

National And Cultural Specificity of Zoomorphic Figurative Means in H. Hosseini's Novel "The Kite Runner"

Bakhronova Zulfiya Ravshanovna
zulfiyabaxronova@gmail.com

Sharapova Gulshan Sharafovna
gulshansharapova56@gmail.com

Turakulova Dilafruz Kahhorovna
dilafruzturaqulova927@gmail.com
Teachers of Interfaculty Department of Foreign Languages
Bukhara State University

Abstract

The article deals with zoomorphic figurative means in H. Hosseini's novel "The Kite Runner". The scientific novelty of the study is because the functioning of zoomorphism is studied based on the work of a bilingual writer within the framework of a cognitive-discursive approach. The study showed that the functioning of zoomorphism in this novel is more variable, their use is characterized by an expansion of the scope of their meanings, as well as a restructuring of associative links, which confirms the existing thesis about a more flexible and dynamic creative consciousness of a bilingual writer.

Keywords: bilingual author, zoomorphic metaphor, linguistic and cultural heterogeneity, figurative means, immigration romance.

I. Introduction

Globalization, one of the manifestations of which is the transition of mankind to mass bilingualism or polylingualism, has affected the development of modern English-language fiction. According to K. Knaut, modern literature is characterized by multilingualism at the level of both denotative and connotative meanings. This happens due to the penetration of foreign languages around the world through the media.

One of the sources of bilingual literature is immigration processes. There is even a new genre - the immigration novel, "immigration novel". The term covers the works of European immigrant writers of the

19th and early 20th centuries, or writers from the latest waves of immigration, including V. Nabokov, D. Conrad, S. Rushdie, O. Pamuk, H. Hosseini, and many other authors. The wide distribution of bilingual literature and the relatively low degree of its study determine the relevance of the work devoted to the work of H. Hosseini, whose novels, written in English, are focused on his native culture, the culture of Afghanistan, and are saturated with elements of his native language.

II. Literature review

Numerous studies of the language within the framework of the linguoculturological approach aim to reveal the deep connections between language,

consciousness and culture. Such a kind of link between culture and language is a text or a set of texts in which knowledge about the world around is recorded and human culture is stored. Y. M. Lotman believed that the text is "a complex device that stores diverse codes, capable of transforming received messages and generating new ones, as an information generator with intellectual personality traits."

In this article, the analysis of the functioning of zoomorphic figurative means in a literary text is carried out within the framework of a cognitive-discursive approach, which determines the scientific novelty of the study. At the same time, taking into account linguocultural aspects in the analysis of H. Hosseini's novel "The Kite Runner" allows us to illuminate and better understand the features of the mentality reflected in the language and to identify models of interaction between different linguocultures in a text written by a bilingual author.

III. Analysis

Research methods include contextual analysis of identified units and analysis of dictionary definitions. The practical significance of the study is that its results can be used in university courses on intercultural communication, stylistics and modern foreign literature. Texts written by native speakers of two (or more) languages are characterized by linguistic and cultural heterogeneity (or heterogeneity). The term "heterogeneous text" in linguistics has received various interpretations and can mean any text characterized by some heterogeneity, including the so-called creolized texts, the distinguishing feature of which is the presence of different sign systems in one text. However, within the framework of the linguoculturological

approach, a text characterized by the interaction of at least two cultures should be called heterogeneous.

Linguistic and cultural heterogeneity can characterize a text of any genre, but a literary text is of particular interest, since it closely intertwines individual authorial and culturally determined elements that reflect the characteristics of the creative consciousness of a bilingual author. E.K. Chernichkina believes that "a bilingual author has a higher level of communicative competence and a greater variability of the communicative models used."

