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РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ ОППОЗИЦИИ "ДУХОВНЫЙ" - "МАТЕРИАЛЬНЫЙ" МИР В НОВЕЛЛЕ О. ГЕНРИ "ДАРЫ ВОЛХВОВ"

В статье рассматривается функционирование лексических стилистических средств в описании оппозиции "духовный" - "материальный" мир в новелле О. Генри "Дары волхвов". В ходе исследования было выявлено, что автор прибегает к языковым средствам, среди которых наиболее частотными являются сравнение, эпитет, метафора, ирония и повтор, благодаря которым душевное богатство героев особенно ярко проступает на фоне окружающей их бедности. Ирония и повторы акцентируют внимание на материальной недостаточности и убогости жилья героев, сравнения и метафоры, напротив, подчеркивают богатство их внутреннего мира. Через сопоставление духовного и материального О. Генри утверждает подлинную ценность любви и человеческих отношений.

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Focus of this paper is analysis of stylistic devices in the description of the opposition “inner – material” world in “The Gifts of the Magi” by O. Henry. In the course of the study it is revealed that the author’s use of stylistic devices, among which the comparison, epithet, metaphor, irony and repetition are the most frequent, aims to vividly visualize the inner wealth of the protagonists against the background of material poverty. Ironies and repetitions very clearly focus on misery living conditions and environment of the heroes. Comparisons and metaphors display better emotions and feelings of heroes. Through the juxtaposition of the characters’ inner feelings manifesting their spiritual wealth and the utmost poverty they live in O. Henry declares the true value of love and human relations.

Key words and phrases: allusion; comparison; epithet; irony; lexical repetition; metaphor; stylistics.

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REPRESENTATION OF THE OPPOSITION INNER – MATERIAL WORLD IN “THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI” BY O. HENRY

O. Henry occupies an exceptional place in American literature as a master of “short novel” genre. William Sidney Porter (the real name of the American writer) is the author of vivid, sharp-witted short stories, which are appreciated worldwide. Years and decades pass by; the readers’ love of O. Henry’s literary heritage is inexhaustible. What is enchanting about the author and his novels today? What makes them appealing for present-day readership? The main reason seems to be in the fact that his works are an ever-living source of kindness and mercy. They not only excite and give pleasure, but also awaken noble and honorable feelings in our souls, thoroughly imbue our hearts with optimism and hope. Even though his heroes mostly appear in demanding or even dramatic situations, the ending never gives a feeling of bitterness or disappointment, but, on the contrary, the denouement is always triumph of goodwill, humanity, benevolence, generosity and altruism.

D. Zhdanova and T. Lyalina highlight a number of attributes distinguishing O. Henry’s short stories. Among them are vibrancy of style featuring uncommon phrases, metaphors, puns and irony; an original plot with many twists and a paradoxical ending; brevity in the plot development and conciseness of style [2; 4, c. 17].

According to the researchers, every short story of O. Henry covers a combination of naive romantic idealism, i.e. belief in higher spiritual values, optimism, described with bitter, realistic and skeptical irony. Many characters of O. Henry’s novellas are driven by compassion, love, friendship and goodwill even though they are simple homespun people, most often poverty-stricken, having a hard fight to make the two ends meet: secretaries and clerks, novice writers and poor artists, etc. As well, the author discloses humanity and mercy in those who have lost themselves into drinking or have broken the law. Despite the fact that the heroes are “on the breadline”, the narrator always shows participation and sympathy for them. And this never fails: the most deplorable endings are perceived as happy or at least positive.

One can hardly pull out irony and humor from O. Henry’s narrative, as they are an essential element, intrinsic background of his talent. O. Henry’s humor is often associated with comic situations underlying various plots. It is multifaceted, spontaneous, and unpredictable; he keeps the narrative as if in a water flux, not allowing the story being channeled in a predictable way. Moreover, O. Henry has an unchallenged ability to see the comic in life and this innate asset generates such incredibly truthful comparisons.

“The Gifts of the Magi” story encompasses all the above-mentioned paradoxes of O. Henry’s prose. Also in this short Christmas story we have identified paradoxes based on the opposition of the surrounding world to the inner worldview of the protagonists, as well as paradoxes built on the contrast of the color palette of gray everyday life and vivid feelings. Moreover, in “The Gifts of the Magi” the paradoxical is related to the ‘miraculous’. The feeling of ‘miracle’ is viewed in the light of human relations, which are highly appreciated by the author and regarded as a true miracle [5, c. 14]. The heroes, Della and her husband Jim, are people of uncommon abilities, with rich inner world, ready for self-denial. Their most important treasures are love, generosity and self-sacrifice. Despite the plight, Dillingham couple has preserved their inward beauty; they love each other even more. When in the finale O. Henry states, “Of all who give gifts these two were the wisest” [6, p. 5] we cannot but agree with him, for the true wisdom of the heroes is not in “The Gifts of the Magi”, but in their love and noble devotion to each other. Therefore, it was interesting for us to conduct research into language means that allow the author to reveal this rich spiritual world of his characters.

