

ETHNOCULTURAL IMAGE CONSTANTS AND THEIR DISCOURSE LITERARY CORRELATES

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ABSTRACT

The present article considers the problems of word valency and its associative abilities in the space of literary discourse, reveals author's priorities in figurative apprehension of natural lexis and characterises lexical and semantic combinability of lexical items with the meaning of "atmosphere precipitation".

Key words: linguistic world-image, ethnocultural consciousness, semantics, discourse syntagmatics, semantic valency, associative links

1. INTRODUCTION

Ethnocultural scripts of socium, metaphoric and mythologic world view built in their languages, on the level of functioning and personal apprehension get semantic increments and nano-meaning, which is foremost represented in the space of narrative and, especially, of poetic literary discourse. In this connection, this article is aimed at characterization of figurative system of natural lexis, i.e. specified lexical-semantic word group with the meaning of "atmosphere precipitation", its representation in lexicographical sources and realization in texts of works by I.A. Bunin as universally recognized master of literary word.

Problem definition is stipulated, on the one hand, by relevance of ideas, related with extralinguistic and intralinguistic factors of language functioning and development, suggested by representatives of Kazan linguistic school (I.A. Boudouin de Courtenay, N.V. Krushevsky (1)), on the other hand, by priority of this phenomenon apprehension in languages and their discourse realizations, orientation on both language constants and speech presentation of semantic, functional and ethnocultural aspects. In consideration of text (discourse) combinability we rest on of A.F. Losev's supposition about "endless semantic valency of linguistic sign" (2), on thoughts by N.D. Arutyunova about figurative combinability (3), on research by native and foreign linguists in issues of language and literary metaphor (4-12 et al.), on lexicographical data (Explanatory, Etymological dictionaries of the Russian language, dictionaries of symbols (13), Dictionary of poetical images (14), Dictionary of the language of 18-20 centuries' poetry (15) et al.).

Actuality of research is determined by both theoretical, ethnocultural aspects, as well as by educating ones, since works by I. A. Bunin are included into the educational standard of the Russian Federation and aid development of young generation's national self-identification.

Address to best representatives of the Russian literature today, in the period of mass pop culture dominance and formation of TV- and Internet-dependent generation, is an essential condition for realization of huge educative potentials of the best of the Russian language, introduction through the language to the knowledge of the world, opening of other dimensions of human being, and finally, soul and thought awakening. Highest achievements of fictional art are vital at all times, such works do not lose its significance, on the contrary, each time reveal new features by meaning increment in interaction with cultural and aesthetic information of reader's space-time continuum.

Exactly such timeless, potentially inexhaustible and particularly present-day are the works by Ivan Alekseevich Bunin, the brilliant stylist, unrivalled word master, his world perception and philosophy are remarkable for treating nature and surrounding world as life breath and inspiration: *It's not a view attracting me, / Not colours greedy eye would notice, / But what is flushing in those tints: / That's love and zest for life* ("Though the air is cold and damp...") (17).

Though this author's language has been thoroughly interpreted in issue-related literature, nevertheless the lexical units that name natural phenomena had not been studied systematically in metaphor and connotative terms.

In this connection the article singles out some specific tasks:

- 1) to analyse connotative semantics of lexical units that name atmosphere precipitation;
- 2) to consider selectional parameters of precipitation names;
- 3) to establish author priorities of image and axiological interpretations of such lexical units by I. Bunin.

The oldest lexical layer, including names of atmospheric phenomena refers to universal categories of the world view and is ethnos-wanted at all stages of its development. It is characterized by highly national informational content and a unique stability, as well as reference to a certain climatic zone.

This lexical group is considered by research workers as the one that takes interposition between categories of substance and predicate, having mixed onomasiological type - substance-predicative. As stated by A.A. Ufimtseva, such names were singled out by the nature of the expressed character value, material denotation of such is divisible, and ideal denotation (notion related with such name) is non-discrete and in character is related with processness and substantiality (18).

