text Literacy and the Competency-Based Approach

Literacy is one of the most essential 21st-century skills necessary for students to successfully achieve personal and social goals, ensuring successful lifelong learning and fulfilling self-realization in society. In Literature lessons, text literacy is particularly significant, as it enables students not only to understand the plot of a literary work but also to interpret deeper layers of meaning, including character motivation, symbolism, authorial intention, and cultural context. (Ausekle, 2003; Rudzītis, 2000; Zimule, 1991) Well-developed text literacy skills allow students to establish connections between literary texts, personal experience, and contemporary social issues. (Lāčauniece, Silova, Bušmanis, & Burima, 2020) Importantly, text literacy encompasses several

interconnected levels, including information retrieval and comprehension, interpretation, critical evaluation, and creative application. (Geske, Kampmane, & Ozola, 2025) Consequently, the development of text literacy should be regarded not merely as a linguistic competence, but also as a foundation for students' intellectual, emotional, and personal development. (Stikute, 2011)

However, recent data, such as the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), indicates a significant decrease in the reading literacy level of Latvian students since 2016, which directly impacts overall academic performance. (Geske et al., 2025) To address these challenges, the Latvian education system has implemented a competency-based curriculum framework (Skola2030), which shifts the focus from rote learning to deep learning and problem-solving. In Literature lessons, this approach requires engaging students in complex learning tasks where they learn to analyse, synthesize, interpret, evaluate, and conclude. (Ausekle 2003)

Within his framework, pedagogical approaches that support deeper literary understanding become particularly important. The integration of the Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome (SOLO) taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982) provides a framework for moving from simple identification of facts to deep interpretation and argumentation. By analysing the choices, behavioural motivations, and time perspectives of literary characters, students develop a deeper understanding not only of literary texts but also of human behaviour, personal identity, and their own attitudes towards time, decision-making, and relationships. (Rudzītis, 2000) In this way, literature acquisition becomes a meaningful process of self-discovery that develops empathy, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking. (Eriksons, 1998; Svence, 1999; Špona, 2006)

## Latvian Exile Literature and Existentialism

The study specifically focuses on Latvian exile literature, which emerged following the dramatic events of World War II. Fleeing the atrocities of the war and the fear of Soviet and Nazi totalitarian regimes, approximately 180,000 Latvian citizens became refugees between 1944 and 1945. (Daukste-Silasproģe, 2024; Plakans, 1995) After spending years in Displaced Persons (DP) camps in Germany, where they endured challenging daily living conditions and administrative uncertainties while actively striving to preserve their cultural identity, many sought asylum in Western countries, including the United States, rather than returning to the occupied homeland. (Wyman, 1998) Anshlav Eglitis's novel *The Shameless Old Men* serves as profound material that reflects this exile reality in California, depicting the struggle to preserve Latvian cultural heritage, the heavy burden of survival in a foreign land, and the intergenerational misunderstandings with the younger generation born outside Latvia.

The literature of the exile period often incorporates features of existentialist philosophy, exploring questions of human existence in an absurd and threatening world. (Kūle & Kūlis, 2020) Echoing the ideas of J. P. Sartre and S. Kierkegaard, exile literature highlights themes of loneliness, alienation, freedom of choice, and the heavy responsibility of determining one's fate. (Aho, 2025; Tabūns, 2008) Eglitis's novel reveals these

existential struggles through characters who must redefine their purpose in a foreign society while facing the inevitability of aging and death.

## Time Perspective Theory

To deeply analyse the characters' behavioural motives and inner conflicts, this study employs Time Perspective Theory. The concept was originally introduced by Kurt Lewin (1951), who defined it as the totality of the individual's views of their psychological future and past at a given time. (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008) The theory posits that an individual's behaviour in the present is significantly influenced by their psychological connection to past experiences and future goals. (Eriksons, 1998; Svence, 1999; Špona, 2006) Philip Zimbardo and John Boyd (2008) expanded the concept into a dynamic process that includes the present and actively shapes human behaviour. (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008) The fundamental differences between both approaches are summarized below (see Table 1).

According to Zimbardo and Boyd (2008), there are five fundamental time perspective dimensions, as well as the ideal psychological state known as Balanced Time Perspective. These dimensions and their behavioural manifestations are summarized below (see Table 2).

In the context of exile literature, understanding time perspective is crucial, as refugees physically exist in a new spatial and temporal reality (present), long for their lost homeland (past), and struggle to build a secure life in the unknown (future). Analysing the characters of Anshlav Eglitis's novel *The Shameless Old Men* through this psychological lens allows students to recognize how fixation on a single time zone leads to family conflicts and psychological discomfort, while a Balanced Time Perspective promotes well-being.

