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IMAGE SCHEMAS AS A WAY TO UNDERSTANDING  
A SCHIZOPHRENIC WORLD PICTURE  
IN NARRATIVE AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL DISCOURSE

The paper describes a language personality with a mental disorder (“schizophrenia”) and the way this hero thinks in two fiction novels and one autobiography of American authors. For this purpose, cognitive mechanisms of a psychopathologic language personality are presented on the basis of spatial conceptualization and its cognitive modeling. In the article the specific world picture is greatly influenced by socio-cultural environment represented by image schemas and conceptual metaphors construing the understanding of a person’s life with this disease, who perceives the self between the real external world and the inner imagined one. The outlined cases are able to point at various stages of the disease in the books.

*Key words: discourse of fiction, a schizophrenic language personality, image schemas, a real and imagined world, conceptual metaphor, conceptualization.*

A human being always tried to think over the surrounding world and explain what is grasped by the human sight, how he is able to reflect what is observed, thought over and interpreted. Human experience represented in language involves careful consideration and person’s goal as the ability “to cognize the self and his attitude towards everything open to the eye and hidden in the surrounding” [1, p. 37]. Though all the language description to a certain extent has been focused on the study of linguistic laws, the comparison of various language phenomena in related and later nonrelated languages, and of course systemic-structural peculiarities of language units, the link between language and human consciousness reflecting the surrounding reality is still the matter of great importance.

This link was underlined by Hjelmslev in the 50s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who wrote: “language... *lies deep in the mind of man*, a wealth of memories inherited by the individual and the tribe, vigilant conscience that reminds and warns. And speech is *the distinctive mark of the personality*, for good and ill, the distinctive mark of home and of nation, mankind’s patent of nobility. So inextricably has language grown inside personality, home, nation, mankind, and life itself that we may sometimes be tempted to ask whether language is a mere reflexion of, simply is not all those things – the very seed leaf of their growth” [2, p. 3].

The idea to turn to a human being and his individuality was firstly proclaimed by specialists in psychology and didactics as one of the most important issues, while the term “personality” (“litchnost”) was developed on the basis of teaching language activities and other related spheres. This research awareness also lead to the attention to “subjectivity” disengaging a particular individual as a “psychological entity, transcendental to the set of given experience linked by this unity and providing the constancy of consciousness”, on the one hand, and the society, where this individual lives, on the other [3, p. 294]. But the speaker is always “omnipresent” in speech “circulating in the systematic ways in which the speaking subject manifests in language use” [4, p. 106].

The movement towards societal and cultural aspects in language research showed the application of both notions corresponding to the expanding linguistic studies inevitably taking into account different epistemological, theoretical and methodological perspectives. One of these perspectives referred to the point of view expressed by the following words, “One cannot cognize language as it is only by looking outside its boundaries, paying attention to the language creator – to the speaker and language user, that means to a human being, to the *concrete language personality*” [5, p. 7].

The shift towards the function and impact of language use in cognitive and functional linguistics became associated with *a neo-anthropological approach*, which is inspired by “a new understanding of a human being – his cognitive abilities, language, evaluative and pragmatic sources of behavior, perception and understanding of the world” [6, p. 78]. This approach changed the subject and object of research interest in philosophy, humanitarian sciences and of course linguistics. It “holds that language is a part of a cognitive system” of an individual, whose mental abilities “interact with language and are influenced by language” [7, p. xi]. The thing is that person’ mental and communicative activities incorporate the scope of social factors in the interaction between people, but besides them we can outline those features, which refer to psychological, mental, pragmatic and many other things in interaction. This particular significance of the world construal in various kinds of discourse exerted by cultural and social strengthening of particular language personalities is becoming of great importance nowadays.

Language personalities are regarded to be *a conceptual category* corresponding to “the *united* portrayal” of various people, their speech and behavior habits characterized by ethnical, social, gender, age, confessional and other features [8]. The term “a language personality” pertaining to some certain social group of people is characterized by similar features and may be regarded as one of the central terms in cognitive-linguistic studies addressing communicative activity, cognitive processes and methods. This term is corresponds to a language activity performed by a human being, a dynamic phenomenon closely related to the special sphere, in which variable knowledge structures are enshrined [9; 10]. Language personality can’t be presented without discourse, which is “primarily a cognitive event, dealing with the transfer of knowledge” and with the request of knowledge, new processing of it, or relying on knowledge observations following definite goals [11, p. 516].

The *aim* of the research is to study two kinds of discourse. Firstly, for the purpose of understanding processes of categorization and conceptualization representing the human being and his/her consciousness *professional discourse* is paid attention to. This is a special discourse of medicine and psychiatry, in which nominative and syntactical units referring to special and common knowledge types specify peculiarities of mental states of patients. The analyzed units represent the category of “a human brain” belonging to the subordinate level of categorization, like *brain circuit, cortical gray matter, Broca’s area, amyglada, thalamus*, etc.

Besides that this category ranges functions of the neural system and its structural units – neurons, as in the following word-groups: *the central nervous system (CNS)*, *hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis*, *axon of the neuron*, *cortical GABA interneurons*, *the N-methyl-D-aspartic acid (NMDA) subtype receptor*, *glio between the neurons*. Moreover, medical, genetic, neurological, physiological, social and other domains of human experience indicate at one of the most common and serious mental disorders, such as schizophrenia. Such a patient as a language personality withdraws from the contact with other people, has delusions and seems to lose contact with the real world. Special medical texts present key symptoms, diagnostics, the cognitive deficits, including ability to concentrate, specific features of verbal and nonverbal memory, functional and structural abnormalities of the brain and medical treatment.

