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STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LITERATURE TO STUDENTS OF SPECIALTY 014 – SECONDARY EDUCATION (ON THE EXAMPLE OF IRIS MURDOCH'S NOVEL "UNDER THE NET")

The textual study of fiction is considered as a priority strategy that should be used in seminar classes on the course of English literature, since it provides an opportunity not only to analyze effectively a work of art, but also to immerse students into an English-language text and conduct a dictionary work. The author of the article emphasizes that one of the important directions in the development of modern literary studies is the study of hypertexts, including the so-called "urban texts".

The article deals with the analysis of the peculiarities of the London text in Iris Murdoch's novel "Under the Net". For the first time, the image of the city created by Murdoch is viewed through the prism of modernist poetics, which allowed us to consider London in the novel "Under the Net" as a complex system in which different levels are distinguished. The author of the article proves that Iris Murdoch mythologizes London, creating the image of a city of eternal searches, a city of masks, a city of tangled labyrinths of human relations.

Mythologizing London, the writer makes us see the supernatural, the unusual in ordinary city labyrinths. In Iris Murdoch's novel, the image of a city is presented in the reception of the main character, for whom London is a city without which he cannot live, he knows and loves this city very well, regardless of its contradictions, because he himself is just as contradictory. In the London text of the novel, an architectural text can be singled out, which allows the writer to depict physical and metaphysical London.

The article shows that the detailing of Murdoch's descriptions of the city has its purpose. On the one hand, the writer makes London familiar to the reader, and on the other hand, she manages to show the extraordinary nature of the big city. The mythologizing of the urban space in the Murdoch's work allows us to single out a number of archetypal motifs, which are an integral part of the mythopoetics of the London text in the novel "Under the Net".

This approach to the study of Iris Murdoch's novel as a hypertext is considered the most effective when studying it at the Faculty of Philology by future teachers.

Key words: text, hypertext, urban text, London text, architectural text, textual analysis, metaphor, mythopoetics, mythologizing, archetype.

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СТРАТЕГІЇ ВИКЛАДАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ СТУДЕНТАМ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТІ 014 – СЕРЕДНЯ ОСВІТА (НА ПРИКЛАДІ РОМАНУ АЙРІС МЕРДОК «ПІД СІТКОЮ»)

У статті текстуальне вивчення художнього твору розглядається як пріоритетна стратегія, якою варто користуватися на семінарських заняттях з курсу англійської літератури, оскільки це дає можливість не лише ефективно аналізувати художній твір, але і занурюватися у англомовний текст та вести словникову роботу. Автор статті підкреслює, що одним із важливих напрямків у розвитку сучасного літературознавства є вивчення гіпертекстів, у тому числі так званих «міських текстів».

У статті аналізуються особливості лондонського тексту у романі Айріс Мердок «Під сіткою». Уперше образ міста, створеного Мердок, розглядається крізь призму модерністської поетики, що дозволило розглянути Лондон у романі «Під сіткою» як багаторівневу складну систему, в якій виокремлюються різні рівні. Автор статті доводить, що Айріс Мердок міфологізує Лондон, створюючи образ міста вічних пошуків, міста-маски, міста заплутаних лабіринтів людських стосунків.

Міфологізуючи Лондон, письменниця змушує побачити надприродне, незвичайне у звичайних міських лабіринтах. У романі Айріс Мердок образ великого міста подано у рецепції головного героя, для якого Лондон – місто, без якого він не може жити, він дуже добре знає і любить це місто, не зважаючи на його суперечливість, адже і сам герой такий же суперечливий. У лондонському тексті роману можна виокремити архітектурний текст, який дозволяє письменниці зобразити фізичний і метафізичний Лондон.

У статті показано, що деталізація описів міста у Мердок має свою мету. З одного боку, письменниця робить Лондон звичним для читача, а з іншого – їй вдається показати надзвичайність великого міста. Міфологізація міського простору у творі дозволяє виокремити ряд архетипних мотивів, що є невід’ємною складовою міфопоетики лондонського тексту роману «Під сіткою».

Саме такий підхід до вивчення роману Айріс Мердок як гіпертексту розглядається як найбільш ефективний при вивченні його на факультеті філології майбутніми вчителями.

Ключові слова: текст, гіпертекст, міський текст, лондонський текст, архітектурний текст, текстуальний аналіз, метафора, міфопоетика, міфологізація, архетип.

The problem statement. The textual study of a work of art is a very important strategy that should be used in seminar classes on the course of English literature, as it provides an opportunity not only to analyze effectively a work of art, but also to immerse students into an English-language text and conduct a vocabulary work. In this regard, we note that one of the priority directions in the development of modern literary studies is the study of hypertexts, including the so-called «urban texts».

