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LEXICAL EMBODIMENT OF RACIAL CONFLICT IN HARPER LEE'S «TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD»

Fiction is a very good way to show a detailed and honest image of life and helps to clarify historical events. This article is devoted to one of the means of implementation of racial conflict in the novel by Harper Lee «To Kill a Mockingbird». The research is focused on the lexical units of representation of racism and racial conflict. The main feature of the novel is the fact that it was written from perspective of the six years old girl, who is a prototype of the author herself. But we are able to explore the manner of speaking of each character. Also mood, atmosphere and general situation of the late 30s of the twenties century are depicted vividly due to successful usage of the language. And language serves as a tool not only to describe events and characters, therefore does the descriptive function, but also to fulfill the affective impact, as language in the novel is a marker of different identities according to a social class and origin.

Key words: fiction, conflict, lexical units, racism, racial conflict, race, language as a tool.

The main aim of the paper presents an attempt to find out the ways and means of embodiment of racial conflict and racism, which is based on Harper Lee's novel «To Kill a Mockingbird». The research material is samples from the novel. In order to make a research we had such tasks - to find parallels between Harper Lee's childhood and its impact on the novel, to analyze the novel and identify the dominant features of language usage, which imply racism and to discover the peculiarities of their usage to reveal main characters and their interaction within the novel.

Scholars who are important for our research and for theoretical background are: Mick Short, Geoffrey Leech, Jennifer Murray, Joanna Thornborrow, and Charles Shields.

As for the methods of research there were used such methods of research as: analysis of Harper Lee's biography, study and analysis of the novel «To Kill a Mockingbird», sampling method and comparison.

Theoretical Background.

Conflict is a fundamental and predictable part of human existence. It is a condition of disharmony in an interactional process, and represents part of the dynamics of the relationship between human beings. It is an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities, in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party [2]. Race has been an American obsession since the first Europeans sighted «savages» on these shores. But race in America took on a deeper and more disturbing meaning with the importation of Africans as slaves. Black Americans are Americans yet they still subsist as aliens in the only land they know [3, p.13]. So America can be seen as two separate nations. Race has become a national staple for private conversation and public controversy [3, p. 14]. The idea of «race» is a human creation. People have given names to their varied strains since physical differences first began to appear. Race continues to preoccupy the public mind, a reminder of a past that cannot be willed away. Since race is a part of common parlance, people have used the term in many ways [3].

A novel by American writer Harper Lee, published in 1960, is a bright example of demonstration of racism and racial conflict. The novel's plot is based on the main idea of false accusation of a good man, who may be sentenced to a death punishment just because he is Afro-American. Basically, we can dwell on different storylines of the novel, but the main thought is an embodiment of racial prejudices and conflict.

The phenomenon of Harper Lee's novel is that she delivers all the situation, history, atmosphere of those times and reader emerges there and becomes aware of the background. However, for our analysis it is essential to denote the historical background of the events as it will help us to analyze Lee's masterpiece. Examining the language of a literary text can be a means to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the writer's artistic achievement [4, p.1].

Many scholars have traced *To Kill A Mockingbird's* roots back to the Scottsboro Trial an early 1930s case in which nine black boys were charged with raping two white women on a train en route to Alabama -pointing to the fact that Lee herself was about Scout's age as the crime and court drama played themselves out in her native state. But Charles Shields in his recent book *Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee*, details the events of yet another trial even closer to Lee's Monroeville, in which a white woman named Naomi Lowery accused Walter Letts, a black man, of rape, drawing even more parallels between fictional Maycomb and Lee's real-life hometown. These events, according to Shields, influenced Lee when she was growing up during the Depression in Monroeville, Alabama, and became a source for the current masterpiece [6, p.3]. The reference to the same name can be the surname of her

mother which she gave to the main character Atticus Finch [5, p.36]. Atticus Finch is based on Lee's father, Amasa Coleman Lee; Charles Baker Harris, also known as Dill, represents Truman Capote, Lee's childhood and lifelong friend; and, of course, Lee's child heroine, Jean Louise Finch, is grounded on the author herself [5].

