

COGNITIVE INVESTIGATION OF THE INTEGRATED MENTAL BASIS OF CREATIVE WRITING

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Abstract

In the article it is suggested the cognitive theory of the poetic picture of the world as a methodological frame for further investigation of the poetic text. The main idea of the paper is that poetry as an art is based on the whole system of special conceptual structures which are the part of the conceptual picture of the world and these conceptual structures get representation in the language of the poetic text. The cognitive theory of the poetic picture of the world includes: defining the main cognitive function of the poetic picture of the world; defining the kind of knowledge, which is conceptualized through this function; structuring the field of this knowledge, highlighting its main structural elements which are under the process of conceptualization; defining the specific categories and categorical levels of the poetic picture of the world. Structural organization of the poetic picture of the world is the key point in the paper.

It is stated that poetry as a kind of human cognitive activity reflects the experience of interaction between the human being and the world (“I”-system, “World”-system). the poetic picture of the world as a mental construct fixes standards, expectations and stereotypes about what events and situations may be the subject of poetry and what language form they should be represented in.

Keywords: Cognitive poetics, poetic picture of the world, poetic concept, structures of knowledge, text

Introduction

The article is devoted to describing some theses of the cognitive theory of the poetic picture of the world as a methodological frame for further investigation of the poetic text as an object of cognitive poetics.

Poetic text is a sophisticated object for any philological or linguistics research. There are different approaches to the poetic text analysis. For this reason, different issues and features of the text are in the focus of different studies. One of the approaches consists in considering the poetic text as a special form of conceptual representation. We refer these works to the cognitive linguistics and cognitive poetic field.

Many cognitive poetic researches are mainly related to the conceptual analysis, individual author’s picture of the world, figure/ground, prototypes, deixis, cognitive metaphor, schema theory, possible worlds theory, mental spaces, text world theory and contextual frame theory (Stockwell 2002, Brône Vandael 2009). All these studies are valuable, but the main idea of this article is that poetry as an art is based on the whole system of special conceptual structures which are the part of the conceptual picture of the world. They are represented in the language of the poetic text. Some of these structures have transpersonal character.

Analysis of a great number of writings in cognitive linguistics, cognitive poetics, psychology of creativity, text study showed clear tendency to investigate mental structures of

human consciousness through the language of poetry. As a result, it becomes obvious that unique features of the poetic language are shaped with special mental basis which can be defined as the poetic picture of the world.

Main Text

The complex relations between human's subjectivity and objective reality are in the focus of cognitive analysis. These relations have been changing in history. It is important to highlight that the occurrence of the term "picture of the world" coincidence with new perception of the world in XVIII century (Heidegger 1977). Initially, the true was objective as a part of the world. The picture of the world appears when the true becomes an object of human mind, not an object of the real world any more. Due to this fact that the principles of interaction between human's subjectivity and objective reality have changed the world reflected by human's eye became the focus of cognitive analysis.

From our point of view, ability to create poetry is a kind of cognitive activity of the human being. We consider the poetic text in the cognitive linguistics context as the verbal representation of special conceptual structures. These conceptual structures are the parts of the conceptual picture of the world, but they constitute a subsystem – poetic picture of the world. Poetic picture of the world contains artistic (poetic) concepts, models and schemas for storage and processing of emotional and aesthetic experience of the human being. Poetic picture of the world is represented directly in poetry and in poets' metatexts (theoretical writings) which are devoted to theoretical aspects of creativity – we can consider these metatexts as a secondary reflection on creativity.

One of the main tasks under consideration is finding out the common principles of conceptual representation in the poetic language. To investigate this issue we should remember that there are different types of knowledge are represented in the language. Types of knowledge which is the base for the poetic language are of different nature too. Focusing on the ontological triad (world system, system of language, conceptual system of the person), we distribute this knowledge as follows: encyclopedic knowledge is ontological for the world, language skills are ontological for the language (Boldyrev 2009: 30-34), and basic knowledge of the poetic concepts, models and mechanisms has conceptual and linguistic nature. The types of knowledge exist in a synthetic form due to the interaction between a man and the world.

