

**STUDY OF M.A. BULGAKOV'S NOVEL "THE MASTER AND MARGARITA"  
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**Keywords:** The Master and Margarita, Pontius Pilate, philosophical Yeshua, mystical and satirical Voland, Ivan Bezdomny, philosophical meanings of the novel.

**Abstract:** This article discusses the study of the novel *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov in school. The essence of Bulgakov's novel lies in the eternal struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, the individual and authority, as well as in the search for truth, justice, love, and happiness. At the same time, a person must always remain truly human. *The Master and Margarita* can also be interpreted as a kind of "gospel from Satan," presenting, in essence, the enemy of humankind's perspective on the events of the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.

**The relevance of this research** topic is determined by the fact that the works of M. Bulgakov represent a new and complex phenomenon for the methodology of teaching literature. It is still necessary to determine the place and significance of Bulgakov's творчество in the history of Russian literature, as well as the main directions for studying this topic in school. The books of M.A. Bulgakov have significant pedagogical potential. They remain in demand among a wide range of readers and address issues that have remained relevant for nearly a century.

**Introduction**

Based on an analysis of the images of the main characters in the novel *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov, two central values can be identified – creativity and love. In the semantic structure of both the novel and human life itself, these values are interconnected and complement one another.

Today, literature as the art of the word is intended to teach what is beautiful and good, to shape moral principles and ideals of behavior. School literary education includes the tasks of artistic and general cultural development of students; therefore, it is especially important during the school years – when a person's character and worldview are being formed – to turn to books that provide reliable moral and spiritual guidance. In this regard, there is a serious need to choose effective methods and means for studying the works of Russian writers. Using various artistic techniques, many authors encoded ideas in their works that often contradicted the state doctrine of their time, yet continued the best traditions of Russian and world literature.

The novel *The Master and Margarita* is one of the most original and complex works of Mikhail Bulgakov. This is confirmed by the large number of studies conducted by Russian and foreign literary scholars, including A. N. Barkov, A. Diallo, A. P. Kazarkin, G. A. Lesskis, L. M. Sorokina, E. V. Sintsov, I. S. Uryupin, A.-K. Wright, and T. R. N. Edwards. Studying the novel *The Master and Margarita* in school is a challenging task for literature teachers because the text possesses deep philosophical meaning and contains numerous symbols, allusions, and reminiscences that allowed the author to express his unique worldview.

The problem of studying the writer's works in school has been addressed in dissertation research by T. A. Barannikova, T. V. Ryzhkova, and K. S. Savvina, as well as in the works of V. G. Boborykin, O. Yu. Bogdanova, I. V. Velikanova, E. V. Karsalova, A. K. Kiselev, V. I. Lobaeva, V. G. Marantsman, and T. N. Statyin. All of the above-mentioned authors share the view that studying Bulgakov's works requires a systematic understanding of the writer's worldview and his role in the development of Russian and world literature. Bulgakov's works should be considered as a continuation of the traditions of classical literature and as a reflection of the struggle between atheism and faith in the consciousness of the writer, who lived during a tragic era of social upheaval.

The introduction of new educational standards requires the use of new, non-traditional approaches and methods for studying *The Master and Margarita*, since many traditional methods and techniques that once proved effective are gradually losing their attractiveness and efficiency for teachers. Nevertheless, they remain the foundation for studying the novel in modern schools. This fact determines the relevance of the present graduation qualification work. In this regard, it is necessary to conduct a comparative analysis of traditional and new approaches to studying the novel *The Master and Margarita* in the 11th grade.

The object of the research is a number of scientific and methodological works by scholars that reflect the process of studying Bulgakov's novel *The Master and Margarita* in school.

The subject of the research is traditional and new forms and methods of studying the novel *The Master and Margarita* in the 11th grade of secondary school.

The aim of the graduation qualification work is to study and compare traditional and new methodological approaches to teaching the novel *The Master and Margarita* in school.

To achieve this aim, the following tasks are set:

- to generalize and systematize theoretical material on this problem;
- to examine the novel *The Master and Margarita* in the curricula of municipal budget educational institutions of the city of Yelabuga;
- to identify traditional approaches to studying the novel *The Master and Margarita* in literary studies;
- to analyze the traditional system of studying the novel in school;
- to examine the methodological and ideological innovations in the modern teaching of the novel;
- to test the effectiveness of new forms and methods of studying the work in practice.

### **Methods**

The following methods were used in this study: analysis of literary and scientific-methodological literature, the comparative method, as well as the study and generalization of pedagogical experience. The practical significance of the research is determined by its methodological orientation. The research materials, generalizations, and conclusions can be used in school practice to improve the effectiveness of literature lessons, particularly in developing lessons devoted to the study of the novel *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov or elective courses aimed at preparing students to write essays.