At the imagery level, the paradox lies in the behavior of the main characters, which is contrary to readers’ expectations. The characters do things, which run counter to the conventional wisdom and force us to think over genuine human values. It is in this novella that the reader could visually trace the opposition “material world” – “inner world”, since true feelings and spiritual wealth of the heroes are conceptualized in the light of ultimate poverty, hardship and misery [1, c. 122]. Spouses do not have money, but try to make each other creditable gifts for Christmas. Everyone in the world has some precious possessions; these are what they have: Della – luxurious long hair and Jim – a wristwatch as the only remembrance of his father. Nevertheless, they both sell their most valuable things to buy the best gift for their beloved ones. Della buys her husband a valuable gold chain for the watch; and Jim – combs for her hair. They sacrifice their ‘crown jewels’ for happiness of the other.

Moreover, the story itself is a literary secret: the reader cannot guess the outcome of events. The writer has enriched the art of creating unexpected ending by introducing two junctions – pre-denouement and a genuine denouement,

which complements, clarifies and, finally, completely refutes the former. And if one could anticipate the pre-denouement while reading, the latter is absolutely unforeseen even for an astute reader.

At the language level, the paradox of O. Henry consists in combination of style redundancy and conventions of the short story genre [3, c. 11]. The writer uses a huge number of different language means, which paradoxically contribute to the compression of the text. This is mainly due to careful selection of vocabulary belonging to different stylistic layers, numerous literary allusions, various traits that give the novella imagery and color staying within the genre of a short story.

Thus, the female image of Della is an embodiment of tender feelings while Jim Jung is the carrier of the author's conception of nobility and depth of feelings, loyalty and sincerity. For example, loving Della calls her husband *my Jim, darling*. As a Christmas present for him she was looking for *Something fine and rare and sterling – something just a little bit near to being worthy of the honor of being owned by Jim* [6, p. 2]. Jim is also depicted as an affectionate man, calling his wife *Della* or *my girl*. When Jim realizes that his gift is useless, he is calm and restrained: *"Dell" said he, "let's put our Christmas presents away and keep 'em a while. They're too nice to use just at present. I sold the watch to get the money to buy Your combs. And now suppose you put the chops on"* [Ibidem, p. 5].

Description of the characters' private states highlights the most important features of their personality. Thus, Della's love is manifested in her inner turmoil, presented in inner monologues, for example, *If Jim doesn't kill me, she says to herself, before he takes a second look at me, he'll say I look like a Coney Island chorus girl. But what could I do – oh! what could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?* [Ibidem, p. 3], which now and then turn into short and quiet prayers, *Please, God, make him think I am still pretty* [Ibidem]. Della's conversations with Jim expose Della's love for the man she wants to spend every second of her life and make him feel happy whatever happens, *Jim, darling, she cried, don't look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold it because I couldn't have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. It'll grow out again – you won't mind, will you* [Ibidem, p. 4]?

The author laughs at his heroes, ridicules their "foolishness", yet loving and worrying about them. This kind of humor discloses inferiority of life, concurrently emphasizing, exaggerating and hyperbolizing it, but at the same time lyrical feelings stand out more prominently. For example, Della's despair and joy is vividly represented in the passages below: (1) *There was clearly nothing left to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it* [Ibidem, p. 1]. (2) *But whenever Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called "Jim" and greatly hugged by Mrs. James Dillingham Young, already introduced to you as Della. Which is all very good* [Ibidem]. Instead of detailed descriptions, we see perfectly matched adjectives and adverbs, diminutives and lexical repetitions. These means strengthen emotional components, for example, Della's sadness is evident in the way she "dully" looks at *a gray cat walking a gray fence in a gray backyard* [Ibidem]. At the very peak of emotional upheaval, the narrator appeals to readers, engaging them into a dialogue – the technique helping us feel that the hardships the heroes have are non-things: (3) *Which is always a tremendous task, dear friends, a mammoth task* [Ibidem, p. 3]. (4) *For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction* [Ibidem, p. 4]. (5) *Oh, and the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings. Forget the hashed metaphor* [Ibidem, p. 3]... (6) *And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house* [Ibidem, p. 5].

