

Linguistic Means Expressing Nature's Charm in Literary Works¹

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Abstract

The article identifies and analyzes stereotyped images and standards of beauty. The concept of beauty is one of the most important values of society. Plenty of linguistic researches are dedicated to the study of various aspects of beauty. This is quite natural, since it is one of the most important, meaningful concepts of aesthetics. The study presents the description of linguistic means of expressing beauty of environment in English Literature of XVIII-XIX centuries as beauty is one of the most important concepts of our life. The colors of nature in the English literature have a wide color range. English writers idealize beauty; they do not tolerate any errors. Images of nature in the present paper have been subdivided into four groups: the sky, the Earth, water and seasons. Special attention of English writers is paid to the eternity, immensity and mystery of the sky. They express their inexplicable love of flowers. Water element is compared to a human being. And every season is beautiful in its own way.

Keywords: Nature; Writers; Sky; Earth; Water; Seasons.

1. Introduction

In recent years, interest of linguists to aesthetics has been increasing. The word “beauty” is mentioned almost in every literary work. The attractiveness of the “beauty” concept for analysis can be explained by the richness of its components as well.

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The analysis of literary concepts in a fiction today is becoming quite effective in understanding the laws of author's thinking. The conceptual approach has been developed in linguistics, including linguoculturology (Khaybullina et al., 2018).

In recent decades due to changes taking place in Russia an alternative method of teaching (linguistic-cultural method) a foreign language has experienced significant development. Pedagogues following it teach language as a reflection of a socio-cultural reality (Paleha & Egorov, 2015; Bayat, et al., (2014).

In the program of language study, we can observe a link between the actual analysis of language semantics and analysis of concepts. The conceptual structure of the linguistic unit deduced from the meaning of the nominative sign allows us to make certain observations regarding the structure of representation of knowledge existing in human thought (Gafiyatova et al., 2016). Studying the lexical tissue of the work, identification of conceptually significant linguistic units and their semantic content contribute to disclosure of the specific features of the writer's artistic thinking, his personal view of the world and conceptual system (Shtyrlina & Antropova, 2018; Kor et al., 2019).

This concept in the English language includes a great number of images related to different spheres of life; one concept can include nature, human appearance and traits of character. In the images hierarchy of beauty in the English language the perceptive images of the environment (nature) are drawn forward.

Beauty of nature is described in English literature through a wide range of colors beginning from turquoise-blue sky with white clouds and ending with brilliant green vegetation. It has been revealed that English literature is characterized by gloss of objects. With regard to the nature it is shine of leaves, petals, sun shine. English writers idealize beauty without any infelicity. Everything must be perfectly beautiful, pure and dazzling: "...in the shade of a tall laurel bush the sunlight slipped over the polished leaves" (Wilde, 2001); "the green lacquer leave" (Wilde, 2001).

It should be noted that the great importance in English literature is attached to describing fragrances. In nature there are lots of nice, delicious flavors: "the rich odour of roses, the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn" (Wilde, 2015), "the keen aromatic air" (Wilde, 2015).

2. Materials and Methods

In the present paper images of nature were categorized into four groups:

1. The sky (the heavenly bodies, precipitation, etc.)
2. The Earth (trees, grass, flowers, fields, meadows, etc.)
3. Water (rivers, lakes, seas, oceans)
4. Seasons.

2.1. *The Sky*

English poets and writers are concerned with eternity, immensity and mystery of the sky. Its might and invisible power interests the readers. In English literature color palette of the sky is very bright. Frequently the sky is depicted in blue and turquoise colors. The blinding light coming from the stars, and heat of the sun is also noted in English literature: “the blue cloud-shadows” (Wilde, 2001); “turquoise of the summer sky” (Wilde, 2015); “the little clouds like ...glossy white silk” (Bronte & Jane Eyre 2009); “The sky was pure opal” (Cristie, 2015); “...flushed with faint fires, the sky hollowed itself into a perfect pearl” (Eliot, 2005); “blue ... dance, like the sun wading thro' the misty sky” (Dickens, 2008); “the sky ... light, fainting, permits the starry fires to burn, with keener lustre thro' the depth of heaven” (Fielding, 2005); “the charm of its approaching dimness and pale-beaming sun” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “the sun went down amongst the trees, and sank crimson and clear” (Byron, 2014); “that sky with its high and light clouds which are sure to melt away as the day waxes warm - this placid and balmy atmosphere” (Austen, 2006).

