

MAIN ELEMENTS OF NOVELS, NOVELLAS AND SHORT STORIES (WITH REFERENCE TO CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES)

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The article is dedicated to the problem of studying the main elements of novels, novellas and short stories. Modern approaches of prominent American and English scholars to classifications of main elements of novels, novellas and short stories are analyzed. A brief overview of main elements of novels, novellas and short stories with the reference to contemporary literature of the English-speaking countries is provided in the article. Main elements of a plot are elicited and analyzed. Theoretical material for work on theoretical literary concept «character» is provided.

Keywords: contemporary literature of the English-speaking countries, character, novel, conflict, theme, novella, short prose form, long prose form.

Introduction. Novels, novellas and short stories differ greatly from each other but all of them contain some elements that are common for the abovementioned long and short prose forms. The lack of unanimity among Ukrainian and foreign scientists about what essential elements long and short prose forms contain leads to the emergence of various approaches to their classifications (T. M. Andersson, M. Howard, W. Bascom, J. Wimmer, K. Surber, F. Marinaro, G. Abramovych, O. Mishchenko, O. Bandura, A. Tkachenko, etc). Thus, the **main purpose** of the following article is to provide a brief overview of modern approaches of American and English scholars to classifications of main elements of novels, novellas and short stories with the reference to contemporary literature of the English-speaking countries.

Presentation of basic material of research. Novels, novellas and short stories usually contain the same elements, except that there may be more than one of each of these elements in a novel. Unfortunately, there is no definite classification of common elements that novels, novellas and short stories contain. For instance, the first group of scholars claims, that *setting, theme, character, plot and point of view* are elements that can be found in any novel, novella or short story [6]. The second group adds two more elements to the abovementioned: *character, plot, setting, theme, point of view, style and tone* [8]. The third group itemizes such common elements as *setting, theme, conflict, character* and *plot* since only these five elements should be mentioned regarding any story.

In this article we'll stop more thoroughly at such novel elements as *setting, theme, conflict, character* and *plot*, because they are undisputable from different points of view and all of them make an integral part of any story.

Let's start with the first element that is *setting*. *Setting* is usually defined using two simple words – «*place and time* [5]». It helps its readers imagine a picture in their mind of where and when the story takes place:

In those days Mr Sherlock Holmes was still living in Baker Street and the Bastables were looking for treasure in the Lewisham Road. In those days, if you were a boy you had to wear a stiff Eton collar every day, and schools were usually nastier than now. But meals were nicer; and as for sweets, I won't tell you how cheap and good they were, because it would only make your mouth water in vain [7].

A novel usually can contain more than one *setting* and, what is more, each of them can have some sub-*settings*.

Most scholars agree that there are two types of *settings*: *integral* and *backdrop*. The main difference between them is the importance of the *setting* to the story. If the story can take place in any *setting* it is defined as *backdrop* [8]. If everything in the story is influenced by its *setting* it is defined as *integral* [8].

The second common element of any long and short prose form is *theme*. It can be defined as «the main idea that weaves the story together, the why, the underlying ideas of what happens in the piece of literature, often a statement about society or human nature [8]». In other words, it is a principle idea that the author wants to communicate in his/her literary work [9].

For instance, the theme of the famous fable «*The Ant and the Grasshopper*» by Aesop is that it is better to be prepared for days of need.

Next element that is common for novels, novellas and short stories is *conflict*, as it is hardly possible to imagine a story without it. In literature, a *conflict* is defined as «a literary element that involves a struggle between two opposing forces» [2].

Some scholars consider that «the most effective way to identify a conflict is to write a conflict statement. A conflict statement is a sentence that briefly states what the main character wants and what is preventing him/her from attaining that desire [10]».

Conflicts may be internal and external. In a story an internal conflict does not usually represent a «visual opposition [4]». It is «a struggle that takes place in a character's mind [4]». Internal conflict emerges when the main character experiences mixed feelings or emotions and has to make a choice between good and evil, right or wrong etc.

For instance, *a teenager goes through hard times after losing his parents in a car accident*.

