

**APPROACHES TO REVEALING THE CONCEPTUAL CONTENT OF LITERARY TEXTS  
(COGNITIVE-DISCURSIVE AND LINGUAL-AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVE)**

*У статті розглянуто підходи до дослідження семантики художнього тексту з перспективи когнітивно-дискурсного та лінгво-естетичного аспектів художнього концепту. Художній концепт представлений як динамічна складова художньої картини світу, лінгво-когнітивна одиниця, породжена у результаті взаємодії авторської та читачької художньої свідомості у процесі комунікативно-пізнавальної діяльності, опосередкованої межами художнього текстосвіту.*

*Ключові слова: художній текст, дискурс, художній концепт, концептуалізація, художній / поетичний образ.*

**Background.** In modern linguistics the ways to solve the problem of literary conceptualization are characterized by the divergence of approaches. The variety of research vectors is caused by the aspiration of scholars to find a new reliable methodology oriented on the exposure of the dynamic nature of literary concepts and conceptual systems, substantiation of interdisciplinary oriented conceptual studies which focus on the specificity of concepts interrelation, their role in development of textual semantics.

Contemporary linguistics treats the textual semantics as a system of mental structures – conceptual space that integrates significant textual notions representing author's artistic aims, the results of artistic perception of the world which material representations are localized in multidimensional, multilevel, explicit and implicit verbal matter (Selivanova 247; Zusman 15; Bara; Luchjenbroers; "From Text to Literature"; Vorobyova 4–12).

Retrieval of conceptual information embodied in the literary text can be performed according to certain algorithms. Since the inception of conceptual studies scholars have been working over the procedures of concept analysis and have developed different algorithms that depend on the type of concepts and the environment of their actualization. However, according to prof. O. Vorobyova, most of them are ineffective when applying to the analysis of literary concepts due to a number of reasons, first of all, because of the specificity of their textual embodiment. She generalizes available methods and approaches defining the basic ones: the methods of metadescription, methods of associative networks, the method of cognitive-emotional analysis supported by iconicity and the method of multimodal analysis based on the concept of inbuilt intersemiotic nature of literary text (Vorobyova 6–12). But, despite of the considerable number of ideas generated in the field of literary semantics the scrupulous search for the reliable ways of concept representation analysis has been going on and is still among the most topical issues of conceptology.

Modern linguistics construes the literary concept in the plane of author-reader cooperation: the concept concentrates the result of author's comprehension of reality and exposes these results to the reader. Consequently, literary text semantics is the form that consolidates different types of author's and reader's knowledge and experience and secure the change in their pictures of the world (Behta 57–60). This understanding rests upon the assumption that literary concepts are notional elements, mental units which are not directly localized either in language or in mental spheres of the literary text. They are relative constructs modeled with the aim of research directed to a complex study of language, cognition and culture (Slyshkin). Thus, the penetration into the conceptual plane of literary semantics requires the extension of the textual verbal system, exceeding its boundaries and consideration of the rich palette of philological, social, cultural, psychological factors that accompany creation of the literary text and its efficiency (Behta 57–60).

Following the mainstream of contemporary cognitive and conceptual studies we understand the notion of literary concept as a dynamic component of literary picture of the world, lingual-cognitive unit generated in the result of interrelations between author's and recipient's artistic cognition within the boundaries of literary textual world; it is characterized by semantic versatility, interpretative unlimitedness, aesthetic value, has socially and culturally determined content (Romanyshyn). Literary concepts transfuse the whole literary line (works, the whole heritage of the writer, literary trend or epoch), go out its boundaries into the space of cultural constants of the nation and trigger the motion of senses at the intersection of historical, social, everyday and proper literary rows. The ability of literary concepts to focalize the system of semantic organization of collective and subjective (author's individual) cognition requires their treatment in the plane "literary thinking and culture" with the elaboration of corresponding complex methods of analysis that integrate both linguistic and linguo-cultural approaches, combine traditional methods of stylistic, semiotic, hermeneutic analysis of the text.

