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AUTHORIAL COMMENTARY ON A LITERARY TEXT AS A HYPERTEXTUAL STRUCTURE

The study examines the phenomenon of authorial commentary within literary texts as a component of hypertextual structure, aiming to elucidate its role and functions in shaping reader perception and interpretation. Given the contemporary literary analysis's focus on intertextuality, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how authorial commentaries interact with readers and enrich the textual experience.

Contemporary research in the realm of intertextuality focuses on how authorial commentaries influence the perception and interpretation of literary texts. Some indicate that authorial commentaries may assist readers in better understanding and assimilating content, serving the function of orientation and clarification of complex aspects of the text, while other studies concentrate on empirical methods, such as psycholinguistic experiments, to determine the impact of authorial commentaries on readers. The article emphasizes the importance of authorial commentary in facilitating communication between authors and readers, expanding our comprehension of literary works as intricate information systems. By analyzing various forms of authorial commentary, including explicit and implicit manifestations, the study describes the mechanisms through which authors engage with their audience and convey nuanced perspectives within their texts. Through linguistic analysis and textual interpretation, the research identifies the communicative functions of authorial commentary, shedding light on its role in guiding reader comprehension and eliciting emotional responses.

An author's commentary is a certain interpretation of a literary text by an author, in particular, words, fragments, or storylines of his or her work. The text of the author's commentary is built by the logical unfolding of information, some of which is additional to the understanding of a particular text fragment, but not superfluous for the reader to catch the main informative line that can affect the semantic structure of the main literary text. Perspectives include further investigation into the interaction between authorial commentaries and readers, consideration of psycholinguistic aspects, and analysis of the role of commentaries in different genres and literary periods.

Key words: authorial commentary, literary text, hypertext, intertextuality, textual analysis.

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АВТОКОМЕНТАР ДО ХУДОЖНЬОГО ТЕКСТУ ЯК ГІПЕРТЕКСТОВА СТРУКТУРА

Дослідження розглядає явище авторського коментаря у літературних текстах як складову гіпертекстової структури, маючи на меті розкриття його ролі та функцій у формуванні сприйняття та інтерпретації читачем. З урахуванням того, що сучасний літературний аналіз все більше зосереджується на інтертекстуальності, це дослідження вносить свій внесок у глибше розуміння того, як авторські коментарі взаємодіють з читачами та збагачують текстовий досвід.

Сучасні дослідження у сфері інтертекстуальності фокусуються на тому, як автокоментарі впливають на сприйняття та інтерпретацію літературних текстів. Деякі з них вказують на те, що автокоментарі можуть

допомагати краще розуміти та асимілювати зміст, служачи функцією орієнтації та пояснення складних аспектів тексту, інші дослідження концентруються на емпіричних методах, таких як психолінгвістичні експерименти, для визначення впливу автокоментарів на читачів. У статті підкреслюється важливість авторського коментаря у сприянні комунікації між авторами та читачами, розширюючи наше уявлення про літературні твори як складні інформаційні системи. Аналізуючи різноманітні форми авторського коментаря, включаючи явні та неявні прояви, у дослідженні описані механізми, за допомогою яких автори взаємодіють із своєю аудиторією та виражають нюансовані погляди у своїх текстах. За допомогою лінгвістичного аналізу та текстової інтерпретації, дослідження визначає комунікативні функції авторського коментаря, розкриваючи його роль у керуванні розумінням читача та викликанні емоційних реакцій.

Авторський коментар – це певне витлумачення автором художнього тексту, зокрема слів, фрагментів чи сюжетних ліній свого твору. Текст авторського коментаря будується відповідно до логічного розгортання інформації, частина якої є додатковою для розуміння конкретного текстового фрагмента, але не зайвою для того, щоб читач уловив головну інформативну лінію, здатну позначитися на смисловій структурі основного художнього тексту. Перспективи включають подальше дослідження взаємодії між авторськими коментарями та читачами, розгляд психолінгвістичних аспектів, а також аналіз ролі коментарів у різних жанрах та епохах літератури.