External conflict, in its turn, is a struggle that occurs between the main character and any outside force. There are several types of external conflict in literature:

- a) character versus character;
- b) character versus society;
- c) character versus nature;
- d) character versus supernatural;
- e) character versus technology [1; 3].

In a *character versus character* type of conflict, the main character usually has a problem with another character (characters) in a story. Sometimes another character is depicted as an animal and not a person.

A *character versus character* type of conflict occurs in novels where the main hero fights against a villain. «This form of conflict may present alone, or in conjunction with other external conflicts» [3].

When a story has a *character versus society* type of conflict, it includes «any conflict against a large organization or societal norms [1]». An example of a character versus society type of conflict can be «Fahrenheit 451» by Ray Bradbury which was published in 1953. The novel shows a future society in which knowledge is considered to be bad and books are outlawed and whose protagonist, Guy Montag, though it's his job to burn books, secretly collects them.

A *character versus nature* type of conflict comes from «the naturalism movement [1]». With this type of conflict, the main character fights with various forces of nature in order to overcome them. Although stories with this type of conflict usually take place in the wilderness, they can occur in urban settings as well [9].

«*The Old Man and the Sea*» by Ernest Hemingway is one of the best examples of a *character versus nature* type of conflict.

If a story has a *character versus supernatural* type of conflict it means that the main character fights against something that doesn't belong to our world: it can be an alien from another planet or a strange creature with some magical powers.

When the main character confronts some technological forces, it is *character versus technology* type of conflict. These technological forces are usually represented by robots or computers.

Numerous writers, literary critics and researchers claim that «each of these types of conflicts rarely exists alone; it is common to have two, three [1]» or even all of them in the same story.

The fourth main element we have to consider in this article is *character*. In long and short prose forms writers usually use different characters that perform different roles in the narrative process and these characters aren't equal. In order to classify them scholars suggest several criteria according to which characters can fall into four groups:

- a) character's importance;
- b) personality development of a character;
- c) character's role in the story;
- d) depth of the character's personality.

According to the first criterion, characters are divided into the protagonist, other major characters, minor characters and extras [12].

The most important character in any novel, novella and short story is the *protagonist*. Although there can be two or more major characters only one of them is the protagonist. «Even if a novel has several leading characters, all of them of seemingly equal importance it is usually possible to single out one of them as being at the novel's core» [12].

Other major characters may include some other leading characters as well as the *antagonist*. They are «vital to the development and resolution of the conflict. In other words, the plot and resolution of conflict revolves around these characters [18]».

Minor characters are the opposite of major characters and that's why writers do not usually spend much time describing them. They «serve to complement the major characters and help move the plot events forward [18]».

Extras aren't really characters. They are just mentioned in order to bring some realism to the story.

According to personality criterion, there are eight types of characters in a novel: round, flat, dynamic, static, stock, love interest, confidantes and foils [17]. Let's look at them in more detail.

Round characters are also often called major and dynamic characters. But to tell the truth there is a slight difference between round and dynamic char-

acters that we'll discuss later. These are characters that «develop throughout the story, making their qualities difficult to identify completely, right up to the end [17]». Round characters usually have many complex personality traits that help writers develop them more fully.

Flat characters do not usually have a complex personality but some of their traits that are described make them recognizable and as a result stereotypical. They do not develop throughout the story. They just play «a supporting role to the main character [17]».

Dynamic characters are major characters that can represent both the protagonist and antagonist. They are so-called developing characters «whose personality changes through the course of the story [17]». Due to this change characters' personality changes completely and irreversibly and that is the main difference between dynamic and round characters. Although round characters develop throughout the story, their personalities do not change.

Static characters do not develop and remain the same throughout a story. They are minor characters whose personalities are consistent and unchangeable throughout the whole story [17].

Stock characters are usually represented by flat ones whose personality traits are not only recognizable, stereotypical and very easy to identify but mocked as well [17].

In some stories we can find *love interest characters*. Writers depict them as «the romantic focus of another character [17].