Secondly, this illness causes the interest of authors reflected in the variety of books in modern American fiction. The reason to study the *discourse of fiction* as the research material is that the main character in these texts is a schizophrenic personality or the book written by this person. The exceptional purpose of this article is to describe language means in discourse corresponding to the way these personalities perceive the reality and think about it as the representation of the image of the world view [12; 13]. For the analysis one autobiographical novel “I never promised you a rose garden” by Greenberg [14], memoirs “The day the voices stopped” by Steele [15], and a novel “Finding Alice” by Carlson [16] that is based on her son’s experience of the illness are discussed in this paper. In the text of the autobiographical novel by Greenberg the conceptual space of the main character is generated on the basis of world view directly expressed in extracts from special medical discourse, it is combined with personal feelings and emotions of a schizophrenic personality in various situations.

We gain access to conceptualization in literary texts through cognitive modeling as the research procedure, including image schemas and conceptual metaphor methodology. Image schemas are non-propositional gestalt structures behaving as “distillers” of spatial and temporal experiences. This knowledge is the basis for organizing information and reasoning about the world. They “help to explain how our intrinsically embodied mind can at the same time be capable of abstract thought” [17, p. 24]. Metaphorical expressions help to reveal different relationships, hierarchies and dependencies especially present in spatial vision of the world.

The representation of the state of a human being with this syndrome is reflected in a number of conceptual metaphors characterizing the person in the suffering state of mind. This individual lives in the real world, which is “the largest and the most important entity in human perception” and his activity [11, p. 465]. It becomes the first and the foremost conceptual space, but at the same time the consciousness of the person in this state of mind moves to some imagined world with other relations. In the analyzed books the description of metaphorical models of various conceptual entities may be organized according to the following groups:

1. The first thing that impresses the reader in the texts, where schizophrenic personality and his/her experience is presented, is the existence of discreteness and continuity in boundaries, which may unite the two worlds and at the same moment divide them. The borderline between these conceptual entities is that the personality moves along the PATH, crosses this line between the spaces and then comes back to the real world space again: *During those early years of the illness, I could still move **back and forth between** my two worlds* [15, p. 27]; *suspended **between** my crazy world and normal life* [19, p. 262].

2. In the course of time each world acquires new features, objects and relations, from the line and surface representations it becomes more complicated performed by the image schema of a CONTAINER. The movement is now between the CONTAINERS based on the image of a “bridge”, which corresponds to the dynamic character of physical and mental transition from one state to the other one, reaching the aims and coming back: *I am caught **between** two confusing worlds, yet belonging to neither. I am neither alive or dead. **Between** here and there... I am **a bridge*** [16, p. 114].

3. The SOURCE – PATH – GOAL schema combined with the metaphorical models of CONTACT and LINK characterizes the development of the disease. The person moves quite freely from “here to there” and back quite often: *“When will you stop straddling these **two worlds**?” “I’m not ready yet!” Deborah shouted* [14, p. 260]. This mental state can be identified through the comparison with *“a **tennis ball** in play from stage to stage”*.

4. For the personality with this syndrome it becomes more and more difficult to return to the real world, as if it occurs to be the movement through *“a tiny door”*: *I’ve begun to suspect that the reason I must **pass through** the tiny door is to reach the other side...I have no idea what awaits me on the other side. Things could have get even worse for me over there in “Normalville”* [16, p. 57]. The tiny door becomes the OBSTACLE in returning to the real life. The obstacle also appears, when he or she is far away from the external world and feels like *“an underwater creature”*. This metaphorical picture shapes the schizophrenic personality not in the real world, where he appears on the beach or land from time to time to survive, but all the other period he spends in the imagined world under water: *I was like an **underwater creature** that still had the ability to **survive** on land from time to time* [15, p. 28]. So the person loses his links with the reality. The “collision of two worlds” appears when the person can’t understand where exactly he is at the present moment. This personality is compared with “an ancient Italian deity, guardian of doorways, gates and beginnings, and protector of the state in time of war” [18, p. 754]. He becomes *“a two-faced Janus”* with the face that looks both forward and backward and imagined world *Yr* dominates over the person and his brain: *Sometimes she was able to see “reality” from **Yr** as if the partition between them were only gauze. On such occasions her name became Januce, because she felt like **two-faced Janus** – with a face on each world* [14, p. 13].

5. When the disease progresses the person with the mental disorder cannot control his/her feelings, moving from one state to the other one, specified by hallucinations. This state happens with the main heroine from the novel “Finding Alice” by Carlson and “*the awful state of horror*” brings her to the hospital bed: *Deborah, who was huddled on the couch, shivering in Yr’s cold through the heat of Earth’s August* [14, p. 82]. The author opposes these two worlds with the antonymic pair of cold and hot, the imagined and mythical world of Yr with the girl shivering from cold and the Earth’s space of the real couch during the hot August weather. We observe the description of the opposition between mental spaces of two worlds, one of which is difficult to return from.

In conclusion, it is necessary to stress that linguists mostly distinguish two main pictures of the world – one is associated with the scientific and the other with the common worldview. The first one is represented by nominative and syntactic units describing stages of the disease development, diagnostics, variability of symptoms, features of remissions and relapse, and the treatment of patients. The common picture of the world is found in narrative and autobiographical discourse. Both worldviews present the language personality and the understanding of the surrounding reality.

Conceptual modeling takes into account image schemas being non-propositional formats of knowledge and conceptual metaphors. Cognitive modeling of space relations in narrative and autobiographical discourse is able to explain how the language personality views the outer reality and the self in it and how his comprehension of the disease state reveals his introspection of two worlds – the real and the imagined one. To penetrate into the conceptualization of specific features in the world picture SOURCE – PATH – GOAL, CONTAINER, CONTACT and LINK image schemas are combined with the number of conceptual metaphors (bridge, tennis ball, tiny door, Yr world, underwater, etc.) are illuminated in the article.

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