The composition of analysed group of names is formed from lexical units bound by generic-specific relations, highest-level generic word is *precipitation*, specific – *snow, rain, sleet, rime, dew, drizzle etc.*

2. SYNTAGMATICS OF LEXICAL UNITS RAIN / SHOWER IN I.A. BUNIN'S WORKS

Archetypical image of rain is related with the element of water, which in pre-scientific mind represented the female principle, mother's milk, "that fed the Earth and the Air" (19). The following periods of the Slavic civilization development were marked with the notion of rain as a "masculine element" (20), associated in the folk perception with fertility, in the wider notion - with life, fertilization of soil by the gods, this phenomenon was identified with hierogamy of air and land, was treated as life-giving and purifying power, with healing effect, gifting people wisdom and foresight (13).

Traditional perceptions based on the Russian folklore in literary text undergo author's correction, the writer's "mental authorial world", created in accordance with semantic field of universe, as well as idioethnical and cultural constants, apply additional semantic layers.

According to research material, in Bunin's discourse there are widely represented association patterns in the line of anthropomorphization, realized at the level of predicative combination lexical unit *rain*, based on image-associative links and metaphorical transfer, thus stimulating use of verbs that create **anthropomorphic image of rain**, first of all, movement, action and effect, speech activity, sounding.

Situational images, reflecting author's specific thinking are determined, as a rule, by the character of comparative and contrasting constructions, metaphorical rethinking of rain. Distributive links with metaphorized verbs create traditional line of associative likeness in two directions: resemblance to a living being and resemblance to other natural or physical phenomena: *I suffered, felt bored, — as ill luck would have it, it was raining for three days, the rain ran rhythmically, beat against the roof with thousands of paws, it was grey in the house ("Dark avenues"); <...> thunder ran down somewhere and big stars of a fast bit of rain flapped against dust and horse-cab ("Three roubles").*

Metaphorical valency, opening new features and links of phenomena, give an impulse to rethinking of source lexical unit, origination of qualitative meanings. Of interest are the episodes of converse correlation, when rain is understood as not the name of atmosphere precipitation, but it becomes an epithet, naming features of object: *Small grasshoppers without a break rain from plantain... (Faraway); <...> meanwhile thousands of sparrows rained from one roof to another... ("Antonov's apples").*

It is characteristic for Bunin to **objectify** names, interpretation of characteristic features of rain, actualization of its material nature adds to creation of a visible image of rain drops in the form of correlations **rain drop – nail head / needles / beads / spangles / diamonds / stars**, based on some sensuous component of word meaning, rendering archetypical content on the basis of visual and sensual image: form of drops, size, density of flow etc.: *Here's a drop, like nail head, / Has dropped <...> ("No sun, but ponds are light..."); The room darkened, wind flew upon those trees, bending down their fresh green, and glasses of the door and of windows sparkled with sharp spatter of drizzling rain (Antigone).* Due to such explicate name combinations Bunin conveys his emotional and aesthetic perception of natural phenomenon.

Observations show that predicative and attributive components that characterize lexical units *rain* or *shower*, are actively used jointly within one context, making single text fragments and presenting the described phenomenon in its entirety, vesting a number of qualitative characteristics, ability to appear with various intensity and possibility to effect the man or the surrounding world.

3. SYNTAGMATICS OF LEXICAL UNIT SNOW IN I.A. BUNIN'S WORKS

Actualization of archetypical meanings, associating snow with a sleep, death, ascending to primitive beliefs of the Slav (21), stipulates the character of syntagmatic links of lexical unit *Snow*.

In the space of Bunin's texts a tendency dominates to objectify snow in its description, this dominance is realized at the level of indirect co-occurrence, based on remote associative links. Contingence of snow with realia of object world is based on traditional perception of snow as a snow mass, covering land surface in winter time.

