



THE CONCEPT “SEA” IN A. BARICCO'S WORKS “NOVECENTO” AND “SEA-OCEAN”

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the problem of studying the concept, which belongs to the key terms of cognitive linguistics. Thanks to the concept when interpreting an literary text it becomes possible to reveal the irrational component of its meaning. One of the main concepts in the works “Ocean sea” and “Novecento” by Alessandro Baricco is “sea”. The article attempts to analyse the concept of the sea through the characters of these works.

Keywords: Concept, cognitive linguistics, interpretation, literary concept, character, metaphor

Introduction

Concepts, acting as components of our consciousness and our knowledge of the world, are the subject of study of cognitive linguistics, philosophy, psychology, linguocultural studies and other humanities.

According to V. Maslova, a concept is a mental nationally specific formation, the plan of its content is the totality of knowledge about a given object, and the plan of its expression is the totality of linguistic means [Maslova 2005: 27].

A. Vezhbitskaya gives several definitions of a concept. In her understanding, a concept is described as an object of the ideal world, which has a name, is defined with the help of a set of semantic data and reflects cultural ideas about reality [Vezhbitskaya 1999: 549].

B. I. Karasik defines a concept as a multifaceted semantic formation, in which value, image and conceptual sides can be distinguished. The scientist notes that we should talk about concepts if a given area is comprehended in the linguistic consciousness and is labeled by a single word [Karasik 1997: 109].



A literary concept is understood as a universal artistic experience fixed in cultural memory and capable of acting as an enzyme and building material in the formation of new artistic meanings [Miller 2000: 42].

Discussion and Results

One of the main concepts in “Ocean sea” and “Novecento” by Alessandro Baricco is “sea”. The sea plays a central role, often as a symbol of transformation, healing and self-discovery. The sea represents an element of profound importance, which serves as a backdrop for the characters' stories and contributes to creating a dreamlike and metaphorical atmosphere. The sea is not just a landscape, but an active agent that influences the characters' lives and choices.

In each book Baricco talks about a different sea and each time the sea fulfils a different function.

In “Novecento” the sea fulfils the function of space, the location of the plot. Much of the plot of the book takes place on the steamship “Virginia”, which sails for years on sea and ocean waters between Europe and America. Each voyage takes about twenty days, and the ship makes five or six voyages a year.

The protagonist of Novecento is introduced to readers at the outset as Danny Budmann T. D. Lemon Novecento, the greatest pianist who ever played on the ocean.

When Baricco tells the story of Novecento, the time when he became an orphan for the second time, after old Danny died, he writes that the ocean was his home. As for the land, he had never set foot on it. He'd seen it from the harbours, sure. But down there, never. He also explains why old Danny wouldn't let the boy go. He was afraid of being taken away, for the boy had no papers.

Thus, Novecento did not exist to the outside world, but at sea he could play the piano like no one ever did. He played wherever he wanted to play. And he wanted to play in the middle of the sea, when the land is only distant lights, or memories, or hope. Novecento was born on a ship and stayed there for life: “I am on this ship. And here the world passed by, but two thousand people at a time. And there were wishes here too, but no more than those that could fit between a bow and a stern. You played your happiness, on a keyboard that was not infinite” [Baricco 2012: 147].



So, the sea in “Novecento” is more than just an environment. It is a character in its own right, influencing Novecento's choices, emotions and life itself, becoming a powerful symbol of his existence and his connection with the ship and its music. If in “Novecento” the “sea” plays the role of the protagonist, the mirror of his life, in “Ocean Sea” it is the theme of another sea, a means or a way to healing, to salvation.

The novel “Ocean sea” is particularly significant for its use of the sea as a central element. The plot of the book unfolds predominantly on the seashore where Almayer's Tavern is located. Almayer's Tavern is a special place because the characters' lives intertwine there and change in certain ways. The chapter on the characters in The Sea-Ocean emphasises the function that the sea plays in each character's life.

Each of eight characters has come to this place for a specific and personal purpose. In reality, the meaning of the sea for each of them is different, which can be death but also life; the sea is love but also pain; the sea is beginning but also end; the sea is healing but also hope.