***Table 1.*** Comparison of Time Perspective Concepts: Kurt Lewin vs. Philip Zimbardo and John Boyd

| Aspect | Lewin (1951) | Zimbardo & Boyd (2008) |
|---|---|---|
| Definition | The totality of the individual's views of their psychological past and future at a given time. | An often nonconscious personal attitude toward time and the process that structures experience into categories. |
| Focus | Past and future. | Past, present and future. |
| Nature | More static (emphasis on perception). | Dynamic (emphasis on process and influence). |
| Consciousness | Not specifically emphasized. | Often nonconscious. |
| Function | Describes how a person perceives time. | Explains how time organizes life and gives it order, coherence, and meaning. |
| Practical Applicability | Theoretical. | Practical (personality analysis, behaviour, and decision-making). |

*(Note. Adapted from Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008.)*

***Table 2.*** Zimbardo and Boyd's Fundamental Time Perspective Dimensions.

| Time Perspective | Brief Description |
|---|---|
| Past-Negative | Focus on negative past experiences, trauma, and regret. |
| Past-Positive | Focus on nostalgia, preservation of traditions, and warm memories. It represents a deep attachment to one's roots, cultural heritage, and positive life experiences. |
| Present-Fatalistic | A sense of helplessness, hopelessness, and the belief that the future cannot be influenced. It reflects an attitude that external circumstances control one's destiny, leading to passive acceptance of the present. |
| Present-Hedonistic | Enjoying life in the moment, impulsivity, and seeking immediate pleasure. It involves valuing aesthetics and joys "here and now" while rejecting long-term planning. |
| Future-Oriented | Focus on pragmatic planning, organization, education, career, and achieving long-term goals. Individuals are highly purposeful, conscientious, and often sacrifice present joys for future stability. |
| Balanced Time Perspective | The ideal psychological state, allowing individuals to flexibly switch between time zones depending on situational demands. It represents the ability to naturally integrate past experiences, secure the future, and actively enjoy the present. |

*(Note. Adapted from Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008 and research findings.)*

## Pedagogical Rationale for the Approach

The application of the Time Perspective Theory to literary character analysis provides a pedagogically grounded extension of traditional literature interpretation by enabling students to perceive literary characters as psychologically complex individuals rather than merely as participants in a narrative. (Ausekle, 2003) Within this framework, literary analysis moves beyond the identification of plot events toward the exploration of characters' motivation, decision-making processes, and behavioural patterns in relation to their orientation toward the past, present, or future. Consequently, students develop a deeper and more multi-layered understanding of literary texts. (Zimule, 1991)

This approach also promotes higher-order thinking by encouraging students to evaluate how different time perspectives influence characters' choices, relationships, and quality of life. Such analysis requires learners to formulate interpretations, justify their arguments with textual evidence, and critically evaluate alternative viewpoints. (Lāčauniece et al., 2020) The integration of P. Zimbardo's Time Perspective Theory (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008) further strengthens the interdisciplinary character of the approach by connecting literary studies with psychological concepts and providing students with a systemic analytical framework.

At the same time, analysing literary characters through the lens of time perspective fosters meaningful personal engagement. Students are encouraged to compare fictional characters with contemporary social realities, people they know, and their own experiences, thereby strengthening both reflective thinking and personal interpretation. This connection between literature and lived experience makes literary education more

relevant while simultaneously supporting the development of empathy and cultural awareness. (Rudzītis, 2000; Stikute, 2011)

The approach is particularly valuable when teaching conceptually complex literary narratives such as Anshlav Eglitis's novel *The Shameless Old Men*, where the characters' lives are shaped by the continuous interaction between past experiences, present circumstances, and future expectations. Examining these temporal dimensions enables students to explore broader existential questions concerning identity, freedom, responsibility, and human choice, thereby enriching both literary interpretation and interdisciplinary understanding. (Aho, 2025; Gosetti-Ferencei, 2021)

## Methodology

To achieve the aim of the study, a mixed-methods approach was applied, incorporating the analysis of theoretical literature, pedagogical observation, the implementation of a lesson sequence based on an interdisciplinary approach, and the qualitative evaluation of teacher-student collaboration outcomes. The study was conducted as a pedagogical approbation from 24th February, 2025, to 17th April, 2025.

The research methodology consisted of the following stages.

1. Analysis of theoretical, pedagogical, methodological, and psychological literature.
2. Pedagogical observation during literature lessons.
3. Development and implementation of a lesson sequence based on an interdisciplinary approach.
4. Analysis and evaluation of teacher-student collaboration outcomes.