**The purpose** of the article is to present and discuss approaches and general principles aimed at revealing the conceptual content of literary text proceeding from a) understanding the literary concept as correlation of its cognitive-discursive and lingual-aesthetic manifestations which exist in the inseparable unity and b) the specificity of literary communication that determines the dialogic nature of literary concept emerging as a superposition of cultural, historical, ideological senses in its semantic structure that arose in the result of common creative reflections of the author and the reader.

**Results**

**Literary concept in cognitive-discursive perspective.** Literary communication develops from the author through the literary text to the reader as an active participant of sense creating process resulted in the comprehension of author's conceptual model of reality that is actualized in the textual world reflecting corresponding norms, values, conscious and unconscious ideologies. Irrespective of its uniqueness author's artistic-conceptual model of reality correlates with a part of general collective experience and according to the theoretical principle of the art as a secondary modeling system is

the limited model of unlimited world, because, according to Yu. Lotman, the model of the object of reality, created by artistic means, simultaneously embraces both particular and universal manifestation of reality and represents the life in all its complexity [Lotman 205–206]. Author's individual literary-conceptual model is commonly represented as a configuration of individual concepts, defining the latter as mental entities with the high level of subjectivity, modifications that accentuate in their semantic structures those aspects which may sometimes contradict the conventional values (Karasik "Linguorolturnaya kontseptologiya" 26; Karasik "yazykovyie kliuchi" 29, 36). The uniqueness and heuristic potential of literary concepts rests upon the cognitive essence of the art; in the basis of literary conceptualization there is an "artistic experiencing" of notions already existing in the ethnic collective consciousness, their combination as a method of developing holistic spiritual position, author's priorities and aesthetic dominants as an outcome of secondary reconsideration of the conceptualized phenomenon.

The author / writer / poet as a subject of artistic cognition, aesthetic, pragmatic and (in general) creative activity programs and directs the reception of conceptual model of the depicted phenomenon. And this reception is grounded in the multilevel semiotic reality of a literary text's world by corresponding textual means: image-associative, expressive, stylistic, compositional, by the palette of verbal imagery with complex semantics created in the correlation of denotative and connotative aspects of word meanings. Textual sense is the result of interrelation of different "textual details" included into versatile systems of connections.

Ambiguity of literary semantics and versatility of literary conceptual model interpretation is determined by the factor of reader's reception (Eco 4) that engages a complex of social, cultural, aesthetic, emotional, psychological factors, dynamics of lingual and communicative competence of the addressee, and is influenced by historical context (both of text creation and text comprehension) (Vinogradov 8–9). This two-dimensionality (author centricity and addressee centricity) of conceptual model of reality as a result of artistic-aesthetic communication in the plane "artistic cognition – culture" renovates the understanding of its basic element – the literary concept. Literary concept as a manifestation of organic interdependence of form and content of literary work is able to focalize the system of sense organization of collective and author's subjective consciousness in cognitive-discursive plane.

The revealing of the specificity of literary concepts and literary conceptual models according to the cognitive-discursive approach presupposes the application of hermeneutic principles and the integration of research tools of linguo-cultural studies and literary criticism which defines the direction of analytical algorithm *from the concept as philosophic notion, mental structure, constant of the culture, literary dominant identified by a vast spectrum of linguistic and extra linguistic knowledge to its implicit and explicit embodiment on different levels of textual matter.*

Involving to the scientific analysis data of literary criticism and linguistics makes it possible to treat the literary semantics fully, to trace in the multidimensionality of the literary concepts the influence of "conceptual images of culture on artistic works" (Kaganovska 37), individual and collective values, evaluations and experience in representation and reflection of reality. Such integration of different philological disciplines allows to understand and relate cognitive (connected to the process of knowledge formation and transmission) and communicative (as a product and object of communicative-cognitive activity) aspects of literary discourse to the character of author's creative activity, type of author's cognition, artistic intentions and conceptions, methods of artistic tasks solution and to perceive their interconnections and interdependence.

Reception and interpretation of the literary text is an active process and final stage in the systemic "author – reader" interplay. Consequently, the literary text as a sense generating entity is a uniting link of literary aesthetic communication resulted in the formation of holistic understanding of author's conceptual system in the unity of logical-notional, valuable and aesthetic manifestations.

