

MAIN LINGUISTIC APPROACHES TO STUDYING FOREGROUNDING

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AKTUALIZATSIYA NAZARIYASINI O'RGANISHNING

ASOSIY LINGVISTIK YONDASHUVLARI

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ОСНОВНЫЕ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ПОДХОДЫ К ИССЛЕДОВАНИЮ ТЕОРИИ ВЫДВИЖЕНИЯ

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Abstract. Foregrounding is a linguistic phenomenon which allows a text to stand out against the backdrop of the text that conforms with the linguistic norms. The article sheds the light on the origin of the concept of *foregrounding*, the tendency of investigating its theory, as well as a wide range of scientific approaches. In the course of the research the following conclusions were drawn: a text that comprise foregrounded language means stimulates mental work and is perceived to be intricate and thought-provoking by a reader. Foregrounding gives a rise to the creation of a special perception of the object. Foregrounding in a language is normally realized through the usage of stylistic devices as well as consistent and systematic nature of actualization. It enables a writer to fulfill the writer's specific aims and motivations through the text.

Keywords: actualization; foregrounding; linguistic deviation; literary norm.

Annotatsiya. Aktualizatsiya nazariyasi matnda til normalariga mos keluvchi lingvistik vositalar fonida me'yordan og'ishni alohida ajratib ko'rsatishga imkon beradi. Ushbu maqola aktualizatsiya nazariyasini o'rganishga urinishda qo'llanilgan keng ko'lamli ilmiy yondashuvlarni ko'rib chiqish, uning kelib chiqish tarixi va matnda qanday rol o'ynashini ochib berishga qaratilgani e'tiborga molik. Tadqiqot davomida quyidagi xulosalar chiqarildi: asosiy til vositalaridan iborat matn aqliy mehnatni rag'batlantiradi va o'quvchi tomonidan murakkab va o'ylantiruvchi vosita sifatida qabul qilinadi. Oldinga qo'yish obyektni nafaqat tan olish, balki uning ko'rinishini ongda yaratish va obyektni maxsus idrok etishga olib keladi. Tilda me'yordan og'ish odatda stilistik vositalardan foydalanish, shuningdek, aktualizatsiyaning izchil va tizimli tabiati tushinish orqali erishiladi. Bu yozuvchiga o'quvchining

madaniy bilim tuzilishiga “murojaat qilish” orqali yozuvchining o‘ziga xos maqsad va motivlarini ro‘yobga chiqarishga imkon beradi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Aktualizatsiya nazariyasi; me‘yordan og‘ish; lisoniy devyatsiya; stilistik vositalar; til normasi.

Аннотация. Теория выдвижения подразумевает лингвистическое явление, позволяющее выделить в тексте что-то, отклоняющееся от нормы, на фоне языковых средств, соответствующих языковым нормам. Статья рассматривает широкий круг научных подходов, использованных при попытке исследовать теорию выдвижения, раскрывает его происхождение и роль, которую оно играет в тексте. В ходе исследования были сделаны следующие выводы: текст, содержащий в себе средства выдвижения, стимулирует работу мозга, и этот элемент языка воспринимается читателем как что-то замысловатое и в результате заставляет его задуматься. Выдвижение на передний план порождает создание особого восприятия предмета, создание «видения» его, а не «узнавания». Выдвижение на первый план в языке обычно реализуется за счет использования стилистических приемов, а также последовательного и систематического характера актуализации. Это позволяет писателю реализовать конкретные цели и мотивы через текст, активируя определенные структуры знаний читателя.

Ключевые слова: актуализация; остранение; выдвижение; лингвистическая девиация; языковые нормы.

Introduction. Foregrounding is an integral part of linguistic account of literary language therefore a literary text organization in terms of language means calls for constant violation of automatization. Foregrounding in a literary text allows a writer to put information to the fore, defamiliarize a literary text and to exert an emotional impact on a reader. The ultimate goal of this article is to outline the tendency of investigating the theory of foregrounding carried out by English and Russian scholars.

Russian Formalism

Formalism was frowned upon owing to its ambiguity and indifference towards aesthetics, psychology, philosophy and sociology. According to B. Eikhenbaum, the ultimate goal of Formalism proponents was to free poetry from subjective aesthetics and philosophical theories. The pioneers of Formalism advocated eradicating philosophical and religious tendencies and primarily focused on investigating facts (18). The leading Formalist R. Jakobson, in his book “Новейшая русская поэзия” (“The Newest Russian Poetry”), claimed that “the object of literary science is not literature, but literariness, that is, what makes a given work a literary work” (19, 32). The Russian Formalists targeted at a systematic and rigorous literature study. According to W. van Peer, the ultimate goal of Formalists was the “delimitation of literature” from the perspective how literary texts are made and to find the answer to the question about what makes literature “literature” (6, 149). Boris Eikhenbaum points out that the proponents of Formalism assumed that literature as a discipline has to focus on investigating specific peculiarities of a literary material that distinguishes it from other materials. L.

