

Abschlussbericht

The influence of implicit and explicit questions on the reception of literary texts

This experiment investigated whether the different formulation of erotetic questions in a literary text leads to different reception behaviors on the part of the readers. According to the theory of erotetic structure, texts are held together by implicit questions and answers. This theory has been studied for a long time in various fields of linguistics and literary studies. However, there has been little research on the concrete form of erotetic questions in literary texts. Therefore, I devoted this paper to this topic. For this purpose, an experiment was conducted with an experimental and a control group. In the experimental condition, the test persons were confronted with explicitly formulated erotetic questions at some text passages, whereas the test persons in the control group were confronted exclusively with implicit questions as they arise from the text. At these text passages, all participants had the possibility to receive the answer immediately or to infer it themselves in the further text. The assumption that the test persons who were confronted with the explicit questions would choose the immediate answer option more often than the test persons of the control group could not be confirmed.