Ключові слова: авторський коментар, художній текст, гіпертекст, інтертекстуальність, аналіз тексту.

Today, the concept of «hypertext» is considered from a theoretical and practical perspective in various fields of contemporary scientific knowledge such as linguistics, literary studies, computer linguistics, hermeneutics, and others, which leads to the presence of different interpretations and concepts. Hypertext, in the most general sense, is a text whose key elements are interconnected by links, allowing the reader non-linear movement within the information field. Hypertext is also viewed as a new way of presenting knowledge due to the non-linearity of human thinking and as a means of communication and organization of networked social space. In lexicography, hypertext is a more advanced method of organizing dictionaries, catalogs, and search optimization. Regarding the traditional book form of fiction literature, the term «hypertext» can be the subject of linguistic analysis, where hypertextuality is interpreted as a way of organizing a literary work.

Topicality of the research. The relevance of this research lies in understanding the author's communication with the reader through internal commentaries within the text. Investigating this phenomenon contributes to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of interaction between the author and the reader in a literary work. Considering authorial commentaries as a component of the hypertextual structure expands our understanding of the possibilities of text perception and interpretation. This allows us to view literary works as more complex information systems that interact with the reader through internal connections and references. Analyzing authorial commentaries in the context of the hypertextual structure enhances understanding of the nature of com-

munication between the author and the audience, and also opens up new possibilities for literary analysis and interpretation of texts.

Presentation of the main material and research. Contemporary studies in the realm of intertextuality focus on how authorial commentaries influence the perception and interpretation of literary texts (Ott, 2000). Some indicate that authorial commentaries may assist readers in better understanding and assimilating content, serving the function of orientation and clarification of complex aspects of the text (Derrida, 1997). Certain studies concentrate on empirical methods, such as psycholinguistic experiments, to determine the impact of authorial commentaries on readers (Hawthorn, 1992). J. Kristeva examines forms of self-referentiality, including authorial commentaries in postmodern literature and their influence on reader perception (Kristeva, 1980). Research into the influence of metatextual elements, particularly authorial commentaries, on engaging readers with literary works and their role in shaping understanding and evaluation of the text, is addressed by W. Irwin (Irwin, 2019). The analysis focuses on strategies of authorial commentary in contemporary prose and their impact on understanding and interpretation of the text (Eco, 1992; Harris, 1952).

The research **aims** to study the role and functions of authorial commentaries in literary texts as components of the hypertextual structure. The study is directed toward understanding and analyzing the mechanisms of interaction between the author and the reader through internal commentaries in literary works. Important aspects of the research include identifying how authorial commentar-

ies influence the perception and interpretation of the text, as well as elucidating their significance for understanding the author's intentions and constructing the textual structure.

Presentation of the main material and research. Commentary on literary texts has a long history and is an important element of literary criticism. As a genre, commentaries are constantly evolving and approaching the text, illuminating its various semantic aspects. In both global and Ukrainian literary practices, there is a variety of commentaries on literary texts, ranging from individual words, lines, or paragraphs to entire literary works spanning epochs. Among all additional texts accompanying a literary work (introductions, prefaces, afterwords, etc.), commentaries receive particular attention, as they have the greatest potential to influence the reader's perception of characters and the content of the literary work.

The author of a literary work acts as both its creator and a thinking subject, motivating their linguistic activity. Commentary within the text can be categorized by its addressee into several types:

Author's commentary: comments directly originating from the author (the sender). For example, in the novel «1984» by George Orwell, authorial commentary may include descriptions and reflections on the socio-political aspects of the work, such as: «*Big Brother is watching you*», emphasizing the theme of control and monitoring in a totalitarian society.

Character's commentary: comments presented as spoken or unspoken discourse by characters. In Charles Dickens' novel «David Copperfield», character commentary is manifested in the internal monologues of the protagonist about his life experiences and interactions with other characters. For instance, in moments of reflection on his relationships with various characters, David expresses his internal feelings and thoughts: «*Oh, how much for each of us!*»!