### Research Sample and Context

The research sample comprised 32 Grade 12 students (18 boys and 14 girls) at Riga X Secondary School. The students were enrolled in an engineering-oriented educational programme with in-depth studies in mathematics, programming, and English, and they studied Latvian language and literature at the optimal level. Notably, the students' native language is not Latvian, their primary daily and family communication language is Russian, and they transitioned to studying all subjects in Latvian during their secondary education. Consequently, many students possess a medium (B1/B2) level of Latvian language proficiency, which occasionally creates barriers in expressing nuanced opinions, understanding abstract philosophical concepts, or interpreting symbolic and metaphorical meanings in literary texts.

Furthermore, pedagogical observation and interviews revealed that 28 out of the 32 students work full-time jobs alongside their studies. This dual burden significantly impacts their learning process, frequently resulting in fatigue, absenteeism, and limited time for extensive reading at home.

According to the learning style models based on I. Briggs, Myers and D. Kolb's theories (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2013; Myers & Myers, 1980), the majority of the class consists of extroverted and sensing individuals who prefer practical, real-world tasks

over monotonous text analysis and require explicit scaffolding from the teacher to comprehend abstract concepts.

## Pedagogical Intervention and Thematic Unit Design

To address these contextual challenges identified in this study and strengthen students' text literacy, an interdisciplinary eight-lesson thematic unit based on A. Eglitis's novel *The Shameless Old Men* was designed and implemented. The instructional design integrated literary analysis with psychological and philosophical perspectives while using the Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome (SOLO) taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982) as the principal pedagogical framework. The taxonomy informed not only the sequence of learning activities but also the formulation of task prompts, guiding questions, and assessment criteria, thereby ensuring constructive alignment between the learning objectives, classroom activities, and student assessment.

The intervention began with lower-level cognitive tasks (SOLO levels 1 and 2 – uni-structural and multi-structural), focusing on the identification of textual information, historical context, and authorial background through activities such as creating the author's visual profile and maintaining a reflective reading journals. As the thematic unit progressed, students gradually engaged in increasingly complex cognitive tasks corresponding to SOLO taxonomy's levels 3 and 4 – relational and extended abstract. These activities required learners to analyse relationships between literary events and psychological concepts, synthesise historical and cultural contexts, evaluate alternative interpretations, and construct evidence-based arguments.

The learning activities were deliberately designed to integrate literary interpretation with historical, psychological, and philosophical perspectives, thereby supporting the interdisciplinary objectives of the study. The principal creative and analytical activities implemented during the thematic unit are summarised below (see Table 3).

***Table 3.*** Key creative and Analytical Activities Implemented in the Thematic Unit

| Activity | Task Description and Pedagogical Objective |
|---|---|
| The Exile's Chest Portrait | Students visualized and justified the symbolic meaning of the chest as a representation of cultural heritage and the burden of the past. |
| The Exile's Letter | Students adopted the perspective of a chosen literary character to write a letter to their homeland, integrating historical facts with the character's psycho-emotional state to develop empathy. |
| Time Perspective Analysis | Students evaluate integrational conflicts by applying Zimbardo's time perspective dimensions to the characters' behaviour. |
| Reflective Reading Journal | Students documented their evolving interpretations of the novel, reflected on characters' motivations, and established connections between literary events and psychological concepts. |
| Argumentative Essay | Students produced an evidence-based literary interpretation synthesising historical, psychological, and philosophical perspectives while constructing independent arguments supported by textual evidence. |

Throughout the intervention, diverse forms of work organisation were utilized, including teacher-guided instructions, individual reflection, pair work, and collaborative small-group tasks. These learning experiences were designed to promote deep learning by combining analytical and creative tasks that fostered literary interpretation, critical thinking, empathy, reflective thinking, and argumentative writing. (Ausekle, 2003)

To operationalize the SOLO taxonomy explicitly, it served as the central methodological framework for task design, formative and summative assessment. Learning tasks and guiding questions were systematically constructed to require progressively more complex cognitive operations, moving from identifying and describing textual information (characters, place, time) towards analysing relationships, synthesising multiple perspectives, evaluating interpretations, and constructing evidence-based arguments. Formative assessments were systematically applied to monitor students' progress across the SOLO levels, providing meaningful feedback and supporting further cognitive development.

The thematic unit culminated in a summative argumentative essay, where the assessment criteria were aligned with the relational and extended abstract levels of the SOLO taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982), evaluating students' ability to synthesize information, integrate historical, psychological and existential perspectives, and construct coherent, evidence-based literary interpretations rather than merely reproduce factual knowledge about the novel.