Yakubinskiy reckoned that Formalism does not tend to turn to aesthetics, but it primarily deals with comparing series of literary works with other series of facts, selecting those that overlap with literary ones and in the meantime differ from them function-wise. For instance, what methodological technique could make it happen was the method of comparing and contrasting poetic language and colloquial language (20, 40).

Having freed themselves from the traditional theory “a form-content”, proponents of Formalism stopped perceiving a form as “a vessel that is filled with liquid” (content). The peculiarity of expressions is reflected not in language elements that a literary work comprises, but reflected through unconventional usage of language means. The concept “form” acquired a new meaning and did not call for the correlation between a form and content. The notion “form” was not perceived as something that contains content, but something particular and dynamic that contains a meaning on its own. According to B. Eikhenbaum, having acknowledged the distinct difference between poetic and colloquial languages and admitting the fact that the peculiarity of art rests upon unconventional usage of a material, it was important to bring clarity about the principle of perceptibility of a form so that it could provide opportunities to carry out analysis of a form (18). Similarly, M. Shapir points out that Russian Formalists considered that analysis of art is the analysis of the form of an expression or a word since a form exclusively exposes the semantic meaning of language means. Formalists considered a content as form and targeted at seeking how content is formalized (14, 363–364). It displayed that stylistic devices give a rise to perceptibility of a form that allows a reader to comprehend and consume it. V. Shklovsky in his article “Искусство как приём” (“Art as Reception”) opened up new avenues for conducting specific form analysis. Imagery and language economy were eradicated, and as a result, it gave a way for the theory of foregrounding. V. Shklovsky holds that “extending the perception of the text and making a reading process more perplexing” is considered to be an ultimate goal of literature. V. Shklovsky states that the ultimate objective of the usage of “foregrounding” is “not to approximate the meaning for a reader’s understanding, but the creation of a special perception of the object, the creation of a ‘vision’ of it, and not ‘recognition’” (15, 19).

After having established the theoretical principles that allowed to focus on facts, Formalists had to embark on materials and specify the issues. Formalists had to shift their focus from the sounds of a poem to the general theory of a poem, from investigating stylistic devices in general to exploring the devices of plot construction. B. Eikhenbaum emphasized that at that point Formalists took on literary works so as to check and confirm theoretical thesis without touching on traditions and evolution. Covering as much materials as possible without deep diving into details and turning to abstract premises, setting rules and carrying out initial review of facts was of paramount importance (18). V. Shklovsky dedicated multiple works to the theory of a plot and prose where he displayed the devices of plot construction and their

correlation between stylistic devices. The notion of form gradually started coinciding with the concept of literature. Moreover, it was crucial to draw parallel between the devices of plot construction and stylistic devices. More often than not for epic step-wise constructions are in line with rhythmic repetition, tautology, tautological parallelism, repetition and so on that rest upon generalization and impeding. Repetitions in “Песнь о Роланде” (The Song of Roland) which is typical of a fairy tale plot are compared with N. Gogol’s synonyms “куды-муды”, “плюшки-млюшки” to affirm the unity of devices on a big diversity of materials (17, 35). Another concept such as “motifs” played an important part in investigating novels. The determination of a wide range of devices of plot construction (stepped construction, parallelism, framing, threading device, etc.) enabled to distinguish construction elements of a literary work and elements such as the selection of motifs, heroes, ideas and a plot. This discrepancy was apparent in the literary works of this period since the ultimate goal was to establish unity of organizational devices on the basis of a big diversity of materials. Formalists endeavored to outline namely organizational devices, whereas motifs became of less importance. Motifs allowed Formalists to take a closer look at literary works and investigate literary works and details of structure (18). V. Shklovsky targeted at finding correspondence between devices and motifs in “Don Quixote” by M. de Cervantes and “Tristram Shandy” by L. Sterne, so as to investigate the plot constructions of the novels. “Don Quixote” is a literary work that encompasses the only hero that draws on threading, the motif of which is adventure. V. Shklovsky highlights that the hero is instable and the selection of the character of this kind is driven by the plot construction (16, 34). The dominance of the plot and the construction over the plot is crystal clear.