Indeed, O. Henry uses a lot linguistic means to intensely display the poverty of life and misery of life situations the characters are in and, on the other hand, convey their emotions and feelings. This opposition could be traced from the beginning of the story: a touching paragraph describing how Della meets Jim comes out immediately after describing their poor habitation. Likewise, the author gives a description of Della's poor clothes on the background of ecstasy she has after finding the way to get money for the gift: *On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she cluttered out of the door and down the stairs to the street* [Ibidem, p. 2].

Focus of this paper is to identify stylistic devices verbalizing the inner world of the characters. All sorted out devices are considered in the context of abovementioned opposition "material world" – "inner world". We singled out metaphors, epithets, phraseological units and comparisons. All of them are divided into two semantic groups: material world and inner world. Our main findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1.

Results

	Material world	Inner world
Metaphors	Poverty <i>twenty dollars a week doesn't go far; modest and unassuming D</i>	Behavior and Actions, Thoughts <i>her heart had simply craved and yearned over them without the least hope of possession; she whirled from the window; her eyes were shining brilliantly</i>
Epithets	Poverty, Dwelling, Appearance <i>dull precious metal; the shabby little couch; a very thin and very agile person; grey cat walking a grey fence in a grey backyard</i>	Emotions <i>many a happy hour; brilliant sparkle still in her eyes</i>
Comparisons	Appearance, Clothes <i>hair fell about her, rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters; curls that made her look wonderfully like a truant schoolboy</i>	Emotions <i>Jim... as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail; Della leaped up like a little signed cat</i>

Irony	Poverty, Dwelling <i>was a letter-box into which no letter would go; an electric button from which no mortal finger could coax a ring; when the income was shrunk to \$20, the letters of "Dillingham" looked blurred</i>	
Repetition	Money, Clothes, Surroundings <i>on went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat; One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it in the smallest pieces of money – pennies... Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents... Tomorrow would be Christmas Day, and she had only \$1.87 with which to buy Jim a present; looked out dully at a grey cat walking a grey fence in a grey backyard</i>	
Verbs + Adverbs		Behavior, Mood, Emotional state <i>Greatly hugged; looked out dully; did it up again nervously and quickly; be properly anxious; she looked at her reflection long, carefully, and critically</i>

As we can see descriptions of poor dwelling, element of interior, clothes prevail in "Material world" group while in "Inner world" column dominate actions, emotions and behavior. Material world reflects poverty, and the inner world – the wealth of Della and Jim's souls. In addition, the inner wealth is vividly visible against the background of poverty. Ironies and repetitions very clearly focus on misery living conditions and environment of the heroes. Comparisons and metaphors helped to show better emotions and feelings of heroes. Epithets used to describe the inner state of the heroes – the tenderness of meeting, the joy of buying the present or the exorbitant fatigue after a hard day. Allusion to the Magi and comparison of Della and Jim with them means that all the legendary kings had many material treasures, but the wealthy family of Dillingham has no less spiritual wealth, as for the sake of love they sacrificed the most precious of what they had.

Thus, the analysis reveals that the novelist in 'The Gifts of the Magi' particularly makes use of metaphoric language, allusions, comparisons, epithets, irony and humor, appeals to the reader, and techniques of juxtaposition for the purpose of characterization as well as developing his theme. O. Henry is the master of highlighting expressive and accurate details, making a subtle and effective use of a complex range of vocabulary in the story. Phrasal verbs and adverbs are used very abundantly, adjectives – both predicatively and attributably, which make the prose style more vivid, colorful and appealing. Through the juxtaposition of the characters' inner feelings manifesting their spiritual wealth and the utmost poverty they live in O. Henry declares the true value of love and human relations. The resources of language are shown to be an essential part of the meaning of the novella, making the interpretation of it more precise and complete, and leading to a better comprehension and enjoyment of the short story.

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РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ ОППОЗИЦИИ «ДУХОВНЫЙ» – «МАТЕРИАЛЬНЫЙ» МИР В НОВЕЛЛЕ О. ГЕНРИ «ДАРЫ ВОЛХВОВ»

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В статье рассматривается функционирование лексических стилистических средств в описании оппозиции «духовный» – «материальный» мир в новелле О. Генри «Дары волхвов». В ходе исследования было выявлено, что автор прибегает к языковым средствам, среди которых наиболее частотными являются сравнение, эпитет, метафора, ирония и повтор, благодаря которым душевное богатство героев особенно ярко проступает на фоне окружающей их бедности. Ирония и повторы акцентируют внимание на материальной недостаточности и убогости жилья героев, сравнения и метафоры, напротив, подчеркивают богатство их внутреннего мира. Через сопоставление духовного и материального О. Генри утверждает подлинную ценность любви и человеческих отношений.

Ключевые слова и фразы: аллюзия; сравнение; эпитет; ирония; лексический повтор; метафора; стилистика.