2.2. *The Earth*

A special trait in the description of nature by English writers is inexplicable love of flowers. Flowers and plants described in the works of literature are of different types, fragrances and colors. E.g., long living tall trees, wide thick forests, planted fields, all this beauty of the nature presented in the English literature. A wide range of colors is striking in its brightness and variety. There the reader can find golden and honey-colored laburnum and shiny green ivy leaves and bright red roses, variegated purple pansies. English Nature is painted in all colors of the rainbow: : “honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of a laburnum” (Wilde, 2001); “the green lacquer leaves of the ivy” (Wilde, 2001); “the verdure of the early trees” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “beautiful wood stretching over a wide extent” (Browning, 2003); “The hill crowned with wood was a beautiful object” (Dickens, 2008); “... apple trees, pear trees, and cherry on one side, and a border on the other, full of sorts of old-fashioned flowers, stocks, sweet-williams, prim-roses, pansies, mingled with southernwood, sweet-briar, and various fragrant herbs” (Tekkerey, 2007); “light illumined the wreathed and dewy orchard trees and shone down the quiet walky under them” (Blake, 2009).

2.3. *Water*

In English literature the water is the source of everything that is alive, an important and necessary component of life. Water is a powerful and natural element (sometimes disaster) beyond human control which can cause a storm of emotions in a person. The river is described by poets and writers as a kind of playful little girlie with whom you always feel funny and cozy in private. Of all the water elements the

river acts as very kind and serene and lavishing care and affection: “the river, tingeing the water with a soft purple hue” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “How lovely the little river is, with its dark changing wavelets! It seems to me like a living companion while I wander along the bank, and listen to its low, placid voice, as to the voice of one who is deaf and loving” (Eliot, 2005).

The sea in English literature is depicted in the image of a very young guy. It is no longer so quiet and submissive. The authors point out its breadth and depth. The sea keeps the age-old mysteries. Passion seethes in it comparable to the size of its waves: “the sea, far thro' his azure, turbulent extent (Maugham, 2008); “the purple seas”; “stormy seas” (Tomson, 2014); “It keeps eternal whisperings around desolate shores” (Keats, 2001); “the wideness of the Sea” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “Surely the sea is the most beautiful face in our universe” (Child, 2011).

The sea gives aesthetic pleasure, one wants to enjoy it. The person also feels like to entrust himself and his secrets. Ocean is presented as the most uncontrollable of all the elements. Strength, power and character merge into one in it. It is portrayed in the role of a mature man with his assertive character and mightiness: “one billowy, white ocean” (Eliot, 2005); “A shoreless ocean round the globe” (Tomson, 2014); “the vital ocean” (Maugham, 2008); “beholding the tranquil beauty and brilliancy of the ocean’s skin” (Melville, 2013). The color spectrum in the description of the water element in English literature is predominantly blue, blue, azure tones.

2.4. Seasons

Autumn in English literature is depicted as extraordinarily beautiful, time of the year which is full of fun. Fall shines with its colors of yellow, red, cinnamon and others. Golden carpet of leaves covers the streets. It is also time of fruitful harvest accompanied by singing songs: “jolly Autumn, sing the song of fruits and flowers” (Blake, 2009); “in the blossom-blanch'd orchard trees, whose boughs drooped like white garlands over the wall” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “russet (leaves)” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “autumn was rich in golden cornstalks” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “let autumn spread his treasures to the sun, luxuriant, and unbounded” (Dickens, 2008); “yellow autumns spies” (Tomson, 2014); “yellow plain, “With golden light irradiate the happy world” (Wilde, 2015); “left his golden load (Blake, 2009); “lane noted for nuts and blackberries in autumn, a few coral treasures in hips and haws” (Fielding, 2005).