**Literary concept in lingual aesthetic space of the literary text.** The interrelation of lingual-aesthetic resources heterogeneous and belonging to different language levels are the source of semantic diversity of semiotic and conceptual space of the text. The aesthetic resources of the language actualized in the literary text are directed to the intensification of sensual and emotional perception, formation of recipients' artistic tastes, activation of their intellectual and creative activity and perform, organized and united by the artistic intention, the role of complex mechanism of explicit and implicit information encoding. The conceptual space of the literary text is embodied in images.

Image as a fundamental category of literary language aesthetics is an aesthetic entity traditionally analyzed in the field of stylistics and literary studies which treated it as a system of expressive and depicting means securing artistic merit in the context of literary process (Vinogradov). From modern scientific positions both the image and the concept are comprehended as lingual-mental categories in which objective-cognitive and subjective-creative aspects are closely connected. Literary concept as well as literary image is construed as building material in formation of literary senses (Nikonova 173).

Proceeding from the fundamental principle of unity of content and form "what" the author is speaking is simultaneously "how" it is spoken since in the development of artistic texture of the literary work the "subtlety" of artistic word plays the crucial role. Verbal image is a "molecule" of poetic language, a representative of the existence of literary work as an aesthetic object; it is an important means of aesthetic mastering that inform the text with bright individual colouring (Kaganovska 17). It is the basis of forming the textual literary meaning, poetic thought that emerges and is realized in the text in the result of correlation between external (general, language systemic) and individual, subjective contexts, world of associations and comparisons characteristic for author's consciousness, it leads into the sphere of different forms of cultural manifestations of the language – mythological, archetypal, symbolic.

Verbal images alongside the so call "nonimagery" vocabulary, semantic shifts and connotative stratification – the whole system of textual construction, its external and internal organization (including the plot, composition, pragmatic intentions) – are the means of literary concept explication.

Analytical processing and of the external verbal cover of the text directs the recipient to the synthetic generalization about the internal circle of senses where each of them reflects in the reduced form the content of a certain textual fragment and constitutes the level of content-conceptual information. Consequently, we understand the correlation of conceptual, ideological, literary and lingual aesthetic aspects of the literary text as a structured system in which conceptual level is not only the central link that connects the level of idea-aesthetic content and the system of expressive means which embody a corresponding artistic idea but also a factor that determines the result of creative comprehension of definite planes of being presented in the form of existential senses and values. The system of concepts that constitutes the basis of author's understanding of the world determines the character and structure of the literary work, the choice of corresponding objects of depiction, actions and states which are able to form the ground for development of literary images, to shape a desired "motion" of associative lines, to create the effect of semantic "tension" as an intensification of informative depth of the text (Gadamer, *"Philosophia i literatura"* 110–114).

The conceptual level of literary texts includes elements of different complexity and abstraction. The analytical algorithms based on the linguo-poetic perspective of research reflecting the dynamic character of forming and functioning of literary text conceptual system in the plane of its lingual-aesthetic manifestation presupposes the development of analytical procedures *from the textual matter to the concept which first step implies "fumbling" in the meaning of poetic word – a medium of conceptual sense – for the information that reflect the characteristic features of the concept, sets of its attributes, predicates, imagery: to the description of concept sphere of the literary work, defining the place of the concept in author's worldview, its connections with other conceptual dominants and modeling of author's individual and national literary system.*

The studies of lingual-aesthetic embodiment of literary concepts first of all should take into consideration:

- semantic, semiotic, associative dynamics of literary / poetic text determined by the very nature of poetic language as "a specific form of imagery representation of reality in the aesthetic evolution of the form against the background of historic development of national literary language;
- diversity of imagery-associative ways of concepts explication, continual nature of textual conceptual system in which the associative-semantic planes of different concepts may intersect, include each other according to the principle of complementation, inclusion etc.;
- types of artistic consciousness and the development of types of poetic cognition; stylistic and genre parameters of the work;
- the phenomenon of semantic versatility of the literary text as a basis feature of its artistic merit.

