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## LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF LOUISE ERDRICH'S NOVEL "LOVE MEDICINE"

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**Key words:** *idiostyle, individual style, linguistic analysis, metaphor, simile, hyperbole.*

This article examines the individual style of the American writer Louise Erdrich on the example of her novel "Love medicine". Defining the individual style of the author is one of the most important tasks in the field of applied linguistics, which plays a leading role in the development of modern means of word processing. The individual style of the author reflects the unique features of the artist's writing that distinguish his works from the literary heritage of other authors. It reveals the personality of the creator, his life experience, values, views and prejudices, as well as the culture of his region and the characteristics of the society of his time. Louise Erdrich is one of the most famous American writers of Indian descent, who, researching the history of ancestors, reflects it in her works, embodies in the images of various characters. During the research the influence of the writer's cultural and personal experience on her works was explored and the choice of syntactic constructions, grammatical and lexical means was analyzed. Examples of the use of literary devices were also selected for the research and their meaning in the context of the work was determined. A detailed analysis of using metaphors, similes, hyperboles, symbols, repetitions and onomatopoeia was conducted within which the influence of literary devices and figurative language on the text and awakening of readers' emotions and feelings were investigated. We discovered that the proportion of metaphors in our text amounts to approximately 40% whereas epithets and similes appear somewhere in the region of 16% and 15% respectively. Moreover, the chart illustrates that personification and anaphora are commonly used by the author. Figurative language plays a significant role in the work, because it allows the readers to immerse themselves in the world of words and experience events with its characters, getting to know each of them better. With their help, the author emphasizes the individual and unique features of the characters and extremely subtly depicts their feelings, experiences and warm relationships between the characters of the work of Louise Erdrich, which permeate the readers to the depths of the soul. The work has theoretical value in terms of studying the unique features characteristic for a particular author, and practical value in the application of findings in automatic text analysis systems and linguistic corpora.

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## ЛІНГВІСТИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ РОМАНУ ЛУЇЗ ЕРДРІЧ “LOVE MEDICINE”

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**Ключові слова:** ідіостиль, індивідуальний стиль, лінгвістичний аналіз, метафора, порівняння, гіпербола.

У статті досліджуються індивідуальні особливості стилю американської письменниці Луїз Ердріч на прикладі її роману «Love medicine». Визначення індивідуального стилю автора є одним із найактуальніших завдань у галузі прикладної лінгвістики, що відіграє провідну роль для розробки сучасних засобів машинної обробки тексту. Індивідуальний стиль автора відображає неповторні риси у творчості митця, що відрізняють його твори від літературної спадщини інших письменників. Він розкриває особистість творця, його життєвий досвід, цінності, погляди та упередження, а також культуру його краю та характерні риси тогочасного суспільства.

Луїз Ердріч є однією з найвідоміших американських письменниць індіанського походження, яка, вивчаючи історію предків, відображає її у своїх творах, втілює в образах різних персонажів. Упродовж дослідження визначено вплив культурного та особистісного досвіду письменниці на творчий доробок, проаналізовано вибір синтаксичних конструкцій, граматичних та лексичних засобів. Для проведення дослідження здійснено вибірку прикладів уживання художніх засобів та визначено їх значення в контексті твору. Проаналізовано використані автором метафори, порівняння, гіперболи, символи, анафору та ономапоєю, їх вплив на текст, пробудження емоцій та почуттів у читачів. Ми виявили, що частка метафор у нашому тексті становить приблизно 40%, тоді як епітети та порівняння трапляються у 16% та 15% випадків уживання художніх засобів. До того ж діаграма ілюструє, що персоніфікація та анафора досить часто використовуються автором. Художні засоби відіграють неабияку роль у творі, адже саме вони дозволяють читачеві поринути у світ слова та пережити події разом із його героями, глибше пізнаючи кожного із них. За їх допомогою автор підкреслює індивідуальні та неповторні риси персонажів та надзвичайно тонко зображує їхні почуття, переживання та теплі стосунки між героями твору Луїз Ердріч, що пронизують читачів до глибини душі. Робота має теоретичну цінність із точки зору вивчення унікальних рис, притаманних конкретному авторові, та практичну цінність під час застосування результатів дослідження в автоматизованих системах аналізу текстів та лінгвістичних корпусах.

**Introduction.** The issue of language of the personality and its unique stylistic features always has been one of the fundamental in the linguistic analysis. Consequently, the notion of the author's individual style became the object of investigation of many great scientists such as N. Bolotnova, V. Vinogradov, G. Vinokur, N. Golovchenko, V. Kucharenko, B. Larin, I. Tarasova.

Almost all researchers agree with V. Vinogradov who determined individual style as complicated but structurally connected and internally bonded system of specific stylistic means inherent in textual activity

of the certain author [10, p.1]. The individual author's style is the way of arranging a verbal material that reflects author's artistic vision by creating a new image of the world, peculiar only to him [1, p. 33].

