
THE ANATOMY OF AN ARTISTIC TEXT

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The article is a survey of contemporary approaches to text studying. The focus of the work is primarily laid upon an artistic text, its constituents and levels. The discussion is held within the scope of the Russian literary and linguistic tradition. The theories of text structuring dealt upon in the article also deal with the methodology of text analysis. The strong and weak points of suggested scientific outlooks are revealed.

Key words: text analysis, composition, message, foregrounding

Studying a literary text structure and specifics goes back to ancient times and a literary text due to its imagery is historically characterized as a piece of art [5. P. 318]. The modern approaches to text structuring are numerous and vary from general semiotics to special literary or linguistic stylistics. In terms of contemporary semiotic theory a literary text is a system of particular signs whose functions and significance are determined by the others like any system implies. The text cohesion and systematic character are possible through the unity of the contents and the structure. Y.M. Lotman once wrote that the same as ideal is inseparable from the material structure of our brains; the artistic image is inseparable from the text structure [6. P. 11].

A more language focused theory of the text architecture reminds of the general idea of the language system as it is and suggests a two-level system with the *deep* and the *surface structures* [10]. The deep structures include the theme and the message, the correlation and the interaction of characters specified by the imagery. A most significant element here is the author's intent and pragmatics. The deep structure is materialized through language and is currently transformed into a surface structure. The both are interdependent: the deep structure can be likened to a computer program imposing its own rules and the choice of language means, while the surface structure affects the deep one materializing it [10. P. 57].

Though the text definition as well as understanding of the number and the nature of its constituents are shaped rather ambiguously in modern linguistics the differences are mainly terminological and do not change the essence of the phenomena. Thus, quite similarly V.V. Odintsov points out the *category of the contents* (theme, characters, message) and the *category of the form* (arrangement, language, expressive means) as the core elements of a literary text [9. P. 43].

The same layers are discussed by A.I. Gorshkov. Now they are called *the plan of content* and *the plan of expression* correspondently. The former includes the theme, the message, the artistic reality, the latter deals with the language means involved, the choice of words, the text arrangement. Particular attention is given to the word choice and arrangement for it being the principal instrument of the text continuity [2. P. 141]. The language elements and the elements of the artistic reality make up the text architectonics, i.e. the

exterior of a verbal piece and its parts. The message and the architectonics merge within the numerous reflections of the image of the author; the text arrangement and the architectonics merge within the plot. At the top of the text structure is the image of the Author [3. P. 247].

A literary text as an artistic unity is studied within the scientific school of Vinogradov (Gorshkov A.I., Kozhevnikova N.A., Nikolina N.A., Novilov L.A. and others (1) where its structure is a strict hierarchy and the message is transmitted up through the text levels. Consequently there are three levels:

— *the Aesthetic Level (ideyno-estetichesky uroven')* the author's aesthetic idea of the artistic reality embodied in a literary text;

— *the Genre and Composition Level (zhanrovo-compozitsyonnyi uroven')* the poetic structure of the text in its broadest sense, the way the literary text is "made up", its construction and the scheme conditioned by the genre, the characters, the events, their interaction and correlation, the arrangement and the relation of artistic details;

— *the Language Level (iazykovoy uroven')* the system of artistic language means involved which express the aesthetic message of the text. The language level is further composed of the lexical (semantic), grammatical (morphological and syntactical), phonetic layers. The elements within one level or between the levels are in permanent interaction to transmit particular semantic or stylistic peculiarities [8; 16–17].

In this connection the theory of the *Text Semantic Field (TSF) (tekstovoye semanticheskoye pole)* suggested by L.A. Novikov broadens the possibilities of the text study. The TSF semantics and arrangement turn up more context dependent, more flexible and less definite than the ones of the language semantic field [6; 554–570, 557]. L.A. Novikov also stated that the TSF is formed by the category of the author to make it a system of heterogeneous elements expressing a single unified idea [6]. The characteristics of the textual semantic space are shaped by the essential elements of the text structure (2) — the so called *key signs (kliutchevye znaky)* [7] which immediately refer the reader to some general textual idea.

The notion of key signs is not equal to the notion of types of foregrounding for the latter serve the purposes of the text interpretation and are often known to the reader beforehand (ex. the title, the epigraph etc.). Furthermore, the foregrounding element is seldom repeated in the text, has a greater degree of generality and can be self-sufficient. It is expressed with formal means and occupies a particular part of the text linear space.

Evidently the text message is revealed through the unity and interaction of artistic images, composition, word choice, the author's style. Thus, the text study is only possible when it is analyzed not as a number of equal and homogeneous parts but as a complicated unity of interacting and interdependent elements [11; 126] where each constituent must be treated in connection with others. Such approach is of vital importance to arouse the reader's sense of textual unity and coherence, to make the reader understand the author's intent and outlook, to make the reader the author's accomplice.

The category of the author and its reflection in the text can also be treated as text forming elements. Thus, V.P. Belyanin says that any literary text is a personal interpretation of reality and the text artistic reality is the structured and verbalized reflection of the author's personal picture of the world [1; 55]. Actually the text architecture may largely depend on two meaningful constituents and be fully conditioned by them. First and

foremost is the part of the author with the personal philosophy and the world outlook accompanied by the expressiveness, aesthetics and imagery of an artistic piece. Second is the characteristics of the reader which can be both steady — imagination limits, memory abilities, creative thinking — and flexible — culture, religion, social belonging, mood, surroundings.

The multitude of interpretive strategies leads to the plurality of text interpretations which are diverse in depth and informativeness. Besides, they may differ not only in the “text-interpreter” dimension but also in the “text-cultural code” dimension which makes the methodology of text analysis extremely complicated and sophisticated [5].

Generally speaking, like other objects of the material world the text structure, constituents and features are prone to the double way of analysis: “from the outside” and “from the inside”. The inferences may differ from each other alongside with being naturally complementary. And despite the incongruence in the number and nature of textual elements a few things can be said for sure such as, for instance, that the basic constituents of any literary text are undoubtedly the artistic idea, the imagery, the arrangement and the language (or the individual style).

The consistent patterns a literary text are not limited by its systematic character. Its specifics lies in particular aesthetic demands. A literary text produces a “living model” of reality depicting events and people, uncovering global laws of existence and making the types of situations. The textual phenomena and events are the picture of the many-sided world which is open for studying, understanding and interpretation.

NOTES

- (1) Similar text structure models are found in works by Bakhtin M.M., Grigoryev V.P., Potebnya A.A. and others.
- (2) In contemporary studies there is a terminological diversity and the text essential elements are defined as *bearing elements (opornye elementy)* — V.V. Odintsov, *key elements (kliutchevye elementy)* — A.V. Puzyriov, *message landmarks (smyslovye vekhi)* — A.N. Sokolov, *message footholds (smyslovye opornye punkty)* — A.A. Smirnov, *message cores (smyslovye yadra)* — A.R. Luriya and the like.

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АНАТОМИЯ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО ТЕКСТА

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В статье рассматриваются современные подходы к изучению текста. Особое внимание уделяется художественному тексту, его составляющим и уровням. Исследование проводится на материале русской литературной и лингвистической традиции. Теории текстовой структуры связаны с методологией анализа текста. Автор указывает на сильные и слабые стороны представленных в статье теорий.

Ключевые слова: анализ текста, композиция, идея, выдвижение

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