The image **snow – cover, winding sheet**, related with a folklore image, based on ancient mythological ideas of the Slav about snow covering as a bed (21), is refracted in the author's mind and gets individual interpretation at the level of semantic development of the context, also related to the death motive: **There shows white the fuzzy bed of snow, / In snowbanks mourning fir-trees freeze ("Frosty breath of snowstorm...").**

Concretion of the snow image - the cover - is expressed in use of words, denotatively and associatively related to cloth and cloth items. Comparison of cover with cloth is predetermined by certain characteristics of snow, including characteristic features of snow covering surface: **The patriarchal kingly cloths – / Of snows and rocks linear rows – / Lie like a fancy tallith on Lebanon ("Sun Temple").**

Characteristic of snow surface in "light-colour attribute" parameter **snow– gold cloth / satin / silk / velvet**: *Blinking of glare of the snow's gold cloth...* ("Teacher"); *The mountain snow is silk-like* ("Lucifer"), specifying through comparison with precious stones, minerals and gems: **snow – malachite / phosphorus / mica/ mercury** etc.: **The golden-glaring snow** ("The black are firs and pines that show through in the front yard dark..."); <...> *And phosphorus-like steams the snow* ("Frost").

Actualization of attribute "powdery, granular matter", contained in the meaning of lexical unit *snow*, is through such realia as *down, powder, dust, ash, salt, sugar, grits, grain etc.*: *...all the night long there were thick, black-and-green, in white sugar, spruce forests* ("Fungus"); **The snow, somewhere satiny, somewhere fragile, like salt, loose and getting harder in the frost, shrieking and crisping with each, most careful, step** ("Ignat").

As it may be seen from the examples, comparing snow with the object world, the author gives preference to comparative constructions, allowing to show the natural world in full diversity of changes, to place emphasis to changeability of this phenomenon.

As for **anthropomorphic patterns**, they are less characteristic for Bunin's discourse in description of snow, nevertheless they are used to show the physical properties of snow and feelings descended upon hero or character of the book. In some cases impersonated image of snow is created due to vision verbs semantics (*to see, to look*), verbal and cogitative activity (*to call*), psychological effect (*to deceive*), as well as adjectives and adverbs of relevant semantics: *Dense magnificent snow poured in the town with its drowsy flakes, as always deceiving with its tender, especially white whiteness, that spring is somewhat near* ("Arsenjev's Life. Youth"); *Just snow and sky in silent night / Look from the garden in the moonlight? <...> Called are they by above, called are by desert snows* ("Winter day in Oberland").

Along with the above said, there occur reverse combinability, realized at the level of transfer of snow properties to other natural realia (**flourish – snow**): *And all the sweet-scented warmth of this spring heaven had drowsily and blissfully buzzed with bees and humblebees, burying themselves in its honey-sweet curly snow* ("Mitya's Love"); *Deep in snow, so curly and sweet-scented / The whole of you is buzzing with a blessed sing* ("Old Apple Tree").

4. CONCLUSION

Drawing on the example of considered lexical units and their syntagmatic potential, it has been discovered that image compatibility in works by I.A. Bunin is inspired by ethnocultural constants of Russian people in the context of their certain correlation with French natural scenes.

It has been shown that there may be observed unification and indissolubility of state of nature and feelings of man in perception of natural phenomena, such as rain, shower, snow. Thereat axiological characteristics of those phenomena have been detected, the word *shower* usually is presented in the positive, purifying sense, while *snow*, preserving its traditional negative connotations, includes positive ones, related with reminiscences of native land, home, and about Russia at large.

Image compatibility of considered lexical units is based on their dual contents: substantial and eventive.

Conceptualization of image compatibility is effected within the framework of extended contexts with consideration of interaction of attributive and predicative blocks.

Syntagmatics of Bunin's discourse is based on close and remote associative links, creating new images or renewing or enriching the existing ones. Author's priorities in figurative apprehension of natural lexis are presented as anthropomorphic directionality and objectification, which influenced syntagmatic associative relations of considered lexical units (images of living beings (man), "object" image, image of cover, image of nature).

5. SUMMARY

Natural lexis as element of graphioc structure of the author's works with actualization of author's implications, undraws the associative-sense field of texts: in compliance with creative concept and textual systemacity, distant in their usual sense lexical units may draw closer. Stereoscopic effect of sense structure of considered lexical units, explicating the unique perception of the surrounding world and at the same time their evaluation, is based on compilation of common language and author's individual meanings, object-discursive and evaluative senses, static and dynamical components. All the above gives rise to variety of sense fields, their perception stimulates their penetration into the Russian language both at logically-notional and connotative-imaginative levels.

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