## Results

The implementation of the interdisciplinary lesson sequence contributed significant improvements in students' text literacy, analytical thinking, interpretive skills, and emotional awareness. The results are based on both quantitative data regarding academic performance and the qualitative evaluation of students' creative and analytical tasks.

### Quantitative Improvements in Academic Performance

The quantitative data revealed a positive trend in students' academic performance during the study period. The average grades in the optimal-level course "Latvian Language I" (*Latviešu valoda I*) increased from 5.56 to 6.26, while the in the average grades in the optimal-level course "Literature I" (*Literatūra I*) increase from 5.2 to 5.88 on a 10-point grading scale. Although these improvements coincided with the implementation of the interdisciplinary learning sequence, the absence of control group precludes drawing definitive causal conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention.

Nevertheless, the observed grade dynamics suggest that engaging students in interdisciplinary, problem-based learning activities and systematic formative assessments is associated with positive academic development. In this study, the quantitative findings should therefore be interpreted as complementary to the qualitative evidence, which provides a more comprehensive understanding of students' development of text literacy, interpretive thinking, and engagement with complex literary texts. This positive

trend is particularly relevant in a multilingual educational context, where Latvian is not the students' native language. (Geske et al., 2025)

### Deep Learning through Visual and Emotional Interpretation

To foster a deep understanding of the exile experience, students engaged in complex creative tasks such as interpreting the "Exile's Chest" (*Trimdinieka lāde*) and writing the "Exile's Letter" (*Trimdinieka vēstule*).

When analysing the "Exile's Chest", students recognized it as a powerful symbol of the protagonist's identity, memory, endurance, and unsevered connection to the homeland. The symbol was primarily associated with the Past-Positive time perspective, which contrasted with the younger generation's tendency to prioritise practicality and modern values. Students successfully identified the conflict between the older generation, for whom the chest represented a vital anchor to their past, and the younger generation, who viewed it as an impractical, ugly object that hindered modern consumer aesthetics.

Furthermore, writing the "Exile's Letter" to Latvia from a chosen character's perspective allowed students to deeply immerse themselves in the exile's emotional state. Students articulated the characters' feelings of alienation, longing for the lost homeland, existential insecurity, and the absurdity of their existential situation, demonstrating a high level of empathy towards historical trauma that many had not deeply considered before. Examples of students' visual interpretations can be seen in the appendices (see Figure 1).

In the activity "My World" (*Mana pasaule*), students reflected on their own values, emotions, relationships, and future goals through visual representation, exploring the specific colours, smells, tastes, and sounds that define their current life. Examples of students' visual interpretations of activity "My World" are presented in the appendices (see Figure 2).

To deepen this self-reflection, the task was purposefully contrasted with activity "The Exile's World" (*Trimdinieka pasule*). Examples of students' visual interpretations of activity "The Exile's World" are presented in the appendices (see Figure 3).