There are different levels of linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of the text: explicit, which is manifested in the exploitation of the realities of a foreign language culture, directly or indirectly pointing to it, and implicit, which is realized at a deeper level - in the specific use of the language of the text. In the analyzed novel, heterogeneity also manifests itself both at the external (explicit) and internal (implicit) levels. The explicit level of linguistic and cultural heterogeneity in the analyzed English-language novel includes the following realities of Afghan culture: Afghan cultural anthroponyms (Hassan, Amir (Hasan, Amir)), ethnonyms (Afghans, Pashtuns, Hazara (Afghans, Pashtuns, Hazaras)), realities from the plant world (loquat tree, persimmon trees, mulberries (medlar, persimmon, mulberry)), everyday realities (chapan (kind of caftan), naan (wheat cake)), religious (Sunni Muslims, mullah, Nazr (Sunnis, mullah, Nazr, or the tradition of ram sacrifice in Afghanistan)), etc. The use of numerous realities from the life of Afghanistan helps to create a unique chronotope in which the main events of the novel will develop and characters will act, for whom Afghan culture is native and

often the only one. However, the most interesting, in our opinion, is the implicit level of linguocultural heterogeneity of a literary text. In this case, the units of the language in which the text is written receive new functions, shades of meanings that are characteristic of another culture. In particular, it can be assumed that the system of images fixed in the means of expression in the work of such a writer is directly related to his bipolar worldview and reflects his experience of living in both cultures. From this point of view, in H. Hosseini's novel "The Kite Runner", the elements of expressive-figurative nomination deserve special attention, namely zoomorphic metaphors and figurative comparisons based on zoonyms.

The metaphor, the study of which began in the time of Aristotle, received many interpretations in the works of such linguists as N. D. Arutyunova, V. Y. Apresyan, J. Lakoff, M. V. Nikitin and others; to another on the basis of the semantic proximity of states, properties, actions that characterize these phenomena, as a result of which words (phrases, sentences) intended to refer to some objects (situations) of reality are used to name other objects (situations) on the basis of the conditional identity of the predicative attributes attributed to them signs."

Metaphorical transfer is a kind of tool that allows you to identify analogies and systematize the knowledge gained in the course of forming ideas about the world. V. N. Teliya believes that "the metaphor plays the role of a prism through which a person performs an act of worldview." In addition, according to the researcher, "the interest in metaphorical formations is explained by the fact that the fragments of the linguistic picture of the world created by means of them most vividly and

distinctively color the conceptual model of the world in national and cultural colors", that is, being a property of the consciousness of each linguistic personality, the metaphor is universal and reflects the national-specific features of a particular language community.

IV. Discussion

A zoomorphic metaphor is the use of animal names for other objects of reality (living and inanimate) based on the commonality of their objective and subjective properties. The most frequent zoomorphic metaphors that perform an expressive-evaluative function are units formed by metaphorical transfer based on a zoonym and serving to characterize a person figuratively. Images of animals throughout the history of humankind have played an important role in human self-identification. People compared themselves with the animals around them, identifying similarities and differences in external features, skills, and even character traits.

The conducted analogies were not only deposited in the minds of individuals, but also accumulated in the collective linguistic consciousness, over time often acquiring the properties of a stereotype, which, as you know, can act as a simplified means of knowing the world around. Consequently, zoomorphic figurative means in the work of a bilingual writer can have the property of heterogeneity, since, along with individual author's interpretations of a particular image, they reflect national stereotypes that are characteristic of the author's two cultures, native and acquired. Thus, in the novel by H. Hosseini "The Kite Runner" there are numerous zoomorphic metaphors characteristic of different cultures. In particular, the zoomorphism "dog" appears

in the text of the novel in the traditional for the culture of Afghanistan general negative value of "mean, unworthy person". This common Afghan swear word is used more than once in the novel, for example, it appears in the words of the anti-hero Asef about the communists who came to power thanks to the support of the Soviet Union:

"...everyone knew the communists had no class... The same dogs who weren't fit to lick my shoes before the Shorawi came".

"This is all the communists ... Until the Shuravi came, these dogs were unworthy of licking my shoes" (hereinafter, the translation of S. Sokolov. - Yu. B.). Interestingly, the zoomorphism traditional for the culture of Afghanistan in this context is combined with almost direct borrowing from the novel *The Great Gatsby* by the American writer F. S. Fitzgerald: "...he wasn't fit to lick my shoe", confirming the thesis of the interpenetration of cultures in the texts of bilingual authors. It should be pointed out that a similar phraseologism functions in the English-speaking culture, however, the corresponding idiom in English uses the lexeme boots (lick one's boots (lick boots)), and not shoes, as in the examples presented above.