From the first pages Lee vividly introduces the background of Maycomb County. Harper Lee describes the established lifestyle and attitudes of the Maycomb community which is an embodiment of many white Southerners during the 1930s.

Most events of the novel are presented through the eyes of Scout a girl who is 6 years old when the novel starts and who is 9 years old when the plot is over, the narration may be perceived as unreliable. However, it may be interesting to discover that primarily Lee wrote 3 variants. First variant – is just childish perspective, second variant is just Jean – Louise adult perception and finally we have a mix of both perceptions. The author's decision to use a child to tell the story is a very important element in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Lee uses the possibilities of the remembering adult narrator, who has the distance of both time and maturity from the events, but at strategic moments she limits the insight of the narrator to what she, as a child, might have understood. In no way can this summarizing voice be attributed to the child Scout; the narrator therefore establishes herself as a potential guide to our understanding and interpretation of events that go beyond the awareness of her childhood self [6].

Her use of language and dialect variation is very powerful, and serves not only as a tool of realism, but as a means to reflect themes, status, and character. On the one hand, Lee just introduces the main characters by describing them and giving situation which we as readers interpret. On the other hand, we may not even notice that, but Lee highlights each trait of her character by using a huge amount of stylistic devices and by using language which is not only serves as a powerful tool but also applied to show realism of the novel but also to reflect the status of each character. That examining the language of a literary text can be a means to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the writer's artistic achievement [4, p.1].

Due to the fact that the narrator of the novel is a child, she uses simple words and structures to express her thoughts and therefore may conclude that the style is informal. However, we may trace and identify various levels of style as a division in social class. This division is reflected not only in the description, but also in using variations in language. According to Essed, rethinking racism entails rethinking the language we use to talk and to think about racism [7]. The language used to talk about racism is important because it can obscure racism or illuminate it [8].

Different claims have been made with regard to the definition of stylistics. According to stylistic pluralism, language performs a number of different functions and any piece of language is likely to be the result of choices made on different functional levels [9]. That is to say an author makes his linguistic choices according to the particular functions he intends to fulfill, which are closely related to his purposes of writing and speaking. Leech proposes that «The style proclaims the man» i.e. there is an intimate connection between style and the author's personality. While approaching literary texts, it involves the use of linguistics [9].

The English vocabulary consists of different kinds of words, which may be classified by different criteria. By level of usage, words can be divided into common words, literary words, colloquial words, slang words and technical words. In order to create an atmosphere of friendliness and closeness for audience words, which author uses, should be quite familiar to the audiences from different classes with different backgrounds, helping them easily understand the idea [10].

For instance Atticus, who is the main character, uses grammatically correct and complex sentences. Perhaps he simplifies his way of communication when he describes something to his children in order to make the explanation clear. Moreover, he uses a big amount of terms which highlight his occupation: «*Jem and I were accustomed to our father's last-will-and-testament diction, and we were at all times free to interrupt Atticus for a translation when it was beyond our understanding*» [1, p.30].

His grammar is always correct and accurate. We may conclude that Lee not only describes each character but under prints these characteristics by using appropriate language. So she defines each character by language he uses. Furthermore Atticus never uses neglecting or offensive words when he speaks about Afro-Americans or when he addresses to them. He always uses term «Negro» and never uses «nigger» and even asks Scout not to call this folk in such an abusive manner: «*Do you defend niggers, Atticus?* » *I asked him that evening. «Of course I do. Don't say nigger, Scout. That's common»* [1, p.60].

When Scout introduces her family she also mentions Calpurnia by calling her just by name. Moreover, we discover that Calpurnia is Afro-American much later. But Scout got used to Cal so much, that she does not make a division. However, later after she goes to school personal attitudes start to change. Scout, in contrast, at first doesn't realize it, since she hears how all students at school and neighbors call this folk «niggers». And according to the wide usage of such words as «Negro», «nigger» in the novel, we can come to a conclusion about people's attitude towards Afro-Americans.