The artist Michel Plasson used to spend whole hours on the beach with his feet dipped in the tidal water as the sea level rose, looking out at the sea. He tried to paint the sea using salty seawater. It was a brilliant idea. Plasson was fascinated by the sea. At first he painted portraits of people, he was one of the most famous portrait painters, but then he decided to create a masterpiece - a sea portrait. Sea portraits were usually completely white and at the same moment they were perfect portraits painted by sea water.

Elisewin, daughter of the Baron of Carewall, had an affliction caused by shock, white terror. In a land where there was neither river nor sea, the best doctor in the land, Atterdel, prescribed sea baths. Atterdel said that only the sea could change the girl's health, which had not improved in years. Either she would die or she would survive, but at least she had hope of recovery. Indeed, the girl is healed.

Father Plush is a clergyman who has been looking after Elisewin for several years. He accompanies Elisewin to the sea, where they stay at the Almayer inn. He always stays by her side. But soon after leaving the seaside inn, he leaves Elisewin and experiences a spiritual crisis. He thinks he has lost his way because the sea confuses his thoughts, but thanks to God and his own faith she finds him again.



Ann Deveria is a woman who betrayed her husband and was sent by her husband to the sea to recover from her adultery. Her husband hoped that the sea climate would help her forget her lover Andre and regain her sense of ethics and morality. “The sea fascinates, the sea kills, moves, frightens, even makes you laugh, sometimes it disappears, sometimes it disappears. Sometimes it masquerades as a lake, or makes storms, devours ships, gives wealth, gives no answers, wise, gentle, powerful, unpredictable. But most of all, the sea calls”, - says Ann Deveria to Elisewin during a walk on the beach.

Ismael Adelante Ismael Professor Bartleboom has come to the sea to add the entry “sea” to his encyclopedia of the limits of Nature. To do this he must find the point where the wave stops, the point where the sea ends. The immense sea, the sea-ocean that into infinity goes beyond sight, the immense omnipotent sea - there is a place where it ends, and a moment - the immense sea, a tiny place and a moment of nothing.

Finally, Adams also uses the name Thomas in the book. His story is mostly dealt with in the second half of the book entitled “The Belly of the Sea”. Its plot takes place on the sea. The frigate l'Alliance, after a fourteen-day voyage, runs aground in the Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Senegal, and there is not enough room on the lances for all the passengers. 147 men have to board a raft, among them the two characters Savigny and Thomas. They are in the heart of the sea, of the ocean: “Ocean sea, mighty above all might and marvellous above all marvels”. After the ten scenes where Savigny is delirious, he looks up and sees “the sea”. For the first time, after all the time on the sea, he really sees it. He hears its sound immense, the strong smell, the unstoppable movement: “The sea was everything. It was, from the first moment, everything. I see it dancing around me ...it is a wonderful infinite monster. It was him in the hands that killed, in the dead that died, there was he, in thirst and hunger, in agony there was he, in life and madness, he was hate and despair, he was pity and renunciation, he is this blood and this flesh, he is this horror and this splendour. There is only the sea. Everything has become sea. We, abandoned by the earth, have become the belly of the sea, and the belly of the sea is us, and in us it breathes and lives”.

So, in “Ocean sea” we are confronted with a sea that extends to infinity, that is, to the horizon. Baricco tells of a sea that has no roads or explanations. The sea knows



neither fatigue nor mercy. If you look at it, you don't realise how noisy it is. But in the dark everything becomes just a rumble, a wall of sound, a whining, blind scream. Baricco says the sea cannot be extinguished. People walking along the beach during the day leave footprints, but the sea at night hides and erases everything. It's as if it erases the past and the next day begins again.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article analyses the concept of sea through the characters in Baricco's books "Ocean sea" and "Novecento". The sea represents a metaphor for life, the sea that is within out of all of us. The sea, which gives and takes away and sometimes destroys, is nothing but life, the life of each person and its ability to give us happiness or even surprise us with its horror and its pain.

Baricco uses the sea as a versatile narrative tool, capable of creating poetic atmospheres, evoking deep emotions and representing important themes such as transition, change and healing.

Thus, thanks to the concept it is possible to reveal the irrational component of the literary meaning during interpretation, which in turn allows us to outline the strategy of conceptual analysis, the description of the structure of artistic representation.

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