



THE LINGUOCULTURAL APPROACH TO THE ANALYSIS OF THE LITERARY TEXT

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ABSTRACT

Language is a dynamic set of visual, auditory, or tactile symbols of communication. Definitely language is one of the most important phenomena of culture. Culture in linguistics is described as socially acquired knowledge of the world, as well as attitudes towards it. The power of language to reflect culture and influence thinking was first proposed by an American linguist and anthropologist, Edward Sapir (1884–1939), and his student, Benjamin Whorf (1897–1941). The **Sapir-Whorf hypothesis** stated that the way we think and view the world is determined by our language (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2002; Crystal, 1987; Hayes, Ornstein, & Gage, 1987).

Linguoculturology is a relatively new science that has arisen at the junction of two sciences – Linguistics and cultural studies. The subject of today's cultural linguistics is the study of the cultural semantics of linguistic signs, which is formed in interaction of two different codes – the language and culture, as each person is both a language and cultural identity [5, 160]. Therefore, linguistic signs can serve as a "language" of culture, resulting in the ability of language to display national cultural mentality of its speakers. Moreover, linguoculturology is a science which studies language as a phenomenon of culture and also the influence of language on culture and culture on language in different communities throughout the world. There are many ways in which the phenomena of language and culture are intimately related. First of all, language is not only the tools for communication between the people who have own cultural norms but it is a mirror that reflects the people's view of the world. Moreover, culture is a complex concept that includes language. Many theorists have expressed their point of view about the great importance of culture in understanding language. Secondly, we can clearly notice the interrelation of language and culture in literary texts. Indeed, a literary text is the main indicator of spiritual wealth of the people, as it is where the components of any language are actualized, interaction of language and culture is shown giving the opportunity to closely investigate the facts of the language linked to the worldview and spiritual values of the people and linguistic consciousness of members belonging to different ethnic groups. A literary text is permeated with numerous cultural codes, it stores information about the history, ethnography, ethic psychology and behavior, i.e.



everything pertaining to culture and literary text conveys aesthetic, emotional and evaluative information as well. The literary text creates the linguoculturological portrait of a nation and enables the reader to see the common and natural traits in people's behavior, mentality and views. So the analysis of the literary text from the point of view of linguoculturology can be done in the following directions:

- To define culture specific units and interpret them;
- To conceptualize the culture specific stylistic devices and concepts;
- To decode the cultural concepts represented in the text.

Interpretation of the literary text from the position of linguocultural approach requires understanding and perception of national and cultural values expressed by the author. For instance, the author may use in his works proverbs and sayings as culture specific units. Proverbs are simple and concrete sayings that express truth based on the practical experience of humanity. Proverbs as culture specific units can be illustrated on the materials of W. Shakespeare's works which abound in proverbs. He used proverbs in the titles of two of his comedies: *"All's Well that Ends Well"* and *"Measure for Measure"*. In his well-known tragedies, *Romeo and Juliet* and particularly in *Hamlet* (Scene 5, Act I), he used a series of proverbs that were frequently used in England at that time:

*Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
The time is out of joint; brevity is the soul of wit;
There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so;
An old man is twice a child;
The cat will mew and dog will have his day;
Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't.*

Another cultural trait of literary text is convergence of stylistic devices and concepts since they convey the author's evaluative attitude towards the event described. Moreover, in recent years stylistic devices have been regarded as cultural models mostly as they serve the purpose of reflecting culture as an illustration let's analyse allusion.

Allusion is an indirect reference to a person, event, or thing or to a part of another text. The author usually eludes a text to make a connection with a particular context. We can see the allusion in John Steinbeck's work called *"The Winter of Our Discontent"*

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" (JSWOD, 33).

In this sentence the author refers to the American Revolution using an allusion to the date 1776, the year the Declaration of Independence was signed. *"Four score and seven years ago"* means eighty-seven years, since a score is twenty years. Eighty-seven years earlier than 1863 is 1776. So, this allusion activates knowledge structures concerning American history

The next regularly used stylistic device is metaphor. Metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a direct comparison between two unlike things. Metaphors create vivid descriptions with few words, as the subject of the comparison takes on the qualities of the thing with which it is compared. The following sentence from Theodore Dreiser *"The Financier"* can be an example to metaphor:



*"With this faith we will be able to transform the **jangling discords** of our nation into a **beautiful symphony of brotherhood**" (TDTF, 503).*

The text involves two metaphors which serve as a comparison for two different but related ideas: 1) racial problems - "jangling discords" and 2) racial problems solved through faith - "beautiful symphony of brotherhood" These metaphors are regarded as culture specific because they render the information about social and cultural values.

We can also illustrate cultural specificity of stylistic devices in the story called "Rock Wagram" by William Saroyan. The author attracts the attention of the reader to the subtle feeling of beauty that characterizes Egbert as a real Englishman having the roots in ancient times by using a number of stylistic devices:

He looked again, straining his keen blue eyes, that had a touch of the Viking in them, through the shadowy pine trees as through a doorway, at the green-grassed garden-path rising from the shadow of alders by the log bridge up to the sunlit flowers.

The sunlight blazed down upon the earth, there was a vividness of flamy vegetation, of fierce seclusion amid the savage peace of the commons. Strange how the savage England lingers in patches: as here, amid these shaggy gorse commons, and marshy, snake infested places near the foot of the south downs. The spirit of place lingering on primeval, as when the Saxons came, so long ago. Ah, how he had loved it! The green garden path, the tufts of flowers, purple and white columbines, and great oriental red poppies with their black chaps and mulleins tall and yellow, this flamy garden which had been a garden for a thousand years, scooped out in the little hollow among the snake-infested commons. He had made it flame with flowers, in a sun cup under its hedges and trees. So old, so old a place! And yet he had re-created it (WSRW, 101).

The hyperbole "had been a garden for a thousand years" as well as an allusion to Anglo-Saxons "as when the Saxons came" and Vikings, Egbert's eyes "had a touch of Viking in them" prove it. The repetition in the inner speech of the hero "So old, so old a place!" presents a great affection of his for the land he works on, to the house, and to England so dear to him.

The development of linguistics is characterized by new scientific trends, anthropocentric and cognitive approach to the language study, the development of text linguistics and literary text theory. The literary text is characterized by textual emotiveness, modality, expressiveness, intertextuality and implicitness. One of the main categories is the category of imagery which in the literary text is expressed by a system of image bearing stylistic means forming the imagery structure of the whole text. Communicative – cognitive approach to the literary text gives a chance to study the category of imagery as a definite structure of the literary text that reveals the conceptual information of the text.

References:

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LIST OF SOURCES and ABBREVIATIONS

2. JSWOD – John Steinbeck. The Winter of Our Discontent. – Москва: Высш. шк. 1985. – 271 с.



3. TDTF – Theodore Dreiser. The Financier. – Moscow, Foreign Lang. Publ. House, 1954. – 566 p.
4. WSRW – William Saroyan. Rock Wagram. – London, A Mayflower Paperback,
5. 1961. – 224 p.