This versatility of poetic word is the source of poetic image emergence and causes the correlation of objective and subjective aspects of content of the text, its inner and outer forms (according to O. Potebnia). In this respect Yu. Stepanov states that in the structure of the literary text there are two systems of images – the system of immediately represented images and the system of indirectly represented images. The latter may be beyond recipient's understanding but it is as real and efficient as the first one and it develops on the basis of the first one (Stepanov "Frantsuzskaya stilistika" 291). More over the superposition of the imagery elements of the first level, their parallel development, intersection, combinations generate poetic / literary image that does not belong to any of them separately but creates imagery transformations as a result of both planes fusion [там же, с. 290], it generates the "beyond textual" organization of meanings (Bart 417, 459–460) that models author's artistic world and sets the variants of possible ways of its comprehension by the reader.

Linguo-poetic perspective of research of literary concepts also presupposes the necessity to account for the role of thematic, compositional, symbolic levels of the work in the processes of literary conceptualization, extra textual relations of the literary work, its inclusion into historic, cultural and social context.

Combination of cognitive discursive and lingual-aesthetic perspectives of concept analysis or in other words the rapprochement of cognitive and poetic planes of literary concept leads to its (concept) understanding as an embodiment of individual and collective intellect and experience as well as the result of aesthetic representation of the world in personal and national artistic systems of thinking. Application of both described vectors of scientific analysis secures a complex systemic penetration into the problem of literary semantics that construes the text as an integration of imagery, symbolic, compositional, intertextual and epistemological spaces. Extraction of deep conceptual information (due to the ability of consciousness to reconstruct the network of concepts as "compression of dominant senses") resembles the infill of a certain amount of information (packing of voids) caused by a "chink" (Stepanov "V mirie siemiotiki" 8) that exists between the verbal sign and the concept – as an asymmetry between the expected and the realized in the literary text. In the result the lingual-aesthetic phenomena are represented in the form of multidimensional constructs that correlate with corresponding cognitive processes and structure.

Let us demonstrate the process of reconstructing author's conceptual system based on the assumption that the specific character of poetic language, its imagery-associative and lexical-semantic potential is an instrument of literary concept actualization, their cognitive, aesthetic and emotionally expressive embodiment. The poetry of William Wordsworth was selected as the source of illustrative material.

We focus on the peculiarities of poetic representation of space as physical and spiritual backbone of human existence. Wordsworth addresses the problem of poetic depiction of space and representation of human interaction with physical and social space from different ideological and conceptual angles. Space is not only the natural environment of an individual but his essence, the sense of his existence. The maximal trustworthiness and authenticity in representation of space, detailed depiction of everyday ethnical aspect of space, striving for the highest possible artistic expressiveness in reflection of ethical, psychological, social, historic parameters of space, developed in large textual contexts, are aimed at intensification of pragmatic influence on the recipients, secure their emotional "immersion" into the reality.

Space in Wordsworth's works reveals itself both as a factor of comfortable human existence, safety, intimacy and as uncontrolled power, fate, destiny. Space can become hostile to a person, devouring him, taking his life. The popular in the world literature theme of a human being lost in space, engulfed by natural powers is realized in Wordsworth's poetry where poems *Lucy Gray*, *Or Solitude* and *George And Sarah Green* may serve as an example.

The plot of the poem *Lucy Gray, Or Solitude* (written in 1799) represents a real accident (retold to the poet by his sister) – when once a little girl were lost in a winter storm and died. Protagonists of the poem *George And Sarah Green* are also real personalities whose tragic death was reported to the poet by their daughter. Wordsworth's personal comments, his epistolary heritage elucidate poet's artistic intention to sublimate by the poetic imagination the personalities of Lucy Gray, George and Sarah Green in order to imprint in the memory their bright and positive images. However we argue that philosophical, symbolic and ethical content of these poems turns to be much deeper since the symbolization is characteristic feature of the poetry due to its tendency to semantic saturation of a word, due to the general symbolic manifestation of the art as cognition.