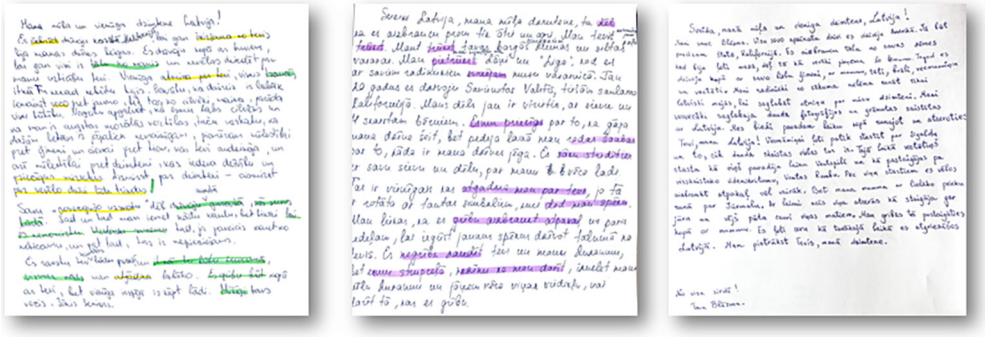


***Figure 1.*** Examples of students' "Exile's Letter"

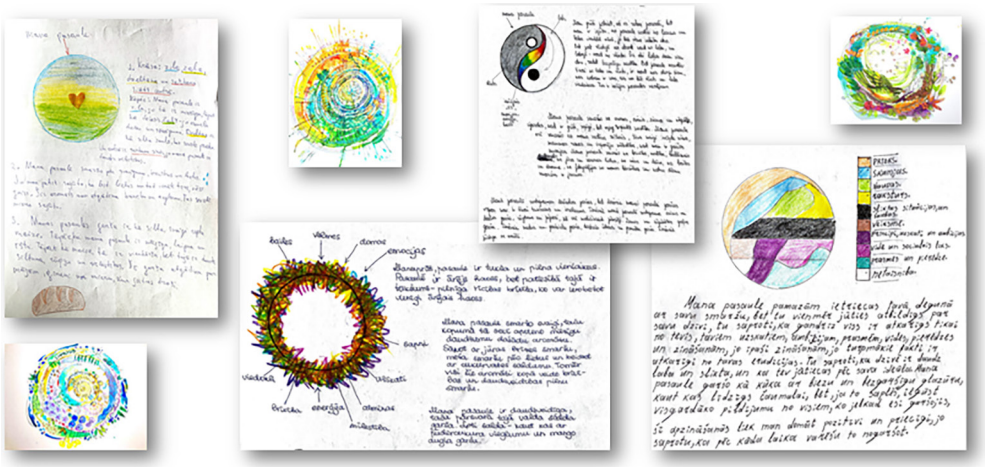


***Figure 2.*** Examples of students' activity "My World"

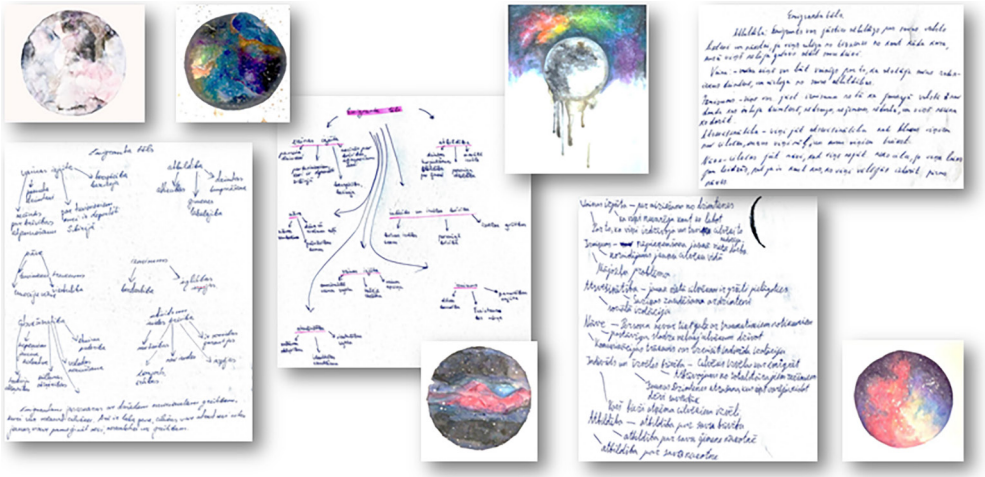


***Figure 3.*** Examples of students' activity "The Exile's World"

In this corresponding task, students characterized the emigrant's reality by linking the exile experience with existentialist traits, basing their judgments on A. Eglitis's novel, historical publications (e.g., Wyman, 1998), and Zenta Mauriņa's (1992) essay "*Drausmi zināt, mokoši skatīties*" (*Dreadful to know, painful to see*). The task encouraged students to establish direct connections between historical existential themes explored in the novel and their own contemporary experiences. As students noted, this comparative approach prompted them to look deeper into themselves, seeking answers to fundamental questions: what is truly important, how to live in this world, how to protect freedom, and how to preserve humanity.

## Exploration of Existential Themes

Through guided text analysis, students clearly identified core existentialist ideas embedded in the novel. They observed that the characters inhabit an absurd world without clear pre-defined meaning, requiring each individual to forge their own path and find their own purpose. (Aho, 2025; Gosetti-Ferencei, 2021) Specifically, students recognized the following existential themes in the characters' experiences:

1. Individuality and Freedom of Choice. Students noted that each character independently shapes their own destiny. This is most vividly seen in Askolds Olte, who deliberately chooses free, unattached lifestyle, exercising his absolute freedom of choice. (Lukaševičs, Mickeviča, & Sokolova, 2007)
2. Sense of Responsibility. This freedom is accompanied by a heavy burden of responsibility. Jānis Bertolds (senior) feels a deep, existential duty towards his physical labor, his self-built house, and the preservation of his past. Meanwhile, Zuzanna assumes absolute responsibility for the family's material welfare and stability. (Kūle & Kūlis, 2020)
3. Guilt and Despair. Students identified indirect manifestations of guilt, particularly emerging through intergenerational misunderstandings and reproaches. This guilt often transforms into despair, most tragically illustrated by Jānis Bertolds senior's profound loneliness and his feeling of no longer being needed by his family after retirement. (Hausmanis, 2005)
4. Alienation. The exile situation deeply amplifies the feeling of alienation. Students concluded that the emigrants feel detached not only from their homeland but also estranged within their own families and the surrounding society. (Tabūns, 2008)
5. Presence of Death. The inevitability of aging and the approaching end of life serve as an underlying motif, forcing the older characters to confront the limits of their existence and evaluate their lifetime achievements. (Hausmanis, 2000)

Ultimately, students concluded that Eglitis's emigrant characters navigate a complex existential reality where they must personally take responsibility for finding their place and meaning in the world.