Although we are discussing characters and not real people there is often a need in someone whom main characters can trust. This way, readers get to know everything about thoughts and secrets of main characters. Such a character is called a *confidante* [17].

One more type of character we can single out using the personality criterion is a foil who serves as a contrast to the protagonist's personality. This type of character is used when the writer wants to enhance protagonist's virtues through the obvious contrast [17].

Next classification that should be mentioned in this article is represented by four types of characters (character's role in the story): protagonists, antagonists, underdogs and sidekicks [17].

The *protagonist* is the main character in any literary work. It is usually a good person who has a definite goal and who wants to achieve it [17].

The *antagonist* is the character who usually opposes the protagonist's goals, is the cause of the conflict and whom the protagonist confronts. The antagonist is not always a bad person with negative traits but he/she is the kind of character that «readers love to hate» [17].

The *underdog* is a character that is cheated, abused or mistreated by other characters in a book but doesn't want to give up. Underdogs usually believe in their own abilities that can affect their destiny [17].

The *sidekick* is usually represented by flat or static character. It is a «relatively recent linguistic term [16]» that derived from the term «sidekicker», both terms mean «a close companion» or «associate». The sidekick's personality is often weaker than protagonist's personality and his/her main role is to support the protagonist or antagonist. Nevertheless, in a book the sidekick can perform a number of different functions and highlight protagonist's behavior or best qualities.

One more classification we have to discuss in this article is based on depth of the character's personality criterion according to which all characters are divided into one, two and three-dimensional.

The term «one-dimensional» means «relating to a single dimension or having no depth or scope [15]». It is used with characters who lack depth and whose only side of the personality comes through. That's why readers see one-dimensional characters only from one view.

Writers use one-dimensional characters to create a life-like setting: taxi-drivers, waiters, shop-assistants etc.

Two-dimensional characters, in their turn, are «integral to the plot's progression and usually interact with the protagonist [13]».

Although two-dimensional characters neatly fit into a novel they do not have their own history. They are included in a novel to assist the protagonist to undergo some changes throughout the story and they never change themselves.

Three-dimensional characters have very complex and changing personalities. They are full of emotions and worries and play important roles in a novel. They are not always ideal but they look real and recognizable. They are able to undergo some changes and become better.

The fifth element that is common for novels, novellas and short stories is a plot. As Richard Jewell claims the plot is the basic plan of any long and short prose form and is «one of the most essential elements contained in novels, novellas and short stories» [11]. «The plot is like a pillar of the building. In case we remove the pillar, the whole building will certainly collapse [6]».

Ronald B. Tobias in his the book «20 Master Plots» singles out 20 different types of a plot: guest, adventure, pursuit, rescue, escape, revenge, the riddle, rivalry, underdog, temptation, metamorphosis, transformation, maturation, love, forbidden love, sacrifice, discovery, wretched excess, ascension and descension [14].

Typically, the plot of any novel, novella or short story contains certain core elements. These core el-

ements include the exposition, the rising action, the climax, falling action and the resolution [7].

The exposition (or introduction) is the very first phase of the plot. It occurs at the beginning of a story. Here readers are introduced to the main characters, the setting and the conflict.

Scholars define the rising action as such a part of a plot where the conflict begins to develop [7].

Most scholars define the climax as «the point of highest interest in terms of the conflict and the point of the story with the most action [7]».

The falling action is a part of a plot where «the conflict between the protagonist and antagonist unravels, with the protagonist winning or losing against the antagonist [7]».

The last plot element, but not the least, is the resolution. It is that part of a plot where the conflict is resolved. The resolution is considered to be the final stage of the plot where the long lasting conflict is settled [9].

Contemporary literature of the English-speaking countries contains some of the best examples of novels, novellas and short stories written by prominent American, British and Australian writers among which there are Cormac McCarthy, Jim Crace, J.D. Salinger, Toni Morrison, Sandra Cisneros etc. What makes them such remarkable writers? They are true masters at combining the five key elements that go into every story: character, setting, conflict, plot and theme.