It should be noted, however, that the negative evaluation value mentioned above is inherent not only in Afghan or Muslim culture, but also in Christian culture. Perhaps the origins should be sought in the main religious texts of Muslims and Christians. According to the *Big Bible Dictionary*, in biblical times, dogs were considered despicable animals, cowardly, treacherous and omnivorous vultures. The positive qualities of a dog in those days included the ability to help a person herd sheep and vigilance. In general, the word "dog" was used to refer to villains and

subordinates. There is no negative characterization of the dog in the Quran, but the attitude towards it in Islamic culture is similar to that described in the Bible.

The loyalty of the dog, recognized by various cultures, is also reflected in Afghan folklore. For example, in the fairy tale "Do not take anything to the extreme", devotion is called the best feature of this animal. This particular positive value of zoomorphism in the analyzed text is manifested in the comparison of the friend and servant of the protagonist, Hassan, with this animal: "A loyal Hazara. Loyal as a dog," Assef said. I "Faithful Hazara. Faithful as a dog," says Asef. In the mouth of his sworn enemy Asef, however, the positive assessment of the image is leveled, which is also due to national and cultural stereotypes. It is known that for Islamic cultures, the dog's blind devotion, readiness to serve the owner is often a reason for contemptuous attitude towards this animal, which is realized in this example.

In the above examples, the zoomorphism "dog" actualizes universal stereotypes that are inherent not only in Afghan culture. The heterogeneity of the images associated with the dog is explained by the fact that this domestic animal, characteristic of different, almost all, cultures of the world, has been in close contact with people for many centuries. In addition, the consequence of constant contact, according to M. V. Nikitin, is that domestic animals "are associated with a wide field of associations, sometimes specialized, and sometimes diverse." However, in H. Hosseini's novel there are examples of a unique interpretation of the zoomorphic image, typical of the culture of Afghanistan. For example, a monkey, not found in the animal world of Afghanistan, symbolizes in this culture a miserable

subject person, a puppet servant, a person who fulfills someone else's will. While in English, a monkey is a prankster or a naughty person: "monkey - a mischievous person, esp. a child" (a monkey is a playful person, esp. a child).

This image came to Afghanistan from India, where monkeys on a rope performed at the bazaars, obeying the will of the trainer. Apparently, the people of Afghanistan also adopted this pastime, as the protagonist of the novel, Amir, writes about such performances, recalling his childhood: "It reminded me of the Monkey Man Hassan and I used to chase down in Shar-e-Nau. We used to pay him a rupia of our allowance for a dance".

I "In Kabul, Hasan and I followed the man with the monkey with our tails. Give the owner a rupee and the monkey will dance for you. The bell around her neck rattled like that too".

The meaning mentioned above is realized in the description of the mullah and in general, of all religious people by the father of Amir, who calls them monkeys: "... all those self-righteous monkeys". I "... all those smug monkeys." It should be noted that the father of the protagonist was a determined man, having his own view of the world around him, knowing his cultural origins and at the same time familiar with Western culture.

The mullah and others like him appear to him as people who obey only the will of Allah, which means that they are weak-willed and bonded people who cannot think and make decisions on their own: "They do nothing but thumb their prayer beads and recite a book written in a tongue they don't even understand". I "They can only fiddle with the rosary and quote a book whose language they don't even understand." The epithet used by the author

is "self-righteous - excessively conscious of or insistent on one's rectitude, correctness, etc." (smug - overly aware or insisting on his morality, rightness, etc.), that is, a person who is overly confident in his own rightness adds a new feature to the characteristics of such people. Unable to think independently, accustomed to obey the will of Allah, they do not doubt the correctness of their own actions. According to Amir's father, such pathetic people are unworthy of respect and at the same time can become a source of trouble in their country: "God help us all if Afghanistan ever falls into their hands". I "God forbid if they ever seize power in Afghanistan." In this context, a unique negative evaluative component of the zoomorphism "monkey" is realized, which is characteristic of the national consciousness of the Afghans.