The work consists of an introduction, two chapters, a conclusion, a list of references, and an appendix. The first chapter examines the curricula of schools in the city of Yelabuga and analyzes traditional approaches to studying the novel *The Master and Margarita* in the 11th grade. The second chapter discusses new methods and ideas in teaching Bulgakov's novel, such as mind maps, denotation graphs, and structures of the Singapore teaching methodology, as well as work within the framework of preparing students for the final essay in the 11th grade.

Based on the materials of the graduation qualification work, an article entitled "Mind Mapping as a Modern Method and Technology for the Analysis of a Literary Work (Based on the Novel 'The Master and Margarita' by M. A. Bulgakov)" was published in the proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Conference "Scientific Community of Students: Interdisciplinary Research." School literary education aims at the artistic and general cultural development of students, the formation of thoughtful readers, and the preparation of learners for a deep perception of literary works within the context of the spiritual culture of society. New educational programs are being developed that include new authors and literary works. The curriculum of the 11th grade has undergone significant changes and now includes a course on twentieth-century Russian literature. The reading circle of students has been expanded with the works of Mikhail Bulgakov, Boris Pasternak, Anna Akhmatova, and other writers. The pedagogical and methodological potential of the novel *The Master and Margarita* is virtually limitless. However, studying it at school is not easy, despite the strong interest that senior students show in the novel. The engaging plot, elements of fantasy, the presence of an adventurous storyline, and vivid characters all contribute to increasing

students' interest in reading. Nevertheless, students often find it difficult to connect the different plot lines of the work into a coherent whole and to understand the author's reflections on life and death, good and evil, crime and retribution, mercy and indifference. When studying large literary works, such as the novel by Mikhail Bulgakov, it is advisable to combine individual and collective forms of work during lessons. This approach allows teachers to use lesson time more effectively, to stimulate students' creative and independent research activities both in class and during preparation, and to continue developing students' ability to read attentively, analyze texts, and comment on the unity of form and content. It also creates conditions for productive creative interaction among students in the classroom. In this article, a study was conducted with the aim of examining how the novel *The Master and Margarita* is studied in school. The research led to the conclusion that in most school curricula the study of the novel is usually allocated six lessons. During the first lessons, the epigraph of the work, the genre originality of the novel, and the relationship between the real and the fantastic are analyzed. Gradually, the teacher guides students toward analyzing the composition of the work and the characterization of its main characters. In subsequent lessons, the problems and themes of the novel are discussed, and students begin preparing to write an essay based on the studied work.

I also studied the article by I. S. Lapatov in the journal *Literature at School*. I noted that the author proposes three traditional methods for analyzing a literary work: extended student presentations and discussion of problems, discussion of students' essays or reports, and debates. All of the studied methods indicate that this topic is actively developing within the methodology of teaching literature. In general, traditional approaches to studying the novel *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov include detailed examination of the work, its comparison with established literary traditions, analysis of its content, and study of the complexity of its themes. These elements are standard in the study of long prose works.

In the second chapter, I examined the methodological and conceptual innovations in the contemporary teaching of the novel *The Master and Margarita*. In practical work, the effectiveness of new forms and methods of studying the novel was tested, namely:

- analysis of the novel using mind maps;
- analysis of the novel in terms of developing argumentation skills for the final essay;
- studying the work through Singaporean teaching structures;
- hermeneutic analysis of the novel using a denotation graph.

After examining these approaches, I concluded that they are effective for studying literary material included in the 11th-grade literature curriculum and have significant methodological value for literature teachers.

In comparing traditional and new forms and methods of studying *The Master and Margarita* in the 11th grade, I found that both approaches aim to help students understand the literary text in the unity of form and content and contribute to improving skills in analyzing and interpreting a literary work as an artistic whole. The new methods, in particular, are aimed at developing skills such as communication, successful interaction, self-control and reflection, and the ability to navigate and process material effectively.

Lessons using new methods for studying *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov are designed to help students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in practical activities and everyday life. This includes defining their own reading preferences, evaluating literary works, and finding relevant information about literature, specific works, and their authors. When employing both traditional and new methods and technologies, the **professional competence of the teacher** is crucial. This competence includes the integration of theoretical knowledge and practical readiness necessary for effective pedagogical activity.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that it is the teacher, possessing both pedagogical and instructional competence, who motivates students to successfully acquire knowledge and apply it in practice.

The essence of Bulgakov's novel lies in the eternal struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, the individual and authority, as well as in the search for truth, justice, love, and happiness. At the same time, a person must always remain truly human. The Master and Margarita can also be interpreted as a kind of "gospel from Satan," essentially presenting the perspective of the enemy of humankind on the events surrounding the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.

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