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METALANGUAGE IN IRIS MURDOCH'S THE SANDCASTLE

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Presentation of communication and thoughts of the characters and author in fiction is one of the most relevant themes of literary criticism. Describing the personality of the author and her characters provides an opportunity for the reader to learn their perception, memories, thoughts, feelings, pleasures, pains, drives, needs, desires, purposes and goals. Metalanguage is the material that enables scientists and readers to comprehend deep thought patterns, hidden motives and suppressed emotions because linguistic reflexivity reveals value priorities of a personality, his or her intelligence, convictions and beliefs. Looking in the depths of consciousness appears to be one of the reasons why Iris Murdoch lets us see the metalinguistic activity of the characters. It is the most important way of character presentation in *The Sandcastle.*

The current study will look closer at linguistic reflexivity of the main characters and particularly that of William Mor in Iris Murdoch's *The Sandcastle* as one of the essential characteristics of the narrative style of the novel. We will also make an effort to classify metalanguage according to the nature, functions and structure of the utterances in the novel. We have chosen this work of Murdoch because it abounds with instances of linguistic reflexivity. It is not only the subject matter of a number of dialogues but also a part and parcel of the inner speech of the characters.

We believe that the investigation of the discursive nature of metalanguage in Iris Murdoch's *The Sandcastle* is quintessential for any literary analysis of the novel. Reflection concerns not only particular lexical units but it is also connected with cognizing the process of communication in all its complexity. Linguistic consciousness of the character is in the focus of the author's and reader's attention and reality perception is achieved at the stage of linguistic reflexivity as reflection, related to human behaviour and interaction with other people.

With the manifestation of metalanguage in a work of fiction we can notice conscious intellectual efforts to overcome the conventions of interaction between people. Metalanguage seems to be that controlling system which does not let us be taken in by the misleading language and actions of other people, sometimes it guards us against our own delusions. However, metalanguage is a part of the ordinary language and that is why it can also create delusions, can distract us from experiencing the reality by substituting the experience with obsessive self-examination and introverted deliberations which are the excesses of our self-consciousness and reflexivity.

Metalanguage is often used to avoid some tension and awkwardness of communication, and linguistic reflexivity is characteristic mostly of people with a relatively high level of intellectual and cultural background who tend to be always aware of politeness, accuracy and efficiency of interaction. It may be deduced that the main character of the novel of Murdoch has a perfect command of the language. The nature of particular instances of metalanguage and their functions play the pivotal role in the process of reflection and 'self-interpretation', reflection of one's own life (be it personal, routine or spiritual life – the life of thoughts and emotions) is inextricable from language and communication interpretation. The relevance of the interpretation depends on the person's overall culture' [2]. Thus, the protagonist is presented as a person who wants and is able to interpret and control communication.

The dialectal unity 'reflection-recklessness' and the correlation of creation and destruction in the concept of reflection are identified in the metalanguage of the main character of *The Sandcastle*. William Mor realises his real feelings thanks to reflexivity and constant quest for that elusive sensation that is smouldering deep in his consciousness. However, constant reflection of his actions robs Mor of the ability to live his life to the full from the very beginning and prevents him from leaving his old way of life and taking risks to find happiness.

Mor cannot see that his presence is important for anybody, and he is simply unable to get away from his social standing because it is the essence of his identity and reflexivity, serving as the guard for identity. It does not allow him to elope with Rain Carter. In our view, the moment when William Mor had to make a decision, his subconscious reflexivity riveted him to the chair and did not let him go. Nevertheless, it is a real moral dilemma in this case and we are in no position to judge the main character, rather we would like to look closer at the instances of linguistic reflexivity in the novel. Reflection helps William Mor clearly see the real state of affairs. But it also impedes his actions and makes him indecisive because consciousness is closely linked to rational behaviour and conventional morality, and the love of a married man to a young girl demands recklessness. I. Murdoch wrote: 'Our destiny can be examined but it cannot be justified or explained…' [3]. In the novel we feel that destiny can be reflected but not challenged.

William Mor is constantly in the state of reflecting interaction with other people. What they and he say is of paramount importance to him: '*Of course it takes a long time to know a man, and this is only an impression. What do you think, Mrs Mor?' Mor held his breath. He thought the question rather bold. He hoped that Nan was not going to dislike Miss Carter*' [4, p. 29]; '*You still haven't sold this box, Tim', said Donald. Really! Mor, doesn't Don know how Tim always responds to any remark of this sort – and if he does know, why does he make it*' [4, p. 64].

In all the above-mentioned examples metalingual comments are directed at the perlocutionary and illocutionary force of the utterance and not only its semantic aspect, which means that the novel is interactive and dynamic, i.e. the discourse draws the attention of the characters, writer and reader. Doing and making things with words is what interests Iris Murdoch and her personages most of all.