Analysis of previous literature. The beginning of the study of the «urban text» was laid by the works of M.P. Antsiferov, devoted to the research of the city image. The problem of the study of «urban text» as a phenomenon of verbal culture most fully was posed in the articles of V.M. Toporov (Топоров В.І.: 1973) and Yu.M. Lotman (Лотман Ю.М.: 2011). In modern literary studies, «urban text» is defined as a complex synthetic supertext, which is associated with higher meanings and goals, the sphere of the symbolic and providential. The capital city in relation to the periphery is seen as the center, that creates a special mythopoetics of the city, which affects its reception till now.

Iris Murdoch (1919–1999), an English writer whose works became a prominent phenomenon in the European culture of the century, may well be called an “unidentified object”. Despite the fact that Western and domestic researchers have carried out extremely meticulous work on the analysis of various aspects of Iris Murdoch’s work, the range of research approaches is very wide and makes it difficult to single out any general concept. Even a skim over the studies devoted to her works shows that opinions differ on every point. These contradictions were summarized by M. Bradbury: “She is most certainly a serious novelist, yet her books can be and have been read at many levels, from the most metaphysical to the most romantic and sentimental; her various readers can thus construct her in very different ways, and she seems constantly and teasingly to reconstruct them, giving them a good deal of the probable and an element of the unexpected” (Bradbury M.: 2007, p. 245).

The literary debut of the writer, the novel “Under the Net” (1954), recorded the reception of the most important philosophical currents of the time: the provisions of existentialism, analytical philosophy and psychoanalysis (through Surrealism) are skillfully “woven” into the texture of the picaresque novel (Bradbury M.: 2007, pp. 252–253). In the image of Jake Donaghue, on whose behalf the narration is being conducted, the features of the characters of Sartre’s novels are guessed (subjectivism, solipsism, immersion in one’s inner experiences, fear of the unforeseen accidents of life), while in the life credo of his spiritual “guide” Hugo Belfounder (silence as the only way of salvation from the imperfection and triviality of the language) one can catch the echoes of the L. Wittgenstein philosophy, whom Murdoch admired and whom she might have met in Cambridge.

It should be noted that “Under the Net” can be considered as a key novel for the entire creative path of Murdoch in several respects at once. It outlined the motifs that grew up on the basis of the existential issues of interpersonal communication (I and the Other) and later it became the main novel for the creative world of the writer. Moreover, in her debut work Murdoch successfully demonstrated her virtuosity in using various literary forms: a picaresque novel, a quest novel, a detective story. And the risky experiment of artistic empathy for a novice novelist (narration from a male person) was an approbation of that narrative strategy, which in the future will become familiar and convenient for her.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the “urban text” as a hypertext of Iris Murdoch’s novel “Under the net”. London is a city that occupies a special place in the novel. Studying the image of the city through the prism of modernist poetics allows us to consider London in Murdoch’s work as a multi-level complex system. Teaching the students to analyze the novel as a hypertext will also help to develop their linguistic and cultural knowledge, which is quite necessary for a modern teacher of a foreign language.

The main material. London is shown in the perception of the main character of the novel – the writer and translator Jake Donaghue. For him, London is a living organism; it is a personality with its own features, with its own character: “On Chiswick Mall the houses face the river, but on that piece of Hammersmith Mall which is relevant to my tale they turn their backs to the river and pretend to be an ordinary street” (Murdoch *Iris.*: 1982, p. 39). Pretense is one of the defining features of both London and its residents: “All the time when I speak to you, even now, I’m saying not precisely what I think, but what will impress you and make you respond. That’s so even between us—and how much more it’s so where there are stronger motives for deception. In fact, one’s so used to this one hardly sees it. The whole language is a machine for making falsehoods” (Murdoch *Iris.*: 1982, p. 74). The houses on the streets of the city reflect the state of those people who live there, or its own state: “It was a brooding self-absorbed sort of house” (Murdoch *Iris.*: 1982, p. 39). The city is inseparable from people, from their attitude to the world. The reader perceives London through the prism of the consciousness of the characters. The basis of the cityscapes in the work is Jake’s perception of the world in a certain situation: “The windows gleamed blackly, like eyes behind dark glasses” (Murdoch *Iris.*: 1982, p. 40).