Thus, the whole system of images and poetic lexicon of the poem *Lucy Gray, Or Solitude* can be conventionally subdivided into several associative planes which elements' semantics entangling associative senses of accompanying verbal images creates definite notional spheres or domains: emotions, motion, natural elements etc. which form the semantic structure of the text.

Conceptual domain "motion" includes verbal structures that denote aim and direction of the motion (*to the town must go; to light / Your mother through the snow*), characteristics of the motion (*She wandered up and down; And many a hill did Lucy climb; O'er rough and smooth she trips along*), with the sense of overcoming obstacles; this conceptual domain also includes nouns and expressions denoting trajectory of movement, roaming: *The print of Lucy's feet, footmarks; Then downwards from the steep hill's edge; And through the broken hawthorn hedge, / And by the long stone-wall; And then an open field they crossed; And to the bridge they came.*

Conceptual domain "space" is represented by language elements: *the moor; the bridge of wood, the steep hill's edge, the broken hawthorn hedge, the long stone-wall; an open field, the snowy bank, the middle of the plank.*

Conceptual domain "natural phenomena" includes verbal elements: *a stormy night, the snow, the powdery snow, / That rises up like smoke; The storm came on before its time.*

Conceptual domain "state of a person" include poetic expressions: *The solitary child, No mate, no comrade Lucy knew; / She dwelt on a wide moor; That you may see sweet Lucy Gray / Upon the lonesome wild; And sings a solitary song / That whistles in the wind* that perform the function of poetic framing. In addition the word-concept *Solitude* included in the poem's title perform the function of semantic and pragmatic hint on the vector of text decoding as generalizer of integral textual structure and its elements.

The sum of imagery elements meanings in itself does not constitute a symbol, a definite image of an object should be unconventionally convincing as a starting point of researcher's activity in search for the poetic metasenses and ideas. When separate elements of the image are shaped and their semantics decoded they create the ground for generalization of textual symbolic and conceptual content – which in the discussed case we consider as symbols of human existence, loneliness, life. Physical obstacles (spatial – field, hill, moor; powers – storm, snowdrifts) are symbols of tragic fate; the little girl is the symbol of defencelessness, human solitude, a human being as a plaything of destiny.

Fate and tragic destiny as a main directing force of poetic and real plot development in *George And Sarah Green* (written 1808) is explicated in the first line of the poem by the words *strangers, fate* and *grave* that refer to the corresponding interrelating semantic paths of imagery development. Alongside with the conceptual domains "motion" (including the character of motion, aim, direction): *wife and husband roam; Not many steps: A few short steps; For 'any' dwelling-place of man / As vainly did they seek;* "natural powers": *By night, upon these stormy fells;* and "space": *those sternly-featured hills* which contextual semantics realization evokes (similar to the previously analyzed poem) the associative parallels "life – is a road", "life is a roaming in darkness" there are the conceptual domains: "sound" *voice was heard; lonely shriek* as symbols of isolation, alienation, inability to be heard; "death" *He perish'd; A body without life; O darkness of the grave; That last and dreary living one; O sacred marriage-bed of death, / That keeps them side by side;* and "psychological states" that include axiologically contradictory semantic subsystems "suffering" and "quietness": *gently; And quiet now are the depths of air, / As a sea without a wave; the heart of peace; quiet more profound; The heart of quietness; safe, and far; In bond of peace, in bond of love; sorrow and affright; fear and grief; agony of mind.* They become the notional background for conceptual metaphorization "grave means death – death is liberation and repose".

Such sections of text imagery perceived in their interrelations opens a perspective for symbolic interpretation of the motive of Human being in the space of life as a poetic conceptualization of the problem of sense of life, human being and his value orientation in the world, determination of the human fate by supreme powers which dominion is absolute.

Being a central figure in Wordsworth's poetry an image of human reveals a set of conceptual spheres. A man as a bearer of definite social, moral, psychological features is transformed into the symbol. In this respect both analyzed poems (although distant chronologically) can be considered as representations of poet's artistic tendency in conceptualization of anthropomorphic notions through human images. Lucy Gray George and Sarah Green became the symbols of human fate that embody the ideas of human defencelessness against the supreme power, predestination of human fate and mark the general worldview tendency of the poet towards humble contemplation, especially in the final period of his creative activity.