Prague Structuralism

Prague school representatives approached a language from a structural perspective and viewed it as a part of a system. It is also noteworthy to mention that later on they opined that all the language means in a literary text are interrelated and interdependent and that no elements in a literary work can be investigated in isolation. Each and every element performs a certain function. Additionally, Prague linguists dealt with the relationship of language and speech, they opposed F. de Saussure’s dichotomy since speech (parole) is the reality of language (langue). Likewise, P. Garvin contends that “the basic assumption of Structuralism is that its particular object of cognition can be viewed as a structural whole, the parts of which are significantly interrelated and which, as a whole, has a significant function in the larger social setting” (5, 148). Mukarovsky supports the view that Prague School proponents perceived a structure as a dynamic integrity that is under an ongoing development. The scholar highlights that if language elements rearranged, the integrity of the structure will be maintained. Structure coexists with external reality and is up to process all the external impact thanks to its own inner developmental logic in accordance with its immanent semantic orientation (13).

Prague School representatives expanded the Formalists' notion of 'function' and thus Prague Structuralism is functionalistic. This fusion of Structuralism and Functionalism was a significant contribution that was made to Modern Linguistics. Functionalism approaches a language from a functional perspective and investigates the functions performed by it as well as the functionality of language means. Prague linguists held the view that a language performs communication and poetic functions. Both language function in a speech act and the role a language plays in society, the language function in literature and problems of different aspects and levels of language from a functional standpoint were central in investigation of Linguists of the Prague Circle. According to H. Bertens, a function of a text is determined by its orientation. These orientations are basically those of a so-called 'speech act' — they derive from what we do with speech (3, 44). The emphasis on function and functionality of Prague School is different from other Structuralist schools. What is more, Prague School linguists put emphasis on what functional elements perform within a language, the way language elements contrast with each other and the total pattern or system formed by these contrasts. Prague School representatives also focused on researching how language elements accomplish cognition, expression and conation. F. de Saussure also views a language as a synchronic system of signs and the oppositions existing among them. The scholar states that the underlying structures which organize units and rules into meaningful systems are generated by the human mind itself, and not by sense perception. Consequently, the mind itself is regarded to be a structuring mechanism that looks through units and files them according to rules (4). G. Leech claims that "Functionalism is an approach which tries to explain language not only internally, in terms of its formal properties, but also externally, in terms of what language contributes to larger systems of which it is a part or subsystem" (9, 76).

The social function of literature, either "as the repository of the best that had been thought and said, or as one of the great revitalizers" of our perception of the surrounding world did not pique interest of the Linguists of the Prague Circle. According to H. Bertens, the Linguists centered around investigating how literature functions, how its defamiliarizing effects are fulfilled (3, 33). The Formalists primarily investigated the defamiliarizing elements in the literary text that distinguish literary texts from non-literary and they focused less on investigating the language elements that did not directly contribute to foregrounding.

P. Garvin coined a new term by translating Czech "*aktualisace*" into "foregrounding" in the English language. According to P. Garvin, "automatization" is normally utilized to refer to the stimulus that are commonly expected in a social situation; foregrounding, on the flip side, is utilized to refer to a stimulus that are not culturally expected in a social situation and consequently is up to grab special attention (5, 148–149). B. Havranek provides an example connected with a common Russian word "здравствуй". Providing that this word is translated into English by means of its functional equivalent of "good morning"

or “good evening”, it will be automatized and it will not capture a reader’s attention. As long as, on the flip side, this word is translated literally as “be well”, it might still denote some kind of a greeting — that is, it may retain its communicative function — but it will also trigger attention of the translator. The free translation thus constitutes an automatization, the word-for-word translation gives a rise to foregrounding in which the language element itself, rather than its communicative content, is responded to, and this namely attribute constitutes and contributes to the esthetic function. Similarly, J. Mukarovsky emphasizes that a literary text is conceived not only linguistic properties-wise, but also and predominantly function-wise, which is based on aesthetic effect. This effect is implemented in the text by virtue of the fact that the attention is predominantly dragged to the linguistic sign itself and not to the extra-textual communication, as in the functions of everyday language (19).

P. Garvin points out that as long as a language element captures a reader’s attention for its own sake and not for the sake of the practical function it performs, it is known to perform an aesthetic function; that is, it is responded to for what it is, and not for what it is for. As a result, the aesthetic functions as such is not confined to a literary text, but can come along in connection with any object or action (5, 185). Poets therefore endeavor to implement optimal foregrounding, which can be fulfilled in relation to the “background” exclusively, which can be rules and maxims of everyday language, but also the literary variety of the standard language.