Prospects of further research. However, the undertaken study is not at the end of all aspects of investigation of different approaches to classifications of the main elements of novels, novellas and shorts stories in contemporary literature of the English-speaking countries. Challenging directions of further scientific research can be as follows: the investigation of distinctive features of novellas with the reference to contemporary literature of the English-speaking countries.

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ОСНОВНИ ЕЛЕМЕНТИ ВЕЛИКИХ І МАЛИХ ПРОЗОВИХ ФОРМ (НА МАТЕРІАЛАХ СУЧАСНОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ АНГЛОМОВНИХ КРАЇН)

Анотація

Стаття присвячена проблемі вивчення основних елементів великих і малих прозових форм. Проаналізовані сучасні підходи провідних американських та англійських науковців щодо класифікацій основних елементів великих і малих прозових форм. У статті проведено короткий огляд основних елементів великих і малих прозових форм на матеріалах сучасної літератури англійськомовних країн. Встановлені і проаналізовані основні елементи сюжету. Представлено теоретичний матеріал для роботи над теоретико-літературним поняттям «персонаж».

Ключові слова: сучасна література англійськомовних країн, персонаж, роман, сюжет, конфлікт, тематика, мала прозова форма, велика прозова форма.

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ОСНОВНЫЕ ЭЛЕМЕНТЫ БОЛЬШИХ И МАЛЫХ ПРОЗАИЧЕСКИХ ФОРМ (НА МАТЕРИАЛАХ СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНЫХ СТРАН)

Аннотация

Статья посвящена проблеме изучения основных элементов больших и малых прозаических форм. Проанализированы современные подходы выдающихся американских и английских ученых относительно классификаций основных элементов больших и малых прозаических форм. В статье проведен краткий обзор основных элементов больших и малых прозаических форм на материалах современной литературы англоязычных стран. Установлены и проанализированы основные элементы сюжета. Представлен теоретический материал для работы над теоретико-литературным понятием «персонаж».

Ключевые слова: современная литература англоязычных стран, персонаж, роман, сюжет, конфликт, тематика, малая прозаическая форма, большая прозаическая форма.

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АКТУАЛЬНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ СТРУКТУРНОЇ ЛІНГВІСТИКИ

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Розглянуто напрями структурної лінгвістики. Визначено основні властивості мовних факторів, розкрито різні підходи дослідження мовних одиниць, трансформаційної граматики, глибинних та поверхневих структур і універсалій.

Ключові слова: структурна лінгвістика, дистрибуція, трансформаційна граMATика, універсалії.

Постановка проблеми. Структурна лінгвістика – галузь мовознавства, предметом якої є будова (структура) мови. Виникнення структурної лінгвістики зумовлене рядом факторів: 1) необхідністю віднайти цілісність об'єкта мовознавства; 2) прагненням подолати безроздільне панування порівняльно-історичного методу, який не задовольняв практичних потреб перекладу, викладання іноземної і рідної мов, укладання словників, створення практичних граматики; 3) внутрішньою логікою розвитку мовознавства, яке, пройшовши етапи зовнішнього боку об'єкта, зіставлення з іншими об'єктами, вивчення історії, підійшло до пізнання його внутрішньої структури; 4) розвитком структурного підходу до об'єкта свого вивчення у різних науках у XX ст.

Аналіз останніх досліджень і публікацій. Мовознавці в різних країнах, зокрема, Фердинанд де Соссюр, Л. Блумфільд, Бодуен де Куртене, Л. Сьєлслев, З. Харріс, представники вітчизняної науки: П.Ф. Фортунатов, С.К. Шаумян, Ю.Д. Апресян, Л.В. Щерба, Р.Р. Піотровський, В.С. Перебийніс та ін. висловили ряд положень, які стали основою структурної лінгвістики. Слід підкреслити, що виникнення структурної лінгвістики зумовлене попередніми досягненнями мовознавства. Якби мовознавча наука не досягла значних успіхів у вивченні свого об'єкта, були б неможливими виникнення та успішний розвиток структурної лінгвістики.

Постановка завдання. У даній статті ми плануємо розглянути напрями структурної лінгвістики,