According to a definition, the term «Negro» means the color black in Spanish. The term «Negro» was widely used by White Europeans as a shortened form of the racial classification Negroid to describe people of sub-

Saharan African heritage. Until the mid-20th century the term Negro was widely used for African Americans, but fell out of favor in the late 20th century. Today it is universally considered inappropriate and derogatory although it is used occasionally in some research reports. In its current use, the term is generally considered acceptable only when used by African origin people, in historical context, or in the name of organizations. The racial classification Negroid is also no longer widely accepted [11].

The term «Black» generally refers to a person with African ancestral origins. In some circumstances, usually in politics or power struggles, the term «Black» signifies all non-White minority populations. The term Black has a long service in social, political, and everyday life and in its use to denote African ancestry is entrenched in epidemiological and public health language [12]. The term *Black* has a psychosocial and political significance [13]. In epidemiology and public health, such a broad term is usually unhelpful [14]. The term covers a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and is potentially offensive and unreliable. It conceals a remarkable heterogeneity of cultures among diverse African populations, and reinforces racial stereotypes. The continuing use of this broad term in epidemiology and public health may reflect pragmatic reasons such as small study numbers. However, the need for simplicity should be weighed against the dangers of stereotyping and incorrectness. The label may suffice for everyday conversation or political exchange but is too simple for scientific studies on causes of disease.

The term «African-American» refers to a person of African ancestral origins who self identifies or is identified by others as African American. While the term African American has been used at least since the 1920s, it has been the preferred term in the USA since the 1970s. As most «African-Americans» in the USA originated from sub-Saharan Africa, the term is not applied to Africans from northern African countries such as Morocco. Most African Americans are descendants of persons brought to the Americas as slaves between the 17th and 19th century. Such people differ from others who came from Africa or the Caribbean in the 20th and 21st centuries, in terms of culture, language, migration history, and health. These differences are often ignored [5].

«Nigger» is derived from the Latin word for the color black. According to the Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang it did not originate as a slur but acquired a derogatory connotation over time. «Nigger» and other words related to it have been spelled in a variety of ways, including «niggah», «niggur», «niggar» etc. no one knows, precisely when or how «niger» turned into «nigger» and attained a pejorative meaning [15, p.4].

We do know, however, that by the end of the first third of the nineteenth century, nigger had already become a familiar and influential insult. During the civil rights revolution whites who joined black civil rights protesters were frequently referred to as nigger lovers. The term «nigger-lover» continues to be heard amid the background noise that accompanies racial conflict. Writes who refrain from discrimination against blacks, whites who become intimate with blacks, whites who confront anti-black practices, whites who protect blacks and whites who merely socialize with blacks are all subject to being derided as «nigger-lovers» [15, p.21-22].

Over the years, «nigger» has become the best known of the American language's many racial insults, evolving into the paradigmatic slur [15, p.23]. Numerous writers have unveiled nigger as insult in order to dramatize and condemn racism's baleful presence [15, p.41].

In the novel, we can trace a wide usage of term nigger and nigger-lover. Scout claims that everybody at school calls Afro-Americans that. Also, among numerous examples of usage of this term, the brightest one belongs to the episode with Mrs. Dubose:

«Atticus,» I said one evening, «what exactly is a nigger-lover?» Atticus's face was grave. «Has somebody been calling you that?» «No sir, Mrs. Dubose calls you that» [1, p.60]. Mrs. Dubose is an old lady, who represents the outgoing time, when Afro-Americans were slaves and in her perception they will always stay slaves. Moreover, when she calls Atticus a nigger-lover she expresses her radical opposition to his acts. It is obvious, that if she had not used this term in the novel, her negative attitude would not have been perceived by readers. This shows the power of language.

To sum up, Lee uses all specter of available terminology in order to depict a bright picture of social attitude towards Afro-Americans. This description summarizes the qualities of most of the terms used in the past few decades to describe African populations in race, ethnicity and health research.

In addition, white people call black people by their name only. While black people use such attachments as Mr or Mrs, when they address or speak about whites. This means that even after the abolishing of slavery Afro-Americans are not respected in the society even on the level of language.