The importance of this image for understanding the novel is emphasized by the fact that this comparison is echoed in the text of the novel once again, when, being at the stadium during the reign of the Taliban for another demonstrative execution, the main character remembered the words of his father and understood their prophetic meaning: "I remembered something Baba had said to me a long time ago: Piss on the beards of all those self-righteous monkeys. They do nothing but thumb their rosaries and recite a book written in a tongue they don't even understand". I "Many years ago Baba said to me, 'These self-satisfied monkeys are only worthy of a spit in their beards. They can only fiddle with the rosary and recite a book whose language they don't even understand.'"

The embodiment of self-righteous "monkeys", blindly following certain religious canons and not questioning their own cruelty, became the Taliban, who seized power in Afghanistan. Despite the

fact that the zoomorphic image "monkey" appears in the text of the novel in a meaning typical of H. Hosseini's native culture, the author's attitude towards blind fanatical faith in Allah, realized with its help, is probably also due to the cultural bipolarity of the author, his personal experience of living in another culture. Moreover, in addition to the culturally conditioned negative meaning, the comparison with the dancing monkey in the novel by H. Hosseini acquires a new meaning in the episode with the boy, Amir's nephew, dancing for the delight of the Taliban. Looking at the child dancing to the music, he remembered the performances with the monkey in the Kabul bazaar. Some external features were similar, for example, the bell on the monkey's neck and the bells on the boy's legs: "... the bells strapped around his anklets". However, the main similarity was the resigned submission to the will of an adult armed man, the boy continued to dance until the music stopped:

"The bells jingled one final time when he stomped his foot with the song's last note. He froze in midspin". In this case, the comparison with the dancing monkey also depicts a person who finds himself in captivity, forced to obey the "tamer", but this is not a miserable person worthy of only contempt, but a person who deserves participation, in need of help, a person who can and should be saved. Thus, a new associative component appears in the semantics of the zoomorphism "monkey". Another universal zoomorphic image is associated with Amir's nephew in the same scene - the image of a sacrificial lamb. Sohrab's eyes during the dance reminded Amir of the inked eyes of the sacrificial lamb from the rites of his childhood: "Sohrab's eyes flicked to me. They were slaughter sheep's eyes. They even had the

mascara -I remembered how, on the day of Eid of qorban, the mullah in our backyard used to apply mascara to the eyes of the sheep and feed it a cube of sugar before slicing its throat. I thought I saw pleading in Sohrab's eyes". There was a supplication in his eyeliner, just like a sacrificial ram, which is slaughtered on the first day of the great holiday of Eid al-Adha.

The victim is also given a piece of sugar before the throat is cut." In this metaphor, the general cultural meaning of the "innocent victim" is realized, emphasizing the new positive meaning of the "dancing monkey" zoomorphism. In some cases, stereotypes traditional for Afghanistan about this or that animal are not embodied in the text, being supplanted by new acquired meanings. The next zoomorphic metaphor "donkey" in Afghan culture has traditionally been associated with gluttony and mundane desires. In addition, this image could personify philosophical calmness in the face of fate. However, in the text of the novel, the meaning "stupid person" is realized, which is characteristic of the author's second language (English): "donkey - colloq. a stupid or foolish person". Therefore, Amir turns to Hasan, joking about his fear of a possible separation: "Bas, you donkey. No one's sending you away."

V. Conclusion

Thus, from the conducted research, it should be concluded that the cognitive-discursive approach allows us to identify not only explicit, but also implicit forms of interaction between two linguistic cultures in a literary text. Relating to the last level, zoomorphic figurative means in the work of a bilingual writer are an integral feature of the linguocultural heterogeneity of a literary text, reflecting the uniqueness of the

work of a bilingual author. In particular, a bilingual author has a wider choice of zoomorphic figurative means and their connotative meanings than a monolingual one, since he exploits the images of not one, but at least two cultures. The functioning of zoomorphisms in the novel "The Kite Runner" is more variable, since it presents universal general cultural zoomorphic images, as well as images that are typical either for the English-speaking culture or inherent in the native culture of the author's first language. In addition, their use is characterized by the expansion of the scope of their meanings, as well as the restructuring and expansion of associative links, which confirms the existing thesis about a more flexible and dynamic creative consciousness of a bilingual writer.

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