**Conclusions.** The conceptual level constitutes the configuration of the main "knots" of the semantic framework of a literary text as author's corresponding model of the represented world, as a product and result of artistic cognition that occurs in a certain social, cultural, historic and ideological context. Different lingual-aesthetic resources are involved

in the explication of conceptual information. In their systemic correlation they construct the semantic volume of the literary concept, reveal the dynamics of cognitive processes and strategies that form the ground of text creation and interpretation.

Understanding of the unity and interrelation of cognitive-discursive and lingual-aesthetic aspects of literary concept determines the necessity to integrate to mutually directed vectors of analysis: from the system of author's worldview and esthetic, evaluative dominants → through the analysis of ideological content ↔ to the system of literary concepts → and their description by relevant forms of textual actualization” and “from the system of verbal and literary means, dynamics of plot and composition → through the conceptual system of the work → identification of dominant literary concepts of author' individual and collective national literary system”.

Proceeding from the comprehension of the multidimensional nature of the literary text semantics determined by the very essence of fiction and the specificity of poetic language as its instrument and matter the research of the conceptual framework setting the process of sense creation is based on the analysis of lingual aesthetic aspects of the text, semiotic and linguo-cognitive processes underlying the semantic structure, explicit and implicit verbal means of literary concepts verbalization.

All above mentioned prerequisites of the research involves the symbiosis of different methodological models that approach the textual meaning not as a static, inwardly stable feature but as a dynamic result of communicative and discursive practices in the plane of author-reader cooperation and provide the researcher with a vast space for individual analytical activity, the choice of the vector of analysis, flexibility of research procedures, principles and stages.

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**APPROACHES TO REVEALING THE CONCEPTUAL CONTENT OF LITERARY TEXTS  
(COGNITIVE-DISCURSIVE AND LINGUAL-AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVE)**

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**Abstract**

**Background.** Modern linguistics is characterized by the divergence of approaches to solving the problem of literary conceptualization. However despite of the considerable number of ideas generated in the field of literary semantics the reliable ways of concept representation analysis has been the most topical issues of conceptology.

**The purpose** of this paper is to present and discuss approaches and general principles aimed at revealing the conceptual content of literary text proceeding from a) understanding the literary concept as correlation of its cognitive-discursive and lingual-aesthetic manifestations which exist in the inseparable unity and b) the specificity of literary communication that determines the dialogic nature of literary concept emerging as a superposition of cultural, historical, ideological senses in its semantic structure that arose in the result of common creative reflections of the author and the reader. The process of reconstructing author's conceptual system was based on the poetry of William Wordsworth as the source of illustrative material.

**Results.** We proceed from the understanding of literary concept as a dynamic component of literary picture of the world, lingual-cognitive and lingual-aesthetic unit generated in the result of interrelations between author's and recipient's artistic cognition within the boundaries of literary textual world; it is characterized by semantic versatility, interpretative unlimitedness, aesthetic value, has socially and culturally determined content. Understanding of the unity and interrelation of cognitive-discursive and lingual-aesthetic aspects of literary concept determines the necessity to integrate to mutually directed vectors of analysis: from the system of author's worldview and esthetic, evaluative dominants → through the analysis of ideological content ↔ to the system of literary concepts → and their description by relevant forms of textual actualization” and “from the system of verbal and literary means, dynamics of plot and composition → through the conceptual system of the work → identification of dominant literary concepts of author' individual and collective national literary system”.

**Discussion.** The problem of literary aesthetic system and literary conceptualization needs further analysis due to its complexity. The further research involves the symbiosis of different methodological models that approach the textual meaning not as a dynamic result of communicative and discursive practices in the plane of author-reader cooperation and to provide the researcher with a vast space for individual analytical activity, the choice of the vector of analysis, flexibility of research procedures, principles and stages.

**Key words.** Literary text, discourse, literary concept, conceptualization, literary / poetic image.

**Vitae**

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