In the novel, the image of London has two main levels. The first level is physical: it is a city-labyrinth with tangled streets, lots of old and new buildings, districts and bridges, gardens and squares, etc.: “Chiswick Mall is a lazy collection of houses and greenery that looks dreamily out on to the water, but Hammersmith Mall is a labyrinth of waterworks and laundries with pubs and Georgian houses in between which sometimes face the river and sometimes back it” (Murdoch *Iris.*: 1982, p. 39).

The London text in the novel is closely related to the architectural text. One can easily explore London while reading a Murdoch novel. Accuracy in geographical names is a striking feature of the work. The character’s travels through the capital are given such precise names that his wanderings can be followed on a map. For example, the route of the truck that takes Anna’s belongings from the theater to Riverside is given so clearly that an inquisitive reader can find the intersection where Jake got out of the car. Such naturalistic detailing is characteristic of all the travel scenes in London in the novel. “Under the Net” can be used as a guide.

Why does the author strive for such a documentary? What is the function of detailed descriptions of the city in her novel?

First, this technique helps Murdoch create a close connection between the main character and the city.

Jake identifies his life with the life of London. He knows London very well and he loves this controversial city, as controversial as he is: “I hate the journey back to England anyway; and until I have been able to bury my head so deep in dear London that I can forget that I have ever been away I am inconsolable” (Murdoch *Iris.*: 1982, p. 2). Of all the other main characters, only Jake remains in London at the end of the novel. This fact confirms his connection with the city, his attachment to the city. Secondly, detailed descriptions of urban landscapes help to create an image of a city that you know very well. In this way, the writer tries to make the city familiar to the reader. At the same time, it forces us to see something extraordinary, fantastic, supernatural, and different in these ordinary things. Therefore, she manages to show London on another level – a metaphysical one.

At this level, the city acts as the city-labyrinth of human thoughts and feelings. It is sometimes difficult for characters to find a way out of such a labyrinth. The city itself either misleads or, on the contrary, helps the characters to get out of their own psychological labyrinths. London exists as if only in a psychological framework, as Jake experiences the city. His feelings, even short-lived, fill the text and subtext of the work.

The title of the novel “Under the Net” is quite symbolic. Using the city as a metaphorical background for the character’s metaphysical struggle, Murdoch creates a journey-excursion through the city that leads Jake to immerse into himself, to self-absorption. London streets, parks, buildings, architectural monuments are a projection of the motives and actions of Londoners. The capital of England in the novel functions as a personality and serves as a physical metaphor for the Donaghue’s confused worldview. The author gives Jake’s psychological reflections a tangled, complex form, similar to a net, to the labyrinth that is London.

In Murdoch’s novel, the comparison of the capital of Britain with a labyrinth, a net occurs repeatedly: “We turned out of the moonlight into a dark labyrinth of alleys and gutted warehouses where indistinguishable objects loomed in piles” (Murdoch *Iris.*: 1982, p. 136). Such a metaphor is ambiguous. Christine Sizemore, author of the monograph “A Feminine Vision of the City: London in the Novels of Five Women,” also points out that in *Iris* Murdoch’s novel, the image of the city as a labyrinth corresponds to the image of a net or web (Sizemore *Ch.W.*: 1989, p. 101).

According to the researcher, such a relationship doesn’t necessarily have a negative meaning, although for most English male writers (among whom she names of Dickens, Beckett), such an image has

a negative meaning. Murdoch sometimes interprets this image as a way to escape from misunderstandings. The main character wanders around the city in a search of a solution to his problems or in a search of his destiny. The city helps Donaghue find meaning in his life; it provides important information about who he is. The labyrinthine space of London is ordinary for him. It is in this space that he finds answers to his questions.

The metaphor of city-labyrinth contributes to the mythologization of the London space. After all, the labyrinth is inherently contradictory. This image is based on the archetype of the primordial chaos of existence, which turns into a tragedy within a human life. Londoners experience a total misunderstanding of others, their surroundings, and even themselves. This is their tragedy. A person becomes completely alone in this labyrinth of tangled relationships.

The poetics of Murdoch's London text is largely determined by the mythopoetic motif of the mask. As an epigraph to the novel, the author chose an excerpt from Dryden's poem "The Secular Masque" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 2). In this way, she emphasized the leitmotif of her work – the motif of the theatricality of the London's space. The theater, like the mask, is ambiguous. No wonder the mask was depicted on the cover of the first edition of the novel. One of the key scenes in the novel is a pantomime performance at Anna Quentin's theater. The author emphasizes that the mask always remains as it was created: cunning, sad, sincere, or calm, etc. However, it is difficult to guess which person is hiding behind the mask. In reality, it is difficult for the main character to find out whether the person in front of him is real or just a mask. Jake is constantly faced with the fact that Londoners play roles, and this is a deception in which everyone participates: both those who deceive and those who pretend to trust the deception – "It is the same deception that we are all involved in" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 32). The main character wanders through the city in search of real, unfeigned psychic depth. And he finds her in Anna Quentin. Jake looks for sincerity in people's eyes: "The eyes are the one part of the face which nothing can disguise <...> The eyes are the mirror of the soul, and you can't paint them over or even sprinkle them with gold dust" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 2).