According to G. Leech and M. Short, the Prague School proponents held the view that the usage of language for the purpose of aesthetic function normally surprises a reader and pushes him/her to encounter the language elements in a fresh, creative and innovative manner which are usually taken for granted as an ‘automatized’ background of communication” (8, 23).

The Linguists of the Prague Circle substituted the term “defamiliarization” with *foregrounding* since our mind processes the infinite amount of information that our senses present to it and filters out what seems relevant (3, 45–46). J. Mukarovsky states that poetic language is an effect of the ‘foregrounding of the utterance’. As opposed to defamiliarization, which does not have a tendency to make an impact on its immediate textual environment, foregrounding normally ‘automatizes’ neighboring language means against the backdrop of which foregrounding is implemented. It tends to drag the reader’s attention to itself and obscure the language that serves as a background for foregrounded language elements.

According to J. Mukarovsky, as opposed to defamiliarization that points to a contrastive, but static, correlation between the defamiliarizing element and the other language means, foregrounding puts an emphasis on the dynamism of that correlation: “what one element gains in terms of being foregrounded is lost by the other elements that constitute its background”. J. Mukarovsky highlights that no matter if the language means are defamiliarized or automatized, which are interwoven and dependent on each other, this mutual

interconnection of both foregrounded and non-foregrounded elements in a literary work constitutes its *structure*, a dynamic structure that both convergence and divergence, and one that constitutes an inseparable artistic integrity, since each of its components has its value in terms of its relation to the totality (12). What is more, F. de Saussure's conception, the linguistic pattern-la langue-is both a system of signs, and a set of social norms. As a system of signs, the pattern has a certain flexibility, allowing for variations within the units and in the choice and arrangement of units, to the extent that it does not conflict with the requirement of intelligibility.

J. Mukarovsky puts emphasis on the relational quality and its systematic character, which are considered to be one of two forces sustaining optimal foregrounding. Random deviations from language rules does not tend to sustain the aesthetic function; only the consistency and systematic nature of foregrounding makes the aesthetic function happen in a text (12, 411). The consistency occurs in the fact that the reorganization of the foregrounded components within a literary work occurs in a consistent manner; consequently, the deautomatization of meaning in a particular literary work is consistently realized by means of lexical selection (the mutual interchange of contrasting areas of the lexicon). The systematic and consistent foregrounding of language elements in a literary work consists in the gradation of the correlation of these components, that is, in their mutual subordination. All foregrounded and automatized components, as well as their interrelationships are estimated from the dominant's perspective. The dominant occupying the highest position in the hierarchy sets in motion, and gives direction to all other components (12, 411).

Cognitive Poetics

R. Tsur coined the term "Cognitive Poetics" in 1980 and outlined the beginnings of a theoretical approach that rests upon a big variety of interdisciplinary fields, including Gestalt psychology, Russian Formalism, New Criticism, literary criticism in general, linguistics, and neuroscience. P. Stockwell claims that "Cognitive poetics is a new way of thinking about literature, involving the application of cognitive linguistics and psychology to literary texts" (10, 2).

According to R. Tsur, Cognitive poetics draws on cognitive theories that systematically account for the relationship between the structure of literary texts and the way it is perceived by an addressee. Cognitive Poetics makes use of the tools that is in use by cognitive science that investigates the psychological processes involved in the acquisition organization and how a reader turns to background knowledge when the brain processes information, when analyzes an immediate stimulus as well as organizes subjective experience. Cognitive Poetics explores how poetic language and form are restrained and shaped by human information processing. The present approach utilizes cognitive theories to shed a light on literature rather than make use of literary words to display cognitive theories (11, 1–2). P. Stockwell states that the object of investigation of this science is not

the artifice of the literary text alone, or the reader alone, but the more natural process of reading when one is engaged with the other (10, 2).

The foundations of cognitive poetics are primarily based on cognitive linguistics and cognitive psychology, together forming a large part of the field of cognitive science. In these disciplines all forms of expressions and forms of conscious perception go hand in hand. According to P. Stockwell, a human being tends to contemplate in the way that he/she acts and say things in the way that he/she acts because human beings are considered to be containers of air and liquid with the main receptors at the top of their bodies. A human being's mind is 'embodied' not only literally, but also figuratively (10, 4–5). T. Bex provides an example connected with trees and wood and enlarges on the cognitive reason why we chop trees down, but we chop wood up is that trees are normally bigger than a human, however once they are cut down, they end up being below a human (1). P. Stockwell claims that the notion of embodiment such as phrasal verb participles “down” and “up” are tightly linked to cognition and affects every part of language. It is possible to draw conclusion that all the experiences, knowledge, convictions, wants and needs are involved in and expressed through language patterns that are rooted in a human being's material existence (10, 5).