## Psychological Analysis of Characters' Time Perspectives

A core result of the study was the students' ability to analyse the characters' inner conflicts and intergenerational misunderstandings using Time Perspective theory. Students identified that fixation on a single time zone led to psychological discomfort and family conflicts, whereas a Balanced Time Perspective promoted well-being. The dominant time perspectives identified by the students in the main characters are summarized below (see Table 4).

***Table 4.*** Dominant Time Perspectives of the Main Characters in A. Eglitis's Novel "The Shameless Old Men"

| Character | Dominant Time Perspective | Behavioural and Psychological Manifestation |
|---|---|---|
| Zuzanna Bertolde | Future-Oriented | Pragmatic planning, organizing the family budget, and rejecting present joys or past sentiments for the sake of future stability and control. |
| Jānis Bertolds, senior | Past-Positive and Present-Fatalistic | Deep emotional attachment to his exile chest, memories and traditional values (Past-Positive), combined with a sense of uselessness and lack of control over his current family life after retirement (Present-Fatalistic). |
| Longins Laukmanis | Balanced Time Perspective | Ability to naturally integrate past experience, future planning, and present enjoyment through social relationships, aesthetics, and artistic appreciation. |
| Indulis Laukmanis, Blāzma Bertolde | Present-Hedonistic and Present-Fatalistic | Living for the moment and rejection of long-term responsibility and future planning (career, education) driven by a fatalistic belief that society is flawed and individual efforts are futile. |
| Askolds Olte | Future-Oriented & Present-Hedonistic | Actively plans and sketches the construction of his future home and stables (Future-Oriented), which directly serves his desires to play polo, enjoy nature, and seek new adventures in the present (present-Hedonistic). |
| Jānis Bertolds, junior | Present-Fatalistic | Demonstrates an avoidance of responsibility and a fatalistic submission to his wife's and mother's will, acting as a passive observer who adapts to external pressures rather than making independent decisions. |

Through detailed text analysis, students observed that Zuzanna Bertolde's extreme Future-Oriented Perspective manifested as rigid pragmatism; she sacrificed present joys to maintain control over her environment. In contrast, Jānis Bertolds (her husband) struggled with Present-Fatalism after retiring, feeling useless and relegated to the garage, which he tried to counter by clinging to his Past-Positive memories and his physical exile chest. The middle generation, represented by Jānis Bertolds (junior), demonstrated pure Present-Fatalism, passively avoiding responsibility and submitting to his dominant mother. The younger generation, represented by Indulis Laukmanis and Blāzma Bertolde, exhibited a mix of Present-Hedonism and Present-Fatalism, completely rejecting future planning due to a belief that the modern societal structure is fundamentally flawed. Among the older generation, Askolds Olte showcased a unique blend of Future-Oriented planning that exclusively served his Present-Hedonistic desire for adventure and polo. Ultimately, students concluded that Longins Laukmanis represented the ideal Balanced Time Perspective, as he successfully integrated his past experiences without getting stuck in them, secured his future, and actively found joy in the present. Students identified that fixation on a single time perspective often contributed to emotional dissatisfaction, interpersonal conflict, and difficulties in adapting to exile conditions, whereas a Balanced Time Perspective promoted psychological stability and social adaption.

### Self-Discovery and Personal Identity Formation

A significant outcome of the study was the students' engagement in deep self-reflection. Because psychology and philosophy are not offered as separate subjects at the upper-secondary education stage in this school, literature lessons served as a vital platform for addressing these disciplines. By analysing the literary characters' choices, behavioural motivations, and intergenerational conflicts, students indirectly analysed their own personalities, values, and relationships with their parents and peers. (Eriksons, 1998; Svence, 1999) This aligns with the principle that literature acquisition should serve as a practical tool for shaping youth identity and life skills. (Stikute, 2011) Furthermore, motivated by the character analysis, several students voluntarily completed the Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) to evaluate their personal dominant time zones. (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008) This demonstrates that integrating psychological frameworks into text analysis transforms literature lessons from a purely academic reading task into a meaningful journey of self-discovery and emotional intelligence development.