The mask serves as a way of escaping from the real London to conventional, symbolic London. And this London turns out to be more harmonious than the real one. Thus, in the London text of Iris Murdoch, the image of the mask acts as a symbol of the desire for harmony. The life of London in the novel appears as a theater, and Londoners are actors playing their

assigned role. However, those who refuse to play roles become lonely. The motif of loneliness is also important in Iris Murdoch's novel. The main character is endlessly lonely in this big city. The feeling of loneliness increases when Jake realizes that Anna is not in London. Suddenly, the city turns into 'an empty frame' for him (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 38). On the one hand, the main character hates his loneliness, and on the other hand, he is not ready for intimacy with another person: "The substance of my life is a private conversation with myself which to turn into a dialogue would be equivalent to self-destruction" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 35). "The essence of my life is a mysterious conversation with myself, and turning it into a dialogue would be tantamount to suicide" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 42). The character's tragedy is that he wants to be alone.

Another mythopoetic motif in the novel is the motif of silence. It also serves to mythologize the London space. This motif is revealed in the image of Jake Donaghue's antagonist – Hugo Bellfounder. In their polemic, two ideas collide. The first one – no matter how much a person strives, he will never be able to break out from the net of theories and words, will never understand reality. The other idea is that true understanding of existence is possible, silence is not an option, but an even bigger trap than words. Jack's desire for freedom of decisions and actions, for a true understanding of being, carries with it the prospect of a future escape from the "net".

Mythologizing the London space, the writer refers to the eternal archetypes that are everywhere in the daily life of London. For instance, the archetype of water has a special place in the novel. K.G. Jung attributed four natural elements – fire, earth, air and water – to the non-personalized archetypal images (Jung C.G.: 1959). Water, as a rule, means changing the world, as well as the struggle of life and death. In Murdoch's novel, water is associated with the catharsis of the main character. The scene where he swims in the waters of the Thames is very symbolic. At first, the river seems to frighten him and reminds him of a burial rite: "The water took my ankles in a cold clasp. <...> Then the water was about my neck and I shot out into the open river. The sky opened out above me like an unfurled banner, cascading with stars and blanched by the moon" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 137). The water seems to gradually wash away Jake's depressed mood, and after leaving the river he feels renewed: "A tension had been released, a ritual performed" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 137). For the main character, water is life-giving, fascinating, and irresistible. In this case, the archetype of water becomes an important component of the mythopoet-

ics of the London text in Iris Murdoch's novel. On the one hand, water embodies an uncontrollable element capable to destroy everything in its path, and on the other hand, just as according to the biblical myth, it symbolizes the "washing away" of human sins. Jake also needs cleaning.

The meaning of the Donaghue's spiritual search is revealed at the moment when the ability to perceive the real world, in all its unpredictability, is awakened in him, a world that cannot be contained within the limits of some theoretical scheme-net. Finally, he manages to escape from this net. This breakthrough takes place in the place in London where Jake feels most comfortable – Mrs. Tinkham's shop. The mystical Mrs. Tinkham, whose image also acquires mythopoetic features in the novel, turns out to be the only person who understands Jake best, who always gives good advice and always helps. She resembles an Egyptian goddess: "I needed the soothing peace

of Mrs Tinkham's shop, with the purring cat and the whispering wireless and Mrs Tinkham like an earth goddess surrounded by incense" (Murdoch Iris: 1982, p. 16). Her shop seems to exist just for people like Jake. He's never seen her having sold anything from the counter. The image of Miss Tink embodies the archetype of the mother. Indeed, at the end of the novel, Donaghue returns to her shop as if to his native home, and Ms. Tinkham greets him as if she were a benevolent goddess rather than a typical shopkeeper.

Conclusion. Having mythologized London, the writer made us see the supernatural, the unusual in ordinary city labyrinths. Iris Murdoch mythologizes London, creating the image of a mask city, a city of eternal searches, a city of tangled labyrinths of human relationships. In our opinion, this approach to the study of Iris Murdoch's novel as a hypertext will be the most effective when studying it at the Faculty of Philology by future teachers.

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