

Concept of "Beauty" In the Image of Nature (Based On English Literature of XVIII-XIX Centuries)

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Abstract

The article identifies and analyzes stereotyped images and standards of beauty. The concept of beauty is one of the most important values of society. Plenty of linguistic researches are dedicated to the study of various aspects of beauty. This is quite natural, since it is one of the most important, meaningful concepts of aesthetics. The study presents the description of linguistic means of expressing beauty of environment in English Literature of XVIII-XIX centuries as beauty is one of the most important concepts of our life. The colors of nature in the English literature have a wide color range. English writers idealize beauty; they do not tolerate any errors. Images of nature in the present paper have been subdivided into four groups: the sky, the Earth, water and seasons. Special attention of English writers is paid to the eternity, immensity and mystery of the sky. They express their inexplicable love of flowers. Water element is compared to a human being. And every season is beautiful in its own way.

Key words: Nature, Writers, Sky, Earth, Water, Seasons

INTRODUCTION

In recent years interest of linguists to aesthetics has been increasing. The word “beauty” is mentioned almost in every literary work. The attractiveness of the “beauty” concept for analysis can be explained by the richness of its components as well.

In the program of language study we can observe a link between the actual analysis of language semantics and analysis of concepts. The conceptual structure of the linguistic unit deduced from the meaning of the nominative sign allows us to make certain observations regarding the structure of representation of knowledge existing in human thought [Gafiyatova, Samarkina, Shelestova 2016, 146]. This concept in the English

language includes a great number of images related to different spheres of life; one concept can include nature, human appearance and traits of character. In the images hierarchy of beauty in the English language the perceptive images of the environment (nature) are drawn forward [Biktagirova, Deputatova 2014, 122].

Beauty of nature is described in English literature through a wide range of colors beginning from turquoise-blue sky with white clouds and ending with brilliant green vegetation. It has been revealed that English literature is characterized by gloss of objects. With regard to the nature it is shine of leaves, petals, sun shine. English writers idealize beauty without any infelicity. Everything must be perfectly beautiful, pure and dazzling: “in the shade of a tall laurel bush the sunlight slipped over the polished leaves” [Wilde in 2001, 17]; “the green lacquer leave” [Wilde in 2001, 53].

It should be noted that the great importance in English literature is attached to describing fragrances. In nature there are lots of nice, delicious flavors: “the rich odour of roses, the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn” [Wilde in 2015, 72], “the keen aromatic air” [Wilde 2015, 110].

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present paper images of nature were categorized into four groups:

1. The sky (the heavenly bodies, precipitation, etc.)
2. The Earth (trees, grass, flowers, fields, meadows, etc.)
3. Water (rivers, lakes, seas, oceans)
4. Seasons.

The Sky

English poets and writers are concerned with eternity, immensity and mystery of the sky. Its might and invisible power interests the readers. In English literature color palette of the sky is very bright. Frequently the sky is depicted in blue and turquoise colors. The blinding light coming from the stars, and heat of the sun is also noted in English literature: “the blue cloud-shadows” [Wilde 2001, 41]; “turquoise of the summer sky” [Wilde, 2015, 13]; “the little clouds like ...glossy white silk” [Bronte 2009, 71]; “The sky was pure opal” [Cristie 2015, 47]; “...flushed with faint fires, the sky hollowed itself into a perfect pearl” [Eliot 2005, 16]; “blue ... dance, like the sun wading thro’ the misty sky” [Dickens 2008, 118]; “the sky ... light, fainting, permits the starry fires to burn, with keener lustre thro’ the depth of heaven” [Fielding 2011, 33]; “the charm of its approaching dimness and pale-beaming sun” [Bronte 2009, 112]; “the sun went down amongst the trees, and sank crimson and clear” [Byron 2014, 81]; “that sky with its high and light clouds which are sure to melt away as the day waxes warm - this placid and balmy atmosphere” [Austen 2006, 51]

