

Cognitive poetics as a method of text analysis and construction

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Abstract. The article deals with the critical analysis of the main sources and concepts of the theory of cognitive poetics. It is substantiated the authors' approach to understanding of the purpose, object and nature of cognitive poetics, formed under the research project "The Cognitive Poetics of Contemporary Texts of Socio- Political Orientation." The object of study of this scientific discipline is a literary text, at that, the criterion of artistry is exclusively its ability at this time to influence on people and to change the surrounding reality in this way. One of its most important features is the communicative orientation. We conducted a pilot study, aimed at identifying of perception strategies of individually author's concepts by the reader; it provides the additional opportunities to describe the concept content. The results allow verifying the relevance of one or other features of the concept in the readers' mind, and serve as an essential complement to other investigation methods of the concept at the text material.

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Introduction

In modern linguistics and literature studies in the last two decades, the concept of literature/art is being developed as thinking/ cognition - cognitive poetics. It appeared at the forefront of global "cognitive turn", conditioned by the use of theory of mind in all spheres of socio-humanitarian knowledge. This psychological theory considers the processes of higher nervous activity, by means of which the individuum differs his own knowledge and system of values from the knowledge and values of other people, the ways and methods, required for a man to describe/understand the wishes, intensions and purposes of other people, predictions/explanations of their actions.

"Poetics", from Latin *Ars Poetica*, the name of Aristotel's tractate, where the following hypothesis was formulated for the first time: any pieces of art (music, poetry, drama) emerge as a result of a) the curiosity, which is typical of people and b) the imitation, which brings pleasure to them.

The term "poetics", over the course of centuries, was mainly used for denomination of section of literary theory, dealing with the problems of structure and form of the literary text, means and devices of prosody. In the XVII century the poetics of the French Classicism presented "the rules, which were not only described, but also prescribed" [1]. M.M. Bakhtin defended a qualitatively new understanding of poetics. In his opinion, "the study of devices of literary pieces structure is only one task of poetics" [2]. "The poetics, determined systematically, shall be the aesthetics of wordy artistic creativity, if

the aesthetics is understood as not the metaphysical concept of beauty, but the scientific-systematic theory of object of artistic perception" [3].

Main part

An approach to understanding of poetics as the aesthetics of artistic creativity, widely known today, became the basis for the cognitive poetics: the full name of the magazine, where the most authoritative cognitive poetics are published, is the following: "Poetics: Journal of Empirical Research on Culture, the Media and the Arts". The content of cognitive poetics is quite diverse:

- some investigators were brought up in the traditions of empiric literary studies, which deadlocked in the epoch of post-structuralism; they try to renew their positions;

- the others came from the cognitive linguistics: for them the fundamental idea of the cognitive poetics is the metaphorical thought, based in the theory of conceptual metaphor [4];

- the third were formed as the specialists on analytical aesthetics and philosophy of consciousness; they try to adapt new knowledge about a man and his consciousness to the existing theories and to create the new theories on their bases;

- the fourth in their academic qualification are far from literary studies and linguistics, they try to embed the literature into general picture of human evolution, using the new methods of informatics [5]. The list, of course, is not limiting....

G. Broone, in the preface to collection "Cognitive Poetics: Goals, Gaps and Gaps" described

three main directions, in which the interaction of specialists in the sphere of cognitive science and poetics takes place in the last years [6].

The first direction, "the cognitive science as poetics" is illustrated by the discussion, developed in 1994 on the pages on "Stanford Humanity Review" around the article of Nobel laureate in the sphere of artificial intelligence [7]. The second direction is the "poetics as a cognitive science". Broone illustrates it by the example of E. Spolsky, who thinks that whenever is a necessity to appeal to any textual unities, the researchers in the sphere of cognitive science shall be supported by the results of specialists on fiction, as only they are familiar with complex interpretative practices, required in the work with texts [8]. We can see that this position is close to the collection editors, G. Broone and J. Vandaele.

The third direction is the "poetics and/or cognitive science"; it presupposes the relative independence of two disciplines (i.e. the mutual disregard, when the possibility for the information exchange is kept). Broone considers this direction by the example of article of one critic of the cognitive approach [9]. However, there is no unity among the followers of the "poetics as a cognitive science". The tasks, set by them, when developing the bases of cognitive poetics theory, were quite different, namely:

- a reply to the post-structuralism crisis [10];
- the understanding of cognitive mechanisms and strategies, underlying the formation and interpretation of the literary text, as a product of one cognizing mind in the context of physical and socio-cultural worlds of creation and understanding of this text by another cognizing mind [11];
- the literary text analysis - to rationalize and explain, how the reader achieves this understanding in this case: to suggest the systematized language, which is used for discussion of various interpretations and a model of transformation process of the intuitive comprehension into expressible essence [12]. A theory of cognitive poetics is different:
 - cognitive-evolution theory of literature [8; 13];
 - scientific systematization of psychophysiological effects, caused by the literary texts [14; 15; 16];
 - the foundation for the variety of qualitatively new theories, but not the regular variant of literature theory, aimed at replacement of all previous diversities [17; 18; 19];
 - a new development stage of cognitive linguistics: the use of its terms and analysis methods for a literary text [20; 21; 22].