The African-American dialect differs from the white; the rich whites speak more grammatically correct than the poor whites; highly educated characters like Atticus and his brother Jack speak more elegantly than town officials like Heck Tate. *«She was furious, and when she was furious Calpurnia's grammar became erratic. When in tranquility, her grammar was as good as anybody's in Maycomb. Atticus said Calpurnia had more education than most colored folks» [1, p.30] – from this description we can deduce that Calpurnia is Afro-American.*

«*She'd call me in, suh. Seemed like every time I passed by yonder she'd have some little somethin' for me to do—choppin' kindlin', totin' water for her. She watered them red flowers every day*» «*Were you paid for your services?*» «*No suh, not after she offered me a nickel the first time. I was glad to do it, Mr. Ewell didn't seem to help her none, and neither did the chillun, and I knowed she didn't have no nickels to spare*» [1, p.102]. This fragment shows the usage of shortenings which is inherent for all utterances said by Afro-Americans in this novel. «*—skin every one of you alive, the very idea, you children listenin' to all that! Mister Jem, don't you know better'n to take your little sister to that trial? Miss Alexandra'll absolutely have a stroke of paralysis when she finds out!*» [1, p.110]. Calpurnia is angry at the children and suggests that she will «skin every one of you alive» This idiom means «to punish» according by Merriam-Webster Dictionary, but the usage of exactly this one with «skin» may be a reference to her origin and upcoming events in the novel [16].

«*Like I says before, it weren't safe for any nigger to be in a—fix like that.*», «*I says I was scared, suh*» [1, p.106]. One more detail which draws attention wrong grammar which Lee uses in order to give illiterate features to Tom, as he is Afro-American and he is lack of education.

There is also a bright detail which divides not only whites and blacks, but also which divides whites of different classes. According to the novel, Finch family is on the highest level in current society, while there are also lower classes like Ewells and Cunninghams. Due to their origin and bad reputation their introduction in the novel is quite miserable and humiliating.

«*Atticus said the Ewells had been the disgrace of Maycomb for three generations*» [1, p.36]. And their manners and language only highlight their characteristics. We can trace this detail in utterances which are told by Robert Ewell: «*Are you the father of Mayella Ewell?*» was the next question. «*Well, if I ain't I can't do nothing about it now, her ma's dead*» [1, p.90]. The way Robert Ewell answers the question shows his manner of speaking. «*Well, the night of November twenty-one I was comin' in from the woods with a load o' kindlin' and just as I got to the fence I heard Mayella screamin' like a stuck hog inside*» [1, p.92]. And «*I seen that black nigger yonder ruttin' on my Mayella!*» [1, p.92]. The presence of shortening in his speech illuminates his social status. While the reputation of Robert Ewell explains everything about this character, he tries to do his best to behave and sound honorably, but he widely uses «*I most positively*» in the following situations «*I most positively was,*» said Mr. Ewell. «*I most positively can.*» «*I most positively will.*» «*I most positively am not, I can use one hand good as the other*» [1, p.94].

These utterances just put him in a bad light and evoke humorous effect. Moreover, Ewell's grammar usage is not satisfactory and it concerns all members of the family (at least which were depicted in the novel) «*I seen who done it*» [1, p.93].

«*He done what he was after*» [1, p.96].

«*I told 'ja I hollered 'n 'kicked 'n 'fough...*» [1, p.99].

Cunningham's family also represents the low level of society. They are also shown in the same manner: «*Walter Cunningham's face told everybody in the first grade he had hookworms. His absence of shoes told us how he got them. People caught hookworms going barefooted in barnyards and hog wallows. If Walter had owned any shoes he would have worn them the first day of school and then discarded them until mid-winter. He did have on a clean shirt and neatly mended overalls*» [1, p. 30]. Moreover, when Scout is astonished by Walter's Cunningham behavior at the table she says: «*He ain't company, Cal, he's just a Cunningham*» – this utterance sounds like a stigma, which everybody in this town accepts, according to the following: «*The Cunninghams never took anything they can't pay back—no church baskets and no scrip stamps. They never took anything off of anybody; they get along on what they have. They don't have much, but they get along on it*» [1, p.40].