## Discussion

The discussion examines the findings in the context of current research on literature education and interdisciplinary pedagogy. It considers how the integration of psychological and philosophical perspectives supported the development of students' text literacy and higher-order thinking, explores the methodological contribution of the SOLO taxonomy, discusses the challenges of multilingual literature education, and outlines the pedagogical implications of the proposed instructional approach.

### Interdisciplinary Literature Education and the Development of Text Literacy

The findings suggest that an interdisciplinary approach to literature education significantly contributes to the development of students' text literacy, interpretative abilities, and emotional awareness. Integrating P. Zimbardo's Time Perspective Theory (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008) and existentialist philosophy encouraged students to move beyond factual comprehension towards a deeper interpretation of literary texts. Rather than focusing solely on plot and character description, students analysed psychological motivations, value systems, intergenerational conflicts, and the existential dimensions of the exile experience presented in Anshlav Eglitis's novel *The Shameless Old Men*. (Daukste-Silasproģe, 2007)

The study demonstrates that combining literary analysis with psychological and philosophical perspectives enables students to construct richer and more nuanced interpretations. By examining the relationship between personal identity, historical circumstances, and individual decision-making, students engaged in a dialectical process of aesthetic and emotional experience. (Ausekle, 2003) Their interpretations reflected an understanding of exile not as a simplified narrative of heroism or victimhood, but as a complex human experience shaped by historical, social, and existential factors. (Rozītis, 2005; Wyman, 1998) This interpretation aligns with Rozītis's (2005) concept

of the "chronotope of exile", which emphasises the disruption of temporal and spatial continuity as a defining characteristic of Latvian exile literature.

Furthermore, analysing the connections between A. Eglitis's own experiences of exile in America and the personalities of his literary characters encouraged students to perceive literature as a reflection of historical and cultural reality rather than as an isolated fictional narrative. (Daukste-Silasproģe, 2007, 2024; Hausmanis, 2005; Struka, 2022) Exploring diverse responses to exile fostered empathy and tolerance toward different life choices and value systems. These results strongly align with previous pedagogical research emphasizing that literature education plays an essential role in youth identity formation, value orientation, and the development of emotional intelligence. (Rudzītis, 2000; Stikute, 2011; Zimule, 1991)

Ultimately, this interdisciplinary framework not only strengthens text literacy and critical thinking but also directly supports the broader aims of competency-based education by bridging abstract concepts with real-world human coping mechanisms.

### SOLO Taxonomy and the Development of Higher-Order Thinking

The findings highlight the importance of gradually increasing task complexity in literature education. Learning activities were designed according to the principles of the SOLO taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982), progressing from the identification and description of textual information toward interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and argumentative writing. This structured progression encouraged students to develop higher-order thinking skills while engaging more deeply with the literary texts.

The SOLO taxonomy served not only as a framework for sequencing learning activities but also as a methodological basis for designing task questions and assessment criteria. Learning tasks were designed to correspond primarily to the relational and extended abstract levels of the taxonomy. These tasks required students to synthesise information, establish relationships between literary, psychological, and philosophical concepts, and justify their interpretations using textual evidence, and formulate independent conclusions. Consequently, assessment focused not merely on the reproduction of factual knowledge but on students' ability to construct coherent, evidence-based interpretations and arguments.

From a pedagogical perspective, this approach closely aligns with the objectives of Latvia's competency-based curriculum and the assessment principles applied in the national upper secondary examination in Latvian Language and Literature. (Lāčauniece et al., 2020) The findings therefore suggest that integrating the SOLO taxonomy into literature education provides an effective methodological framework for developing analytical, interpretative, and argumentative competences while simultaneously preparing students for the cognitive demands of summative assessment.

### Challenges of Teaching Literature in a Multilingual Classroom

The study also revealed several pedagogical challenges associated with teaching complex literary texts in a multilingual classroom. Although students successfully interpreted

the characters' past- and present-oriented time perspectives, they experienced greater difficulty when analysing future-oriented perspectives and evaluating the subjective factors underlying the characters' decisions and existential choices. These findings suggest that abstract psychological constructs require a higher level of interpretative thinking than descriptions of observable behaviour and therefore demand more explicit instructional support. (Svence, 1999)