The Earth

A special trait in the description of nature by English writers is inexplicable love of flowers. Flowers and plants described in the works of literature are of different types, fragrances and colors. E.g., long living tall trees, wide thick forests, planted fields, all this beauty of the nature presented in the English literature. A wide range of colors is striking in its brightness and variety. There the reader can find golden and honey-colored laburnum and shiny green ivy leaves and bright red roses, variegated purple pansies. English Nature is painted in all colors of the rainbow: “honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of a laburnum” [Wilde 2001, 58]; “the green lacquer leaves of the ivy” [Wilde 2001, 134]; “the verdure of the early trees” [Bronte 2009, 120]; “beautiful wood stretching over a wide extent” [Browning 2003, 151]; “The hill crowned with wood was a beautiful object” [Dickens 2008, 41]; “... apple trees, pear trees, and cherry on one side, and a border on the other, full of sorts of old-fashioned flowers, stocks, sweet-williams, prim-roses, pansies, mingled with southernwood, sweet-briar, and various fragrant herbs” [Tekkerey 2007, 186]; “light illumined the wreathed and

dewy orchard trees and shone down the quiet walky under them” [Blake 2009, 12].

Water

In English literature the water is the source of everything that is alive, an important and necessary component of life. Water is a powerful and natural element (sometimes disaster) beyond human control which can cause a storm of emotions in a person. The river is described by poets and writers as a kind of playful little girlie with whom you always feel funny and cozy in private. Of all the water elements the river acts as very kind and serene and lavishing care and affection: “the river, tingeing the water with a soft purple hue” [Bronte 2009, 34]; “How lovely the little river is, with its dark changing wavelets! It seems to me like a living companion while I wander along the bank, and listen to its low, placid voice, as to the voice of one who is deaf and loving” [Eliot 2005, 182].

The sea in English literature is depicted in the image of a very young guy. It is no longer so quiet and submissive. The authors point out its breadth and depth. The sea keeps the age-old mysteries. Passion seethes in it comparable to the size of its waves: “the sea, far thro’ his azure, turbulent extent [Maugham 2008, 55]; “the purple seas”; “stormy seas” [Tomson 2014, 43]; “It keeps eternal whisperings around desolate shores” [Keats 2001, 214]; “the wideness of the Sea” [Bronte 2009, 55]; “Surely the sea is the most beautiful face in our universe” [Child 2011, 79].

The sea gives aesthetic pleasure, one wants to enjoy it. The person also feels like to entrust himself and his secrets. Ocean is presented as the most uncontrollable of all the elements. Strength, power and character merge into one in it. It is portrayed in the role of a mature man with his assertive character and mightiness: “one billowy, white ocean” [Eliot 2005, 144]; “A shoreless ocean round the globe” [Tomson 2014, 152]; “the vital ocean” [Maugham 2008, 63]; “beholding the tranquil beauty and brilliancy of the ocean’s skin” [Melville 2013, 212]. The color spectrum in the description of the water element in English literature is predominantly blue, blue, azure tones.

Seasons

Autumn in English literature is depicted as extraordinarily beautiful, time of the year which is full of fun. Fall shines with its colors of yellow, red, cinnamon and others. Golden carpet of leaves covers the streets. It is also time of fruitful harvest accompanied by singing songs: “jolly Autumn, sing the song of fruits and flowers” [Blake 2009, 185]; “in the blossom-blanced orchard trees, whose boughs drooped like white garlands over the wall” [Bronte 2009, 98]; “russet (leaves)” [Bronte 2009, 114 p.]; “autumn was rich in golden cornstalks” [Bronte 2009, 114]; “let autumn

spread his treasures to the sun, luxuriant, and unbounded" [Dickens 2008, 53]; "yellow autumns spies" [Tomson 2014, 254]; "yellow plain, "With golden light irradiate the happy world" [Wilde 2015, 40]; "left his golden load [Blake 2009, 15]; "lane noted for nuts and blackberries in autumn, a few coral treasures in hips and haws" [Fielding 2011, 45].

Frequently in English literature one can find description of summer. Summer is described by British writers as a gentle and sweet time of the year. The beauty of nature is revealed in bright colors: "summer of sweetness and affection [Bronte 2009, 67]; "It was a sweet murmur of the summer foliage, which drowned in music" [Conrad 2008, 199]; "the sunlight piercing the distant boughs, "heavenly blue of the wild hyacinths" [Bronte 2014, 176]; "It was a close, warm, breezeless summer night" [Cristie 2015, 73]; "The sun which golden light doth shed, the clouds of pearly hue" [Byron 2011, 87]; "through the small leaded panes of the window streamed the apricot-coloured light of a summer day" [Wilde 2015, 141]; "lane noted for wild roses in summer" [Wilde 2015, 142]. The variety of colors is the greatest one in summer. Bright flowers, fruits, green grass, foliage of trees, dazzling sun – all this and many other fruits of summer nature can be found in creativity of English poets and writers.