Linguistic reflexivity does not always mean objective evaluation of the interlocutor's speech and in many cases it does not help Mor formulate and control what he says. Moreover, evaluation of already finished communication prevails in the metalanguage of Mor, manifested by the author.

Reflection constantly brings the main character down to Earth, but it does not hinder his denial of reality in favour of a dream right until the last moment. It could be that Mor's love to Rain might be his real life that was destroyed by conventional perception of reality, conceiving one's social standing in the society, and conformity to conventional morality, induced by extensive reflection to prevent disintegration of personality. Reflection of life and speech leads William Mor to the thought that his attachment to Rain is not arbitrary. But it is reflection that transmogrifies his love into 'ephemeral phantasmagoria', to use the words of J.C. Oats [5]. Murdoch juxtaposes rational behaviour to the behaviour of a person in love, both reflected in the tormented mind of William Mor.

Reflection substitutes reality, speech is superseded by metalanguage and the essence of life seems to lie in perpetual creation and destruction of sandcastles. Sand could be our life. Sandcastles are our dreams that perish in spite of all our emotions because the sun of our rational mind dries up every drop of free will. Metalanguage is necessary for conflict resolution and it enhances understanding of reality and concepts, represented in communication. It is remarkable that sometimes a single word in the novel provokes a lengthy comment and we can see the character's true feelings and emotions thanks to his metalingual utterance or verbalized thought that are often connected with the narrator's words and may be inherent to the author's style.

Linguistic reflexivity in the novel often disrupts interaction because it is used to exacerbate the tension, which is best revealed in the dialogues between Mor and his wife Nan: 'Don't nag him about the climbing', said Mor. Donald wanted to go on a climbing holiday. His parents were opposed to this. *'Don't use that word at me!' said Nan. 'Someone's got to take some responsibility for what the children do'* [4, p. 4].

Metalanguage utterances are numerous in the novel, which demonstrates exceptional importance of interaction for the author and her characters. We have found crucial complexes of metalanguage in the text which do not simply comment on the use of words but rather concern conceptual depths of human consciousness and focus on illocutionary forces and perlocutionary effects of utterances. Such complexes are most frequent in dialogues between the main character and others.

Speaking about language in terms of speech acts, the main character uses metalanguage as the first-order language with reference to reality without preliminary examination of the object-language. As a result, language becomes a common theme for discussion and is not so directly related to linguistic reflexivity but rather directly to its role as a tool and means for creating socially, culturally and personally conditioned reality, and that is why personages discuss not just their utterances but relations, feelings, motives and thoughts constituting their existential being in the world.

The study of nature and functions of linguistic reflexivity presupposes investigation of its classification. I would like to look at several variants of systematizing the stock of metalanguage in Iris Murdoch's *The Sandcastle*. First and foremost it should be mentioned that metalanguage can be distinguished on the basis of the object of reflexivity: **a) word (lexical unit and its illocutionary force in speech); b) utterance (its illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect)**.

We can also distinguish conventional and unconventional metalanguage, though the difference is not distinct. **Metalingual clichés** and original **utterances of speakers** are what is meant by this distinction. The functioning of linguistic reflexivity in the author's words, direct and indirect speech of characters, is an important factor in the study of metalanguage which is strongly connected with the main character's reflection.

Classifying metalanguage according to its functions one has to take into account the facts that **reflective function** is realized in every metalingual utterance, **speech evaluation** is linked to its interpretation by characters, and **orientation, selection, regulation** and **control** are hardly ever explicated, pertaining to the domain of inner voice and even more to the subconscious. **Interpretation** and **evaluation** of one's own and others' speech play a vital role in understanding the conceptual basis of the characters' personality: *'Mor was answering a question. 'Freedom,' he said, 'is not exactly what I would call a virtue. Freedom might be called a benefit of a sort of grace – though of course to seek it or gain it might be a proof of merit'* [4, p. 55].

We think that we should speak about the means of manifestation in terms of the nature of reflexivity. Metalanguage is inevitably based upon the object language and uses the same material form which makes it immersed in our consciousness and influenced by the prejudice and subjectivity present in human language. Although it should be mentioned that metalanguage has its own cliches and operates as a distinct form of control over our utterances, metalanguage is still subjective and Iris Murdoch intends to reveal the characters not only with the help of their utterances and thoughts but also thanks to the manifestation of their self-perception and linguistic reflexivity.

If to use the classification of I. Vepreva [1], metalanguage of the novel mostly has to do with **personal** and **stylistic** assessment of the speech norms. **Dynamic** and **derivational** reflexive utterances are not so important in the novel because there are not so many instances of neologisms or superficial wordplay at the derivational level. According to the efficiency and felicity of metalanguage one can distinguish metalanguage that resolves communicative tension and those metalingual utterances which exacerbate it. Another possible classification could adhere to the dichotomy 'polite-impolite' which is present in most instances of metalanguage because small talk is of paramount importance and its norms are conditioned by the rules of speech etiquette.