**The topicality of the research** is related to the linguistic analysis of text and individual manner of writing used by its author which represents his peculiar way of seeing and describing the world.

**The object of investigation** is Contemporary Native American novel “Love Medicine” (1993) written by prominent American author Louise Erdrich.

**The research subject** focuses on author's usage of various literary devices and richness of the language of narrative.

**The purpose of the article** is to define the peculiarities of individual style of writing and analyze the text from linguistic perspective.

Our investigation deals with the Louise Erdrich's story *Love Medicine* which is a part of the same name novel of the author. As the daughter of a Chippewa Indian mother Erdrich explores her ancestors' heritage and represents Chippewa lifestyle in her literary tradition. Therefore, this story reflects writer's experience which is connected with her family roots.

Louise Erdrich uses figurative language and huge variety of different literary devices to create a special effect on the audience. The author uses the following metaphors for description of characters, their lives, emotions, feelings and actions: *a hard nut, pack of lies, his mind got so full it exploded, those stories that everybody knows by heart, I run my fingers up the maps of those rivers of veins, I got secrets in my hands, the tricks of mind and body, odd feeling that cramped my hands, Grandpa Kashpaw just opened my eyes, stumbled through my mind, my jaw just dropped, love is a stony road, I give him an elbow, the road of death, the hole in their lives, wall of death, greet death, tears shot up behind my eyelids, a buried root, she was seeing the years and days, to drive all sense completely out of Grandpa's mind, the letter was what started the fire, it devastates your basic urges, shared their folks with me, saw Grandpa off into the next world, her heart broke down, you wear your life like a garment from the mission bundle sale, get back some happiness, the tail ends of their lives, stumbled through my mind, darkness inside my body, a buried root*. A few cases of usage metaphors are analysed below.

Grandpa Kashpaw is described using the following metaphor.

– *He was a hard nut.*

With the help of Collins Dictionary we can find out that the idiom “a hard nut” is assigned to person who is difficult to deal with. The Cambridge Dictionary of English language defines it as someone who is not only difficult to deal with but also very unpleasant. In our text this phrase stands for kind of people who are difficult to understand, especially their feelings and emotions.

– *Love is a stony road.*

The denotative meaning of the adjective “stony” provided by Macmillan Dictionary is either “covered with stones, or containing stones” or “not friendly and not showing any emotion”.

By using this metaphorical expression Erdrich demonstrates her thoughts that our life resembles a road which is not always easy to pass and where we encounter many tangled ways. Each person has to

make own choices in life, overcome difficulties that are like stones. You never know which decision or way is the right one. It appears like narrator's stream of consciousness. The readers can feel the uncertainty of the character, which worries whether his choice is correct.

– *...she yelled at last, surprising me so my jaw just dropped...*

Macmillan Dictionary explains that the idiom *someone's jaw drops* is used to show that someone is very surprised or shocked. This phrase is applied to intensify the meaning, express character's astonishment.

– *I give him an elbow once or twice, but that was nothing to him.*

In informal British English according to Macmillan Dictionary definition “to give somebody the elbow” means to end relationship with someone. Other dictionaries propose more meanings like to fire (an employee), to nudge someone aside in a rough or contemptuous manner [8]. In this context this phrase may be substituted by collocation “I pushed him aside with my elbow”.

The next expression touches hearts of readers, demonstrates love and caring relationships between mother and her child.

– *It was like the look of mothers drinking sweetness from their children's eyes.*

The verb “to drink” except its meaning “to take liquid into the body through the mouth” is defined as “to watch or listen to something with eager pleasure or interest” in Oxford Dictionary.

Another literary device and common literary tool used in text is a type of metaphor called **personification**, for instance, *video games that don't forget your score; the time came; time was flashing back and forth like a pinball machine; gratitude gets old; sheets was flapping on the lines above, and washcloths, pillowcases, shirts was also flying through the air; his life come over me; death came and tapped his chest; her wig was almost with a life of its own; a week had passed; a look came on her face.*

The usage of **similes** in this work is illustrated by such expressions as *her tired veins all knotted up in her legs like clumps of blue snails; he pleaded like a movie actor and he pounded his chest like Tarzan; his teeth, a beak like a hawk, and cheeks like the blades of a hatchet; she mourned him like the dead; looked like one of them squeaky little white-people dogs; she was stiff-necked now, and elegant, even bald, like some alien queen, the sun was hot and heavy as a hand on my back; he was called to second childhood like anybody else gets a call for the priesthood or the army or whatever; they was like parents to me; hit me like a ton of bricks.*

Besides, we would like to analyse a few more examples of comparing things in the narrative.