Cognitive poetics being related to the field of literary criticism and being overlain onto the triangle of ‘author — text — reader’, is not confined to one or other of the points. Predominantly dealing with world-representation and literary reading, and with both a psychological and a linguistic dimension, cognitive poetics proposes a means of discussing interpretation of a writer version of the world or the reader's account, and how those interpretations emerged in a text (10, 5).

One of the most crucial tools that is utilized for the literature analysis in cognitive poetics is the theory of “figure” and “ground” rooted in Gestalt psychology. P. Stockwell put forward the theory of figure and ground so as to explore stylistic foregrounding and how it captures a reader's attention in a literary work. This way he displays the correlation between stylistic patterns and techniques used in the creation of a literary text and particular reader-centered effects of appreciation and interpretation. Particular aspects of literary texts are normally viewed as being more prominent or salient than others. The “literary innovations” and creative expressions can be seen as foregrounding against the backdrop of regular non-literary language. This is a dynamic process because language means in the text are “thrown into relief” in a reading process or ‘actualizing’ the text. Some of this effect can be implemented by means of literary devices such as linguistic deviation, defamiliarization, foregrounding, etc. It becomes apparent that cognitive poetics aims at keeping track of the usage of stylistic devices, providing the explanation and interpretation of mental process involving literature, the way it makes an impact on a human's perception and a literary text reception.

V. Shklovsky contends that to accomplish the objective of art normal cognitive processes in a course of reading must be disturbed

and slowed down. According to the scholar, over-automatization of language elements does not stimulate brain work. Habitual elements which do not violate language norms do not tend to appear in cognition and stick to a reader's mind. V. Shklovsky emphasizes that art induces a reader to "refresh" the way a reader perceives the surrounding world to feel things, to make the stone *stony* (15, 15). Thus, V. Shklovsky states that the ultimate objective of the usage of "foregrounding" is "not to approximate the meaning for a reader's understanding, but the creation of a special perception of the object, the creation of a 'vision' of it, and not 'recognition'" (15, 17). The main reason for not introducing it as something customary is to complicate and extend the comprehension of a message, to prolong the length of perception since "Art is a way to experience the making of a thing, and what is done in art is not important" (15, 14). Cognitive poetics explores a mixed diversity of processes and investigates the way in which they might be slowed down by a wide range of stylistic devices other than the ones studied by V. Shklovsky.

Cognitive poetics targets at studying what cognitive processes are involved in literature creation and the reception by touching on re-conceptualizing which can be deployed in a literary text through the usage of metaphor. According to G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, metaphor was initially merely considered to be a stylistic device in the study of literature, cognitive poetics takes it one step further by endeavoring to set forth how a human being's mental faculties comprehend the way the "target" domain is understood in terms of the "source" domain (7, 87). G. Lakoff and M. Johnson claim that a human being makes sense of everyday experience, the way they act, think and experience things through metaphorical conceptual system (7, 8).

Conclusion. It is possible to draw the following conclusion:

Formalism proponents ruled out subjective aesthetics, philosophical and religious tendencies in literature and primarily targeted at exploring not literature, but "literariness" and what makes a literary work literature. Moreover, the correlation between "form" and "content" was eradicated, "form" was not regarded as something that incorporates a meaning, but a content was perceived as form that exposed the semantic meaning of a word and allowed a reader to seek how content was generated. This approach opened up new avenues for the theory of foregrounding that aimed at extending the perception and comprehension of the text by making the reading process more thought-provoking.

Prague school representatives approached a language from a structural perspective where each and every language element in a literary text is interrelated and interdependent as well as performs a certain function. The notion 'function' proposed by the Formalists was expanded by Prague School representatives, as a result, the functions performed by a language became central in investigation of Linguists of the Prague Circle as well as how the functions that language performs give a rise to actualization. The representatives of Prague School put emphasis on the consistent and systematic character, which is considered to be forces that make foregrounding happen.

The proponents of Cognitive poetics look at a literary text from cognitive linguistics and psychology perspectives. Primarily, the psychological processes such as turning to background knowledge, subjective experience that allowed a reader to comprehend were investigated. This approach utilizes cognitive theories to shed the light on literature rather than make use of literary words to display cognitive theories. One of the fundamental tools such as “figure” and “ground” was borrowed from Gestalt psychology so as to explore stylistic foregrounding and its impact on a reader. This theory implies that a human being’s brain selects something salient and prominent as well as the language elements that are the most relevant to our lives against the backdrop of the language means that conform with the language norms.

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