Polyphonic commentary: comments presented indirectly through a fusion of the author's voice and that of the characters. In Jane Austen's novel «Mansfield Park», the polyphonic commentary is present through the reproduction of various voices and musings of characters interacting with the author's external narrative. For example, in the internal monologues of the protagonist, Fanny Price, the author reproduces her reflections and inner experiences, which intertwine with

the author's descriptions of her actions and feelings: «*Could there be a more interesting situation?*»

These forms of commentary interact with each other, creating depth and complexity within the text, and can be considered as units of hypertext. Authorial commentary can also be extratextual, such as notes at the end of chapters or epigraphs, or intratextual, such as evaluations of events and characters at any point within the text. Intratextual commentary may take various forms, including reflections, analyses of character motivations, as well as ironic or humorous commentary. These forms of commentary interact with each other, enriching the text and expanding its meanings.

Special attention should be paid to authorial commentaries, as they influence the perception and interpretation of the literary text. They can serve as keys to understanding the author's intentions and complement the main text, creating hypertextual connections and revealing additional layers of meaning.

The information in the authorial commentary can be presented either explicitly or implicitly. Authorial commentaries can be direct if the author speaks to the reader from their persona, and depicted if the authorial commentary is conveyed through the voice of a character. That is, the narrative is transmitted to the character-narrator or a substitute stylized narrator. In terms of content, commentary related to the main characters can be divided into four thematic areas: 1. Individual characteristics of the character (their appearance, social status); 2. Their actions; 3. What they say; 4. What others say about them (the attitude of other characters towards them).

Authorial commentary is a specific interpretation by the author of a literary text, particularly of words, fragments, or plot lines of their work. The text of the authorial commentary is constructed according to the logical unfolding of information, part of which serves as supplementary for understanding a specific textual fragment but is not superfluous for the reader to grasp the main informative line capable of influencing the semantic structure of the main literary text. Let us provide several examples of novelistic works containing authorial commentaries.

The authorial commentary in William Makepeace Thackeray's novel «Vanity Fair» exhibits a pronounced satirical nature, typical of realism literature. His dialogue with the reader resembles

a conversation during a theatrical performance, featuring directorial adjustments and comments that elucidate the author's intentions: «*If Miss Rebecca Sharp had determined in her heart upon making the conquest of this big beau, I don't think, ladies, we have any right to blame her; for though the task of husband-hunting is generally, and with becoming modesty, entrusted by young persons to their mammas, recollect that Miss Sharp had no kind parent to arrange these delicate matters for her, and that if she did not get a husband for herself, there was no one else in the wide world who would take the trouble off her hands*» (Thackeray, 2009). This example serves as a vivid argument to justify Becky's behavior. The narrator not only elucidates his perspective on his heroine but also engages the reader in accepting and justifying Becky's actions in pursuit of a wealthy husband. The author ironically characterizes the «*modest*» morality of society, yet he simultaneously aligns himself as one of the representatives of contemporary society, as indicated by the personal pronoun «*we*».

The inclusion of authorial commentary in a narrative is associated with the author's intention to express their viewpoint, and draw the addressee's attention to the commented object or subject. From this perspective, the function of authorial commentary is defined as establishing contact between the addressee and the addresser, acting on the reader's attention, and activating their deeper perception and comprehension of the information conveyed in the text. Let's consider a fragment from S. Maugham's novel «*The Razor's Edge*»:

*«I was silent. I wondered whether that was the only reason for this unexpected step or whether it was connected with Isabel's refusal to marry him. The fact was, I didn't know at all how deeply he loved her. **Most people when they are in love invent every kind of reason to persuade themselves that it is only sensible to do what they want...**»* (Maugham, 2004).

The highlighted fragment of the text serves as an authorial commentary or digression, where the author attempts to draw the addressee's attention to Larry's action, who, upon receiving a rejection from his beloved woman, decided to alleviate his emotional pain through physical labor. Through this commentary, where the author employs such lexical units as «*most people*», «*to persuade*», and «*only sensible*», he seems to justify the protagon-

ist's actions, indicating that any person in love is willing to undertake thoughtless actions.