Frequently in English literature one can find description of summer. Summer is described by British writers as a gentle and sweet time of the year. The beauty of nature is revealed in bright colors: “summer of sweetness and affection (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2009); “It was a sweet murmur of the summer foliage, which drowned in music” (Conrad, 2008); “the sunlight piercing the distant boughs, “heavenly blue of the wild hyacinths” (Bronte & Jane Eyre, 2014); “It was a close, warm, breezeless summer night” (Wordsworth, 1979); “The sun which golden light doth shed, the

clouds of pearly hue” (Byron, 2014); “through the small leaded panes of the window streamed the apricot-coloured light of a summer day” (Wilde, 2015); “lane noted for wild roses in summer” (Wilde, 2015). The variety of colors is the greatest one in summer. Bright flowers, fruits, green grass, foliage of trees, dazzling sun – all this and many other fruits of summer nature can be found in creativity of English poets and writers.

Spring in England represents a new life after harsh winter conditions. Colds are becoming increasingly rare; the days are getting longer and much warmer. Everywhere there are green plants, trees covered with foliage, primroses in blossom. New spring after the recent heavy rains is described by poets as something sacred and innocent. Nature is painted green, tulips bloom in the gardens, the air is filled with the intoxicating aroma: “Sweet spring, full of sweet dayes and roses” (Eliot, 2005); “They were fresh now as a succession of April showers and gleams, followed by a lovely spring morning” (Tomson, 2014); “music wakes around, veil'd in a shower of shadowing roses, on our plains descend” (Tomson, 2014); “Through primrose tufts, in that green bower the periwinkle trailed its wreaths” (Wordsworth, 1979), “with green hath clad the hill” (Maugham, 2008).

In winter snow wraps the ground in England only for a few days. The rest of English winter resembles Russian autumn: fog, humidity, rain and wind. In English literature you can rarely see the description of winter. But when the English poets and writers write about it they use exactly the time when the streets are covered with a small layer of snow. They speak about the snow-covered streets as if they are covered with silver and crystal snowflakes: “The streets looked as if they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening” (Wilde, 2015); “long icicles like crystal” (Wilde, 2015); “but whose best winter delight lay in its utter solitude and leafless repos (Eliot, 2005); “Winter keens the brightening flood (Tomson, 2014).

3. Results

After study of English literature, we conclude that the English nature is a very important component of literature. It can reflect feelings and emotions of the characters intermingling with them. The soul of a man and the world of nature are interrelated, reflected in each other, and are in harmony.

But often it serves as a standalone image independent of the characters or sometimes it can be a protagonist. English Nature can also have a very important role in the narrative work as a supplement to the main action.

4. Discussion

Nature in English literature of the 18th-19th centuries interacts with the human being. In some works, it also acts as an independent background to the main action. Through nature a person expresses his thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

In English literature writers and poets most often use the summer season, a little less often spring and autumn, and very rarely winter.

7. Summary

English writers and poets glorify Nature. It has spiritualized and healing powers. The most frequently used season by English writers and poets is summer. A little less often spring and autumn and very rarely winter is described.

With the help of bright colors, writers convey to the readers a romantic mood, a subtle spirituality and cool freshness.

It is a very interesting feature of English literature that with the help of various expressive means, and most often metaphors, nature comes to life, it is able to speak, hear and feel like a person.

8. Conclusions

Our research provides an opportunity to outline the prospects for further researches about beauty in literature of various languages. Research can be considered more broadly not only in literature but also in other aspects of life, for example, in philosophy, culture, aesthetics, music, etc.

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