Spring in England represents a new life after harsh winter conditions. Colds are becoming increasingly rare; the days are getting longer and much warmer. Everywhere there are green plants, trees covered with foliage, primroses in blossom. New spring after the recent heavy rains is described by poets as something sacred and innocent. Nature is painted green, tulips bloom in the gardens, the air is filled with the intoxicating aroma: "Sweet spring, full of sweet dayes and roses" [Eliot 2005, 31]; "They were fresh now as a succession of April showers and gleams, followed by a lovely spring morning" [Tomson 2014, 192]; "music wakes around, veil'd in a shower of shadowing roses, on our plains descend" [Tomson 2014, 200]; "Through primrose tufts, in that green bower the periwinkle trailed its wreaths" [Wordsworth 2011, 33], "with green hath clad the hill" [Maughan 2008, 41].

In winter snow wraps the ground in England only for a few days. The rest of English winter resembles Russian autumn: fog, humidity, rain and wind. In English literature you can rarely see the description of winter. But when the English poets and writers write about it they use exactly the time when the streets are covered with a small layer of snow. They speak about the snow-covered streets as if they are covered with silver and crystal snowflakes: "The streets looked as if they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening" [Wilde 2015, 131]; "long icicles like crystal" [Wilde 2015, 139]; "but whose best winter delight lay in its utter solitude and leafless repos [Eliot 2005, 32]; "Winter keenly the brightening flood [Tomson 2014, 355].

RESULTS

After study of English literature we conclude that the English nature is a very important component of literature. It can reflect feelings and emotions of the characters intermingling with them. The soul of a man and the world of nature are interrelated, reflected in each other, and are in harmony.

But often it serves as a standalone image independent of the characters or sometimes it can be a protagonist. English Nature can also have a very important role in the narrative work as a supplement to the main action.

English writers and poets glorify Nature. It has spiritualized and healing powers. The most frequently used season by English writers and poets is summer. A little less often spring and autumn and very rarely winter is described.

With the help of bright colors, writers convey to the readers a romantic mood, a subtle spirituality and cool freshness.

It is a very interesting feature of English literature that with the help of various expressive means, and most often metaphors, nature comes to life, it is able to speak, hear and feel like a person.

DISCUSSION

The research has been carried out in the context of scientific conceptual researches conducted at the junction of such scientific directions as cognitive linguistics (A. Wierzbicka, N.D. Arutyunova, E.S. Kubryakova, V.Z. Demankov) and linguoculturology (V.I. Karasik, Y.S. Stepanov, V.A. Maslova, I.A. Sternin, Z.D. Popova).

The concept of "beauty" was studied in various types of discourses, namely, in anecdotes, in phraseological units and aphorisms, as well as in literary texts.

The key specific characteristics of the concept of "beauty" in English culture is the opposition of directly emotional and rationally aesthetic evaluation, highlighting the choice as a condition for recognizing something by the proper criteria of beauty.

The signs of the concept of "beauty" in the images of nature in literature are:

- 1) The central conceptual feature in the English language is "something attractive, attracting attention";
- 2) The sign of "getting pleasure from the perception of objects of reality, which harmonious in form, color, size, etc";
- 3) The sign of being "pleasant, delightful, corresponding to harmony".

CONCLUSIONS

Nature in literature of the XVIII-XIX centuries interacts with the human being. In English literature it can also act as an independent background to the main action.

It is worth noting that the concept of "beauty" is one of the most significant concepts in the system of life values. The material studied makes it possible to determine the prospects for further researches, which we see in the search for representations of beauty in different cultures and the systematization of key differences. Studies can be more private in nature and consist in studying the concept of "beauty" in the diachronic aspect. Studies may reflect a broader view of the concepts studied, namely, the analysis of the concepts of "beauty" at the junction of linguistics and other sciences and aspects of the life of native speakers of English, for example, ethics, aesthetics, music, philosophy, etc. It will also be very productive to make a comparative study of this concept in different languages as well.

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