From our point of view, any poetic text fixes different stages of relations between a man and the world because poetry we can consider as an attempt to find harmony in these relations. So, poetry reflects the experience of interaction between a human being and the world. Therefore, the human being and the world are represented as two interacting systems – "I"-system, "World"-system.

Poetic picture of the world is defined as aesthetically meaningful conceptual subsystem which structures creative activity of a person in the process of creating alternative poetic reality. The main features of the poetic picture of the world are subjectiveness, dominance of emotionality, I-centricity, fragmentariness (Maslova 2011).

We consider the poetic picture of the world is a kind of informational matrix which is the base for creating of alternative poetic worlds. Theory of the poetic picture of the world gives possibility to make a detailed study of creative conceptualization and categorization represented in the poetic language.

Thus, the considering the poetic picture of the world as a separate object of cognitive research includes several consecutive steps:

- defining the kind of knowledge, which is conceptualized through this function;
- defining the main cognitive function of the poetic picture of the world;

- structuring the field of this knowledge, highlighting its main structural elements which are under the process of conceptualization;
- defining the specific categories and categorical levels of the poetic picture of the world.

As it was said, the idea of subjective reflection of the world gives us an opportunity to speak about the interaction of two systems – “I”-system, “World”-system. Accordingly to this idea, the leading cognitive function of the poetic picture of the world is developing the ability of orientation in the subjective reality; it is the base for bringing “I”-system and, “World”-system in the balance.

The main knowledge which is conceptualized through this function is the aesthetically meaningful subjective vision of the existential and emotional personal situations. The main structural elements of the poetic picture of the world should be regarded as poetic concepts, which accumulate understanding of the existential, emotional and sensuous experience, as well as poetic categories.

Creation of a poetic text is possible not only with encyclopedic knowledge, and knowledge of the linguistic patterns, but also with special metapoetic knowledge and knowledge of principles of understanding of the poetic language (Table 1). We attribute the result of creative reflection and the result of theoretical understanding of poetry to metapoetic knowledge. Structural components of the knowledge of language (Boldyrev 2009) correspond to the structural components of the knowledge of the poetic language. Encyclopedic knowledge and metapoetic knowledge are the components which are behind the creation of a poetic text too. They have nonlinguistic nature and belong to the ontology of the world. Knowledge of the poetic language has linguistic nature and belongs to the ontology of the language. Knowledge of famous poetic images, models and ways of image transformation, knowledge of the main artistic models of representation/transferring of emotional impression, knowledge of precedent texts has conceptual and linguistic nature. Saying this, we mean ontological triad: system of the world – system of the language – conceptual system of the human consciousness.

From this point of view, the poetic text is a result of synthetic interaction of different structures of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge. In this case, special knowledge interacts with that one which is necessary for everyday life – common knowledge.

Between the substructures of the knowledge of language and the substructures of knowledge of the poetic language the following analogy exists: the knowledge of the objects of the world in the lexical categorization corresponds to the knowledge of the major poetic models of the emotional experience transferring; knowledge of the spoken linguistic forms corresponds to the theoretical knowledge of versification, knowledge of interpretative nature of language units and categories corresponds to the knowledge of idiosyncrastic (author’s stylistic) components of the poetic language. Thus, the methods and principles of the poetic interpretation of the world and the poetic language as the way of linguistic representation of the poetic interpretation are based on common knowledge and spoken language, but they have their own unique structure. Therefore, poetry reflects the result of interaction between human being and the world (“I”-system, “World”-system).

Poetic picture of the world is represented in poetry as a reflection under vital and emotional experience and in metatexts which are written by poets and dedicated to theoretical aspects of poetry, secondary reflection under creative work.