To sum up, whites who represent a higher class speak more grammatically and elegantly, while low class families use shortening, simple sentences, wrong grammar.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, according to different resources «To Kill a Mockingbird» is inspired by Harper Lee's own experience and childhood memories. The plot and aim of this novel are catchy and easy to remember. Harper Lee uses language quite distinctively. Language has a powerful influence over people and their behavior. Moreover, language has an impact on us and we, as readers, may not notice that from the first sight but the influence is tremendous. Harper Lee did a profound work in order to depict each character not only by descriptions, but also to fulfill each one with distinctive language. Also «To Kill a Mockingbird» is an example of how an author assimilates the autobiographical element into the imagination thus results in the production of a splendid novel.

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РЕЦЕПЦІЯ БІБЛІЙНИХ ОБРАЗІВ У ЖИТТЕПИСНІЙ ПРОЗІ МЕЖІ ХХ-ХХІ ст.

У дослідженні наголошено на виділенні специфічної категорії творів, написаних напередодні 2000-ліття християнства, які умовно можна віднести до художньо-біографічних. Це життєписи біблійних персонажів. Авторка аналізує українські художні життєписи в контексті аналогів світової літератури.

Ключові слова: художньо-біографічна література, життєписна проза, герменевтика, євангельський сюжет, рецепція, інтертекст, біблійний образ.

Наукові розвідки й художні версії Біблійного матеріалу віками множились у мистецтві, філософії, історії, літературі. Уже після Різдва Христового формується християнська герменевтика (екзегетика), яка була покликана тлумачити Старий і Новий Заповіти. Протягом одинадцяти століть у світовій літературі накопичилась велика кількість творів різних жанрів, присвячених інтерпретації сторінок Біблії (Данте, Т. Тассо, Дж. Мільтон, Дж. Байрон, А. де Вінї, поети-модерністи).

Біблія справила величезний вплив і на розвиток української літератури, яка в найвищих своїх досягненнях на різних етапах розвитку інтерпретувала Книгу Книг як важливий елемент у національній культурі й самосвідомості. У часи східнослов'янського середньовіччя біблійно-християнські мотиви виразно звучать у „Слові про Закон і Благодать...” митрополита Іларіона, „Моліннях...” Данила Заточника. У добу бароко особливої мистецької вартості набуває опрацювання біблійних тем у творчості Кирила Транквіліона-Ставровецького, отця Віталія, Софронія Почаського, Івана Величковського, Івана Максимовича. Декалогічні ідеї закладено в основу „Саду божественних пісень” Григорія Сковороди. До Біблійного матеріалу звертались П. Гулак-Артемівський, М. Шашкевич, Т. Шевченко, П. Куліш, І. Франко, В. Шурат, Леся Українка, П. Грабовський, В. Самійленко, В. Александров, А. Гриневич, молодомузівці, С. Яричевський, О. Маковей, К. Устиянович, Б. Грінченко, М. Чернявський, О. Кониський, П. Карманський, В. Мова-Лиманський, Б. Лепкий, П. Тичина, М. Рильський, Я. Савченко, М. Філянський, Д. Загул, Б.-І. Антонич, У. Кравченко, Ю. Клен, Є. Маланюк, М. Орест, І. Багрянний, М. Руденко, В. Симоненко, О. Бердник, В. Стус, Є. Сверстюк, І. Драч, Д. Павличко, Л. Костенко. Традиції високої духовності розвиває покоління вісімдесятих років: О. Пахльовська, І. Римарук, О. Забужко та ін.

Отже, метою статті є зображення інтертекстуальності Євангельського сюжету, рецепції образу Ісуса Христа та інших біблійних персонажів життєписною прозою межі ХХ-ХХІ ст.

В українській літературі традицію переспівів Святого Письма аж до кінця ХХ ст. підтримувала поезія. Лише невеликі ремінісценції наявні в прозі й драматургії. Вирішуючи проблему перенесення конфліктних інтерпретацій онтологічних структур у сферу лінгвістики, П. Рікер писав: „...ці взаємопов'язані образи буття, які ми маємо і в які занурюються взаємозаперечні інтерпретації, не дають нам нічого, окрім діалектики інтерпретацій. З цього погляду герменевтика неможлива. Тільки герменевтика, заснована на символічних образах, може показати, як ці різноманітні моделі існування