The opposition of followers of two founders of cognitive poetics theory - R.Tsur and P. Stockwell - is quite typical. The approach, stated by British

linguo-stylist P. Stockwell in the articles [23; 24]. In the works of R.Tsur there is an absolutely another approach to combination of methods of cognitive linguistics and narratology [25; 14; 26; 16]. For the decade, passed from moment his textbook was published, there appeared another variants: cognitive semantics, stylistics, narratology, linguistics, literary studies...and, respectively, the endless "scientific" discussion about the correlation of these new terms with each other. If we want to use the cognitive poetics as some set of methods (procedure) to analyze some text, we will inevitably face the necessity to choose one from the set of different approaches, practically incompatible with each other. Properly, here is the meaning of R. Tsur's words that "today there is no consensus on what is the cognitive poetics" [16]: according to the words of G.Broone in the collection "Cognitive Poetics: Goals, Gains and Gaps" two problems are solved: a) to clear up if this sphere of investigations, as a cognitive poetics, has a right to exist and b) to determine the degree of applicability of cognitive poetics methods for solution of definite tasks [6]. The scientific discussion continues actively, and nobody reached the consensus: the cognitive poetic is still a project, a boiling pot, unsystematized and unsteady set of ideas, which is not formed into common system, into the theory, which will be used as "the scientific bases of study".

We made an attempt to contribute to development of the cognitive poetics theory, studying it in the context of urgent "non-fiction" problems of literary studies, within the frameworks of preparation of the research project "The Cognitive Poetics of Modern Socio-Political Texts". As per the definition of B.V. Tomashevsky, "a discipline, studying the construction of non-fiction pieces, is called rhetoric; a discipline, studying the construction of fiction is called poetics; both rhetoric and poetics constitute the general theory of literature". R. Jakobson formulated "the main problem" of poetics in the following way: "What turns a speech message into a piece of art? [27]. In other words, why do some texts influence on people, and the others leave hem indifferent? Thus, poetics was presented as an analysis method and "a recipe", the construction rules for the literary text, the piece of art, influencing on the reality efficiently and changing it. However, there is a question: what shall be considered as the criterion for artistry? We assumed, that, may be, the ability of text to influence on people and, thus, to change the surrounding reality, can be admitted as this criterion? In modern realities, not only texts and not so much, referred to fiction by the literary theorists and considered to be the pieces of art, influence on the reality. We need to say that our assumption is proved by some works of cognitive poetics. Thus, for instance, P.Swirski writes about

cognitive poetics as applied both to fiction and non-fiction [28]: in his opinion, when determining the degree of artistry ("functionality"), not only the text features are important, but also the conditions and context [29]. (Namely, the metaphor, as the slogan, pronounced at the meeting in time and "overwhelmed the masses" (V.I. Lenin) can be considered as an example of highly artistic literature!). A well-known researcher of Nabokov creative work, New Zealand scientist B.Boyd, goes further in his concept of "evocriticism". In our opinion, his monograph "On the Origin of Stories" [30] is one of the most interesting contemporary works at the confluence of philology and cognitive science. It offers a new evolutionary view on the history of fiction, which, in the author's opinion, take the more important place in people's life, that it is traditionally believed (it is not for nothing that the title of his book coincides with the title of classical work of Charles Darwin. He describes literature as a kind of adaptation, playing its own role in evolutionary development of homosapiens. The fiction was described in this direction previous to Boyd [31], but he managed to inscribe these ideas into wide context of cognitive science, not simplifying the specifically philological problematics. The most common narrative text is one of the central topics of the last book of leading scientist in the sphere of cognitive science, a Nobel laureate in Economy [32].

Conclusion

It is the language that represents the main resource, "a symbolic instrument of power" [33]. "The names and numbers provide the human understanding with the power over the world" [34], "the power, enclosed in language, is invisible, as the fact, that each language classifies, escapes from us, and each classification is a tyranny [35]. The contemporary history persuasively demonstrates us, that every structural reform of social life began with implementation to political language and mass consciousness of new "pitiless words": it is impossible to make revolution without changing the old language and vocabulary, as only they prepare the change of consciousness. Any serious political action started from the language reform, from introduction of new words into everyday use.

Summary

From here, under the first stage of research project "Cognitive Poetics of Modern Socio-Political Texts", we formulated the following statements:

1. Cognitive poetics is a scientific discipline, studying a) the construction of literary texts (as per classical interpretation of the literature theory by B.V. Tomashevsky) and b) the mechanisms of their influence on people, by

means of which the reality is changed (as per the theory of mind). The object of study of this scientific discipline is a literary text, at that, the criterion of artistry is exclusively its ability at this time to influence on people and to change the surrounding reality in this way. Hence, the purpose of cognitive poetics is to create text construction methods, influencing on the reality. It is the language that promoted the creation of new reality, including on the political, economical and social one.

2. A concept is a key notion of the cognitive poetics. One of its important features is its communicative orientation. We conducted a pilot study, aimed at identifying of perception strategies of individually author's concepts by the reader; it provides the additional opportunities to describe the concept content. The results allow verifying the relevance of one or other features of the concept in the readers' mind, and serve as an essential complement to other investigation methods of the concept at the text material.

The analysis of readers' perception allows determining base strategies of text conceptual interpretation, including the strategy of actualization of conceptual component, the strategy of actualization of personal meaning, the strategy of symbolization, the strategy of desymbolization and the strategy of representativeness

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