The challenges were further intensified by the multilingual learning context. As Latvian was not the students' native language, they were required to interpret literary symbolism, culturally specific concepts, and abstract philosophical ideas through their second language. This considerably increased the cognitive demands of the learning process. (Auziņa & Šalme, 2016) Understanding complex concepts such as exile, identity, freedom, responsibility, and future orientation posed a significant cognitive challenge. It required students to move beyond the mere linguistic comprehension of the text and actively integrate historical, cultural, psychological, and philosophical perspectives into their interpretations.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of providing systematic scaffolding when teaching conceptually demanding literary narratives in multilingual classrooms. Carefully sequenced learning activities, explicit discussions of abstract concepts, guided interpretation, and opportunities for reflective dialogue appear to support students in developing deeper text literacy and more sophisticated literary interpretations. (Oliņa, Namsone, & France, 2018) Such support is particularly important when literature education aims to foster critical thinking, empathy, and personal reflection rather than factual comprehension alone. (Eriksons, 1998; Svence, 1999)

Overall, the findings indicate that the successful development of higher-order interpretative skills depends not only on students' literary knowledge but also on the careful integration of language support, conceptual scaffolding, and interdisciplinary learning strategies. These considerations may be particularly relevant for multilingual educational contexts in which literature serves simultaneously as an object of the study and as a means of developing advanced language proficiency and cultural understanding. (Ancāne, 2024; Pičukāne, 2022)

## Pedagogical Implications for Literature Education

The findings of this study demonstrate that interdisciplinary literature education provides a valuable methodological framework for developing students' text literacy, critical thinking, and reflective interpretation. Integrating literary analysis with psychological and philosophical perspectives encourages students to examine literary texts from multiple viewpoints and to establish meaningful connections between literature, personal experience, and broader social and historical contexts. (Stikute, 2011) Therefore, this approach offers a transferable pedagogical model that can be applied not only to the teaching of Latvian exile literature but also to other conceptually complex literary narratives.

Within this framework, Anshlav Eglitis's novel *The Shameless Old Men* offers considerable pedagogical potential for advanced secondary literature education, particularly within the advanced-level course "Latvian Language and Literature". The novel creates opportunities for the interdisciplinary exploration of cultural identity, historical memory, existential philosophy, and psychological dimensions of human behaviour. At the same time, it enables students to investigate linguo-cultural concepts that are central to Latvian cultural consciousness, including "homeland" (*dzimtene*), "exile" (*trimda*), and the "chest" (*lāde*), thereby strengthening both literary interpretation and cultural literacy.

The study also suggests that the depth of these learning outcomes depends on sufficient instructional time. While the initial eight-lesson sequence proved effective in introducing the interdisciplinary approach, it did not provide adequate opportunities for sustained reflection, discussion, and independent interpretation of abstract psychological and philosophical concepts. Expanding the unit to approximately twenty lessons would allow students to revisit complex ideas from multiple perspectives, strengthen argumentative writing, and consolidate higher-order interpretative skills. (Oliņa et al., 2018)

Overall, the findings indicate that carefully designed interdisciplinary learning sequences – supported by structured cognitive scaffolding and constructive alignment between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessment – can significantly enhance literature education in upper secondary schools. (Biggs & Collis, 1982) Such an approach not only develops students' literary competence but also fosters empathy, cultural awareness, and the reflective thinking required for meaningful engagement with literature in contemporary multilingual classrooms. (Rudzītis, 2000; Zimule, 1991)

## Conclusions

The findings suggest that integrating psychological theories and philosophical perspectives into literature education provides a valuable interdisciplinary framework for developing students' text literacy, interpretative competence, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and empathy. By encouraging students to analyse literary texts through multiple disciplinary perspectives, this approach promotes deeper literary interpretation and more meaningful engagement with complex literary narratives.

The study indicates that the interdisciplinary learning sequence supported students' ability to interpret literary characters as psychologically and existentially complex personalities whose decisions are shaped by the interaction of historical, cultural, and temporal factors. Rather than focusing solely on narrative events, students developed increasingly sophisticated interpretations by connecting literary, psychological, and philosophical perspectives.

The structured implementation of the SOLO taxonomy provided an effective methodological framework for progressively developing higher-order cognitive skills. Using the taxonomy to sequence learning activities, formulate task prompts, and align assessment criteria supported students' analytical, interpretative, reflective, and argumentative

abilities, particularly in a multilingual educational context where Latvian language is not the students' native language.

The findings further indicate that students require additional methodological support when analysing Future-Oriented Time Perspectives, existential decision-making, and other abstract psychological and philosophical concepts. These results highlight the importance of carefully structured instructional scaffolding and sufficient opportunities for guided interpretation and reflective discussion when teaching conceptually demanding literary texts.

Overall, the study demonstrates the pedagogical potential of interdisciplinary literature education for upper secondary schools. Expanding the thematic unit beyond the initial eight-lesson sequence would provide greater opportunities for sustained reflection, interdisciplinary integration, and the development of higher-order interpretative skills, thereby strengthening both literature education and students' text literacy.

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