Every action is associated with a certain purpose; hence any authorial commentary can be considered as the realization of a specific goal of the author. In this study, we pay attention to the fact that in most cases, authorial commentary is intentionally introduced into the text. The specificity of authorial commentary is determined by the fact that it is used as a means of linguistic action on the reader's position. The action aims to shape the addressee's positive or negative attitude towards the referent of the digression, i.e., towards the commented unit. Accordingly, the conveyed information contains a certain evaluation and authorial judgments, which are not explicit but rather implicit in the digressions themselves. These instructions are also designed with the assumption that the addressee is prepared to accept them, possessing a certain system of knowledge. These knowledge and assumptions determine the success of applying the authorial digression: whether the addressee agrees with the author and accepts his viewpoint, or not.

The authorial commentary, as an expression of a generalizing-clarifying nature, facilitates the transition of the addressee's attention from the specific, discussed in the narrative, to the abstract, related to an indefinite object/subject/event. The generality of the authorial digression is verbalized in the text by lexical and grammatical means such as *any, every, no one, all, always, never*. For example, adverbs *always* and *never* objectify the meanings of extreme temporal generalization: *always* expresses the generalized presence of something, while *never* denotes generalized absence.

An example of another type of (extra-textual) authorial commentary is a fragment of Chapter III, «*Religious Wars*», in J. Barnes's *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters* (Barnes, 2009). The chapter has a complex text structure, and two levels can be distinguished. The first level, graphically marked in italics, is the author's commentary at the beginning and end of the text, where the reader is provided with information about the main part, which is the second level. The reader learns about such a cultural phenomenon as animal trials in the Middle Ages, and therefore refers to Evans's book «*The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals*», published

in 1906 in London: «...it was customary to catch several specimens of the culprits and bring them before the seat of justice, and there solemnly put them to death while the anathema was being pronounced» (Evans, 2009). In addition, the author's commentary reveals that the main part of the chapter is a record of a court hearing, which makes it possible to classify the text as an official business style. The concluding commentary is an independent text, which, from the point of view of modern linguistics, is an example of hypertext (the presence of clearly marked references to specific text fragments): «Here a manuscript from the municipal archives of Besançon breaks off without giving details of the annual commemoration or penance imposed by the court on the settlers. The state of the papers indicates that over the past four and a half centuries, the archives have been subjected (and probably more than once) to the invasion of termites, which gnawed off the final words of the verdict of the Eglise judge» (Barnes, 2009). This fragment serves as a reference in the text.

In the analyzed text, the author introduces a commentary directly into the narrative, including his reflections on "Was the woodworm ever upon Noah's Ark," which creates intra-textual intertextuality: «Therefore the question... is the following: was the woodworm ever upon Noah's Ark? Holy writ makes no mention of the woodworm embarking upon or disembarking from the mighty vessel of Noah... How could it have been so, for was not the Ark constructed of wood?» (Barnes, 2009); «...it is argued that the woodworm did not have

passage on the Ark of Noah and therefore must be diabolically possessed» (Barnes, 2009). «In either case we have been much swayed by the argument... that the woodworm could not have been upon the Ark of Noah – for what prudent sea captain in his wisdom would permit such agents of shipwreck to board his vessel?» (Barnes, 2009). Intertextual connections perform an appealing function, as they draw the reader's attention to the depicted episode of the text.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. Therefore, commentary in a literary text, regarded as a form of hypertextual structure, is considered a unique instance of incorporating comments authored by the writers within the published literary work. The authorial commentary serves as a unit that reinstates the original communicative situation of direct interaction between the author and the reader. The primary function of such commentary is to govern the reader's perception and to activate their knowledge. Within their author's digressions, authors employ stylistic peculiarities (such as substitution of conjunctions, figurative expressions acquiring nuanced connotations, thematic motifs, elements of colloquial language, interrogative and exclamatory sentences) to articulate their thoughts more distinctly, to vividly envisage the essence of the depicted scenario, and to deeply engage the reader in the course of reasoning. The delineation of commentary as a communicative unit and the description of its linguistic characteristics at various levels hold significant practical importance in text analysis.

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