

THE ROLE OF STYLISTIC DEVICES IN TRANSMITTING THE CONCEPTUAL INFORMATION OF THE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

The present article focuses on the role of stylistic devices as means of activating knowledge structures and conveying conceptual information of the text. Previously, researches on stylistic devices have been carried out from the point of view of their structural and semantic organization and stylistic functions. Nevertheless, it is believed that the consideration of these phenomena can only be arrived at by means of a cognitive approach. In this respect stylistic devices are seen as means of transferring the conceptual information of a particular text, representing the conceptual world picture and knowledge structures. The paper analyzes stylistic devices from the point of view of cognitive approach focusing on the representation of conceptual world picture and reflection of knowledge structures.

Keywords: cognitive stylistics, stylistic devices, world picture, knowledge structures, conceptualization.

INTRODUCTION

It is worth mentioning that stylistic devices (allusion, antonomasia, symbol, cognitive metaphor, cognitive metonymy, etc) serve as means of representing knowledge structures and activating them in human mind. In Cognitive Linguistics, knowledge structures are understood as blocks of information containing a system of interrelated concepts. The activation of knowledge structures in the text takes place as follows: under the impact of some verbal signal a certain frame is activated [2].

Obviously, the role of stylistic devices is enormous in promoting activation of knowledge structures. For example, let's focus on activation of knowledge structures on the material of antonomasia.

“Jamie, the elder, is thirty three, He has his father's broad-shouldered, deep-chested physique, is an inch taller and weighs less, but appears shorter and stouter... Combined with his habitual expression of cynicism it gives his countenance a Mephistophelian cast” (O'Neil, Three American Plays).

The usage of “Mephistophelian” activates literary knowledge structures, i.e. the knowledge of Goethe's “Faust”, the image of Mephistophel, symbolizing evil, contempt to people, which serves to characterize the personage of this play.

“He has a bit of a Jekyll and Hide, our Austin. I think Dorina is afraid of him “(Murdoch “An accidental man”).

The allusive anthroponyms “Jekyll” and “Hide” activate again literary knowledge structures. In order to understand this fragment of the text, it is necessary to be familiar with the story “The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hide” by R.L. Stivenson, in which the hero is of a dual character. Sometimes he appears to be a good-natured person, i.e. Dr. Jekyll), and sometimes

he can be an evil, Mr. Hide. In this context the proper nouns “Jekyll and Hide” reveal the characteristic features of the personage and symbolize the concepts of “Good and Evil”.

Knowledge structures can also be activated by means of such stylistic devices as metaphor, euphemism, symbol, repetitions and so on. In the following sample, the use of euphemism activates knowledge structures:

“Don't ever call me mad, Mycroft. I'm not mad. I'm just ... well, differently moraled, that's all.”
(The Eyre Affair, Jasper Fforde)

Stylistic devices are used in literary discourse as manifestations of concepts [2]. As we know from the course of Cognitive linguistics, concept is an open and dynamic system which creates a set of ideas, images, notions, associations, etc. that accompany words, actions and gestures. They create new meanings when they are incorporated into new contexts and enlarge a number of possible combinations and links. Antithesis, for instance, presents concepts in their opposite meanings. It can portray the two sides of a single concept, or oppose distinctive concepts.

“One knew the troops who had been in action. The ones who sang their way to death, the new recruits, were the dupes of the romance of war. But the others were dupes of the reality of war”. (J. Fowles)

The concept of war is described with the help of the troops, in action, death, recruits and war. The narrator highlights two types of people: recruits soldiers and experienced soldiers. They perceive war differently, opposing romance and reality. Yet all of them are referred to as ‘dupes’ by the narrator.

“I thought of her on Parnassus; I thought of her in Russell Square; things she said, she did, she was. And great cloud of black guilt, knowledge of my atrocious selfishness, settles on me. All those bitter home truths she had flung at me, right from the beginning ... and still loved me; was so blind that she still loved me...In a way her death was the final act of blackmail; but the blackmailed should feel innocent, and I felt guilty. It was as if at this moment, when I most wanted to be clean, I had fallen into the deepest filth; free for the future yet most chained to the past”. (J. Fowles)

It is a part of an inner monologue with high emotive charge which depicts the protagonist's state of turmoil. The reader has to employ a wide range of background knowledge because the opposition innocent – guilty represents the opposition of the concepts “innocence” and “guilt”, which are constituents of the domain “justice”; the opposition clean – filth introduces concepts of “cleanness” and ‘filth’ which metaphorically represent the domain of Morals; the opposition free – chained represents the concepts of “freedom” and “confinement”; and future – past correlates with the concept of “time”.

Whenever stylistic devices represent a particular concept, they essentially bring one object ahead and provide its detailed description. If, on the other hand, a stylistic device represents several concepts, it leads to a more informative scenario by implementing a wide range of knowledge and giving a multifaceted description of an event or a phenomenon.

Stylistic devices in literary discourse reveal the affairs as observed by a character or the narrator. Conceptualization can be presented in its dynamic evolution when different objects and phenomena interact during a short period of time; or as a static event when objects are placed relative to each other. Conceptualization is similar in both cases; it is based on a

situation which involves objects interacting (or remaining detached) within the boundaries of an indicated space.

“When the ultimate Mediterranean light fell on the world around me, I could see it was supremely beautiful; but when it touched me, I felt it was hostile. It seemed to corrode, not cleanse”. (J. Fowles)

In this case, antithesis conceptualizes the situation where the character arrives in Greece; the situation involves two objects (I and light) that interact with one another (touched me). The opposition to corrode – to cleanse helps accept the light as a participant in this scenario; readers have to rely on their background knowledge and life experience to compare the effect with corrosion and purification.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, in investigating the principles and methods of cognitive linguistics to stylistics a special attention is considered to be paid to the problem of stylistic devices. From the position of cognitive stylistics, stylistic device can be regarded as a cognitive model, means of transmitting the conceptual information of the text in cognitive stylistics. By means of stylistic devices conceptualization can employ information which is part of a person’s experience or common knowledge. The narrator can present the concepts so that the situation can be perceived differently.

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