It is our conviction that any metalingual utterance deals with the object-language utterances as signs that have syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects. Metalanguage of the novel is not restrained to one definite aspect but we can say that the main ones are the relations of utterances to reality and human beings which are the two basic elements of reflection.

The means of linguistic reflexivity manifestation are first of all the direct and inner speech of the character, as well as the comments of the narrator which often describe the process of reflexivity upon the speech of the characters and sometimes dwell on the perlocutionary force of the words and their powerful effect on the personages. If to speak about the linguistic means of reflexivity manifestation, we have to say that there were no limitations to the use of any linguistic units for the purpose of reflection. Linguistic reflexivity enjoys a great range of variable means because the author is using metalanguage as a first-order language, i.e. the most important aspect of the life of the personages is their speech and perceiving of what they are talking about. Assessment and interpretation of *The Sandcastle* are intertwined with metacommunication of the main characters, with their self-consciousness which is meticulously reflected in the text. The explication of language personality by the author via metalingual utterances speaks a lot about the extremely introverted consciousness of the author herself, her utmost attention to the subconscious, inner world and linguistic background of the characters.

The study of personality of the main character of *The Sandcastle,* based on the metalingual utterances, has been implemented in our research only to a certain degree and we think that systemic analysis of the text should reveal more peculiar features. So far it has become clear that William Mor is a highly introverted individual with extraordinary acuteness of linguistic competence and performance, but he lacks moral integrity and suffers severely from deficiency of values and priorities in life which has become more of a habit to him. He knows a lot about himself but he does not live his life to the full because he constantly re-establishes the distance between his real feelings and intentions and the expectations of society but there is no other way to become a human being and this premise is the answer why William Mor does not dare to elope with Rain Carter, his social standing and background are in the heart of his identity and no matter how fake and artificial this life is in reality: '*He knew he ought to follow Rain out – but again he could not. The scene held him prisoner, his wife's presence and her words pinned him to his chair, his whole life contained him like a strait-jacket*' [4, p. 322].

This conformation suppresses the fundamental desire of William Mor to love and be loved, to live a real life with sincere feelings and deep-rooted relations. Rain Carter may offer him a chance to become a new person but the same reflexivity which revealed to him his real feelings binds him to the relations already established, and here lies one of the most important problems raised in the novel. Is it possible for a human being to live a life with sincere feelings and emotions not mitigated by the society and self-discipline?

For William Mor it turns out to be impossible and we feel that the author's point is quite clear. There has never been such a place where one could build sandcastles. Any illusion of freedom as not a virtue but ability to do what you like is short-living and the irony of the situation is that William Mor formulates this premise himself and subconsciously he is destined to stay with his family and colleagues: '*If... by freedom we mean self-discipline, which dominates selfish desires, then indeed we may call a free man virtuous!*' [4, p. 56].

But his reflections show us that every person looks for fulfilment and full realization of his intentions and society and self-control are the guards of tradition and social order which are not always pertinent and stimulating to starting a new life out of sincere but selfish desires.

We feel strongly that *The Sandcastle* deserves to be in the list of the finest achievements of Iris Murdoch, and it is invaluable for the study of metalanguage. In our short study we have paid tribute to this largely neglected novel of Iris Murdoch which has long been passed over because it did not dwell ostensibly upon any resonating aspect of the postmodern moral challenges but was penned in the best tradition of realism under considerable influence of existentialism with a particular stress on life as a virtue.

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КОНЦЕПТ БОГ В ПОЭЗИИ ПЕРВОЙ ВОЛНЫ РУССКОЙ ЭМИГРАЦИИ

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Концепт БОГ является центральным в религиозном дискурсе; основным понятием религиозного мировоззрения. По определению "Краткого философского словаря", Богу в христианском понимании присущи высшие духовные совершенства, такие как: *вечность, независимость, самобытность, вездесущность, всеведение, премудрость (София), благодать, любовь и милость, праведность и истина, творчество и всемогущество, беспредельное величие и неприступная слава; Бог олицетворяет высшую нравственность* [5]. Эти характеристики, присущие Богу как верховному существу, управляющему миром [2], легли в основу множественности способов вербализации данного концепта в русском языке. В словаре синонимов приводится ряд, состоящий из 15 лексем: *Бог, божество, верховное существо, творец, создатель, господь, боженька* (ласков. или ирон.); *всевышней, всемогущий, вседержитель* (высок.); *вышний* (устар. высок.); *предвечный, царь* (или *отец*) *небесный* (церк.); *небожитель* (книжн.) [1].

Лексические средства актуализации концепта БОГ в русском языке зависят от того, как решается вопрос "личности Бога" (признание или непризнание Бога живым существом). *Человеколюбче, Владыка(о), Хранитель, Спаситель (Спасе), Создатель, жизни Податель, Святый Крепкий, Цареви наш Бог, Сотвори-*