Poetic language is a link in the chain: emotion, impression, experience – poetic language as a keeper of mental implement for configuring and representation of information – poetic discourse. Poetic language, in this case, is not only the way for correct representation of author’s conception, but it is the way for correct reader’s interpretation and understanding. So, we can define poetic language as poetic linguistic code, where the words and images have

special contextual meaning. Poetry is difficult for deep understanding without knowing of poetic linguistic code. This code is possible to reconstruct on the base of mass of typologically congenerous texts.

Table 1 shows that synthesis of components of knowledge, which takes place in writing poetry, related to creating special poetic code. This code helps to represent changeable man's attitude to himself and to the world. The fact of writing poetry is an attempt to reach harmony in the inner life.

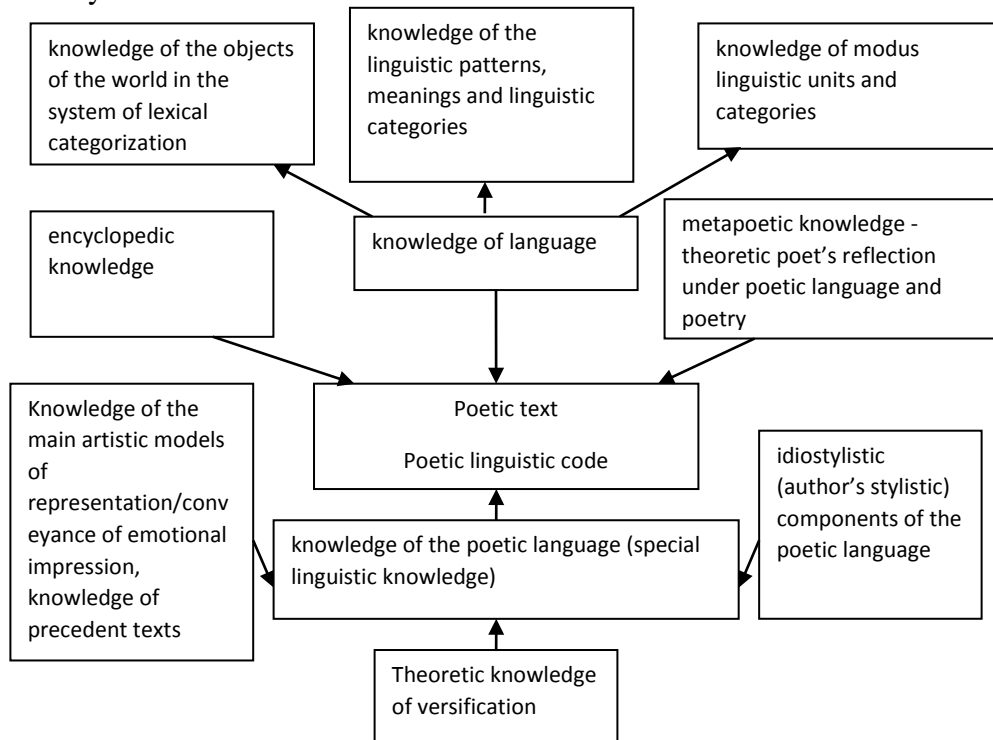


Table 1. Components of knowledge

Obviously, most of knowledge components are known to all members of the society and have a shared character. This fact ensures continuity in conceptualization and representation of aesthetically meaningful subjective vision of the existential and emotional personal situations. Components of knowledge are also used in the process of forming of the cognitive strategies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be stated that the poetic text in cognitive context should be considered as verbal representation of special conceptual structures because it fixes special kind of information and reflects the experience of interaction between a human being and the world. In poetry special knowledge interacts with common knowledge and creative writing has the integrated mental basis which depends on author's mind only partially. So, we need in particular methodological frame for further investigation of the poetic text as an object of cognitive analysis. Cognitive theory of the poetic picture of the world also includes study of artistic (poetic) concepts (Minakhin 2011) and their typology, further investigation of processes of conceptualization and categorization.

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