Секция «Лингвистика: Когнитивные и лингвокультурные аспекты иноязычной коммуникации»

"Text world theory and cognitive linguistic through literature – Empire "V"

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The idea developed is based on the "Text world theory" devised by the Paul Werth in the early '80s and published twenty years later posthumously.

Text World Theory is a "conceptual framework" [Van der Bom: 8-40]: it is used to analyze various contexts or situations, and to organize ideas. In this spectrum, the theory enables the study of language in context. The context is maybe the most important key-word in the cognitive world: it is in fact the aim of the assumption to demonstrate that grammar is strictly connected to the socio-political and cultural situation of the speaker. In order to introduce what exactly Text World Theory is about we would like to quote the Austrian philosopher L. Wittgenstein as he affirmed that "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world". Language shapes one's conceptual world and affects conceptual processes used in the comprehension of meaning. The focus is describing how these conceptual worlds are produced and how they do work, considering relationships, knowledge, experiences of the speaker/writer and hearer/listener, not forgetting which connections exist between them. Therefore, Text World Theory is applied in the field of cognitive poetics, to analyze differing interpretation of the same text, to examine articles, films and political discourse. We can sum up the ideology of cognitive science in few worlds: confute the abstraction of language. It is of course connected to the generative linguistic of N. Chomsky, which stated that the human being shares a limited set of rules to organize the language: cognitive linguistic besides believes that what we share are cognitive principles, which guide us to similar experiences. Behind concepts like "frame" or "script" linguists tried to define how these ideas diverge in the same context but in different languages. As an example, for a non-native speaker stereotypical situations are hardly to be understood only on a grammar-based level. What really often goes missing is the knowledge of the culture, history and way of living behind grammar. The fact that what captures our attention reflects what we express [Ungerer: 5] is a revolutionary vision of communication and the field of language itself. The meaning is based on the "Weltanschauung", the point of view of the speaker. Werth theorized that we all share a mutual, individual and general knowledge [Werth: 94-95]. The general one can be cultural and linguistic, the mutual is perceptual and experimental. When A knows some term of information and tells it to B, both A and B shares the same information, but on a cognitive plan they may not share the same general or mutual knowledge: the information is processed in two different ways. However, they built a "common ground" where they share the information: this common ground is created also by not necessarily expressed information; consequently, what we choose to not express, is influenced by our perspective.

Cognitive grammar helps a non-native reader to understand what conceals a statement. E. Tabakowska in her work "Lewis Carroll's Alice in grammatical Wonderland" (see "Cognitive Grammar in Literature") gives an example of the translation's problems between English and Polish in the novel [Harrison: 104-105]. She underlined the controversial readership of the novel, which could be enjoyed both by children and adult readers: the "familiar reality" of the Victorian Age and the virtual reality of Wonderland, hiding a sagacious satire of the time.

We tried to apply the same idea to a Russian novel, "Empire "V" by V. Pelevin. The familiar reality of Moscow is opposed to the unfamiliar fantastic reality of "Empire "V", while making a

twenty-first century muscovite's satire of Russian people. From the point of view of a non-native speaker there are a lot of cognitive dissonances which turn an apparently simple book into a challenge. Pelevin communicates through metaphors that are hard to be understood by a non-Russian speaker who cannot catch the historical or political quote. For example, "Archetipique boutique", a shopping center, is turned in "Archipelag Boutique" [Пелевин: 76]. The author makes jokes about Russians naming shopping centers, pubs and also books with non-Russian names. "Glamour" and "discourse", two subjects taught to all young vampires, are the "ideology" at the base of their "regime": both are linked to money. The author paints a nihilistic view of contemporary Russian society, where the vampires are a parasitic class exploiting emotions and dreams of "normal" people. They are not productive in themselves, but instead create a culture of discontent and ambition that fuels the economic activity and creates the conditions for the vampires to survive. The idea some can get of this novel without understanding its philosophy is of a fantasy book about non-conventional vampires, just like Alice in Wonderland. At this point it is necessary to know the Victorian culture in order to understand what hides behind the secret world of Alice, because mastering English won't help the reader to catch all the references hidden behind the story. Given these points cognitive linguistic is the most powerful tool a non-native speaker could use to master a language.

Источники и литература

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