– *As I lay there, falling asleep, I suddenly felt Grandpa's presence and the **barrier** between us **like a swollen river**.*

This sentence shows that even though characters seem to be in the same room they are quite far from each other. This spiritual presence of Grandpa and real being of narrator demonstrate that our close people after their death live in our hearts. This idea is expressed through comparison.

– *The earth was full of life and there were dandelions growing out the window, **thick as thieves**, already seeded, **fat as big yellow plungers**.*

To be thick as thieves in informal English means to be very close friends and share secrets (Cambridge Dictionary definition). The description of nature contains imagery. Therefore, dandelions grow very close to window and share secrets of the family.

Louise Erdrich uses epithets in order to make story more vivid and expressive: *dim sky, the dark truth, her hard agate eyes, strong and reliable grief, fairly deep thoughts, sacred serenity, sunshine court yard, her brown eyes hard as lake-bed flint, pert flowery dress, tongue storms, rock-hard silences, sad realities, the grassy afternoon.*

One more figure of speech found in text is hyperbole. A great example is given below.

– *That **hit me like a ton of bricks**.*

Cambridge Dictionary of English provides the following meanings of the verb “hit”: 1) to touch something with sudden force; 2) to have an unpleasant or negative effect on a person or thing; 3) if an idea or thought hits you, you suddenly think of it.

In Merriam – Webster Dictionary the idiom “like a ton of bricks” is defined as “very hard or severely”. It is used in informal language style through which author tries to become closer to his audience.

The narrator of the story talks about idea that strongly affected his feelings. He compares its force with the force of a ton of bricks in order to demonstrate the powerful influence which it had.

Louise Erdrich depicts characters and their relations with the help of symbols listed below.

– *He had his little **dandelion** fork out, and he was prying up them dandelions right and left while Lamartme watched him.* Dandelion is a symbol of life, struggling through its challenges, symbol of emotional healing that liaises us with Grandpa Kashpaw.

– *Two honkers, Canada **geese**, the kind with little masks on their faces, a bird what mates for life.* These birds symbolize family devotion and faithfulness of the spouses.

Another literary device determined in our research is anaphora.

– ***She** loved him. **She** was jealous. **She** mourned him like a dead.*

– ***How** come? **How** come you yelled?*

– *He loved you over time and distance, but he went off so quick he never got the chance to tell you **how he** loves you, **how he** doesn't blame you, **how he** understands.*

– ***She** looked at me. **She** was seeing the years and days I had no way of knowing, and **she** didn't believe me.*

– ***It was** like the look of mothers drinking sweetness from their children's eyes. **It was** tenderness.*

– ***I felt her side of it** with my hands and my tangled guts, and **I felt his side of it** within the stretch of my mentality.*

– *And **he** kept on like that. **He** did not let up. **He** hollered and **he** yelled them prayers...*

– *And I think to myself, **just what if** I went out and got a pair? And **just what if** I fed some part-say the goose heart-of-the female to Grandma and Grandpa ate the other heart?*

With the help of anaphora Erdrich makes emphasis on special points and parts of the story that are important for our understanding of events. She intensifies some statements evoking reader's excitement.

The next examples demonstrate usage of **onomatopoeia**.

– *...those **rustling** sounds we heard from their side of the room...*

– *The washers and the dryers was all on, chock-full of quarters, shaking and **moaning**.*

– *...a **creak** in her shoulder.*

– *“Look up Aunt June,” **I whispered** as he left.*

Onomatopoeic words make storytelling more expressive and vivid. They influence reader's perception of text and help to imagine and even experience it.

All literary devices used by the author play an important role within the text, give words some additional shades of meaning, intensify some text elements and allow the reader to experience characters' life, to understand

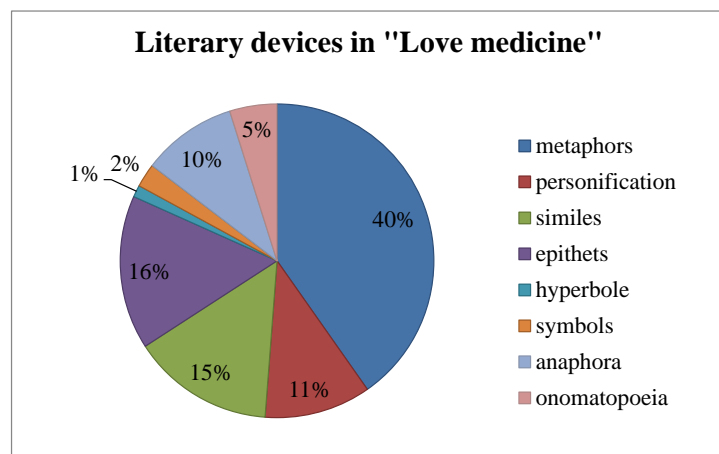


Fig. 1. Chart showing proportion of usage of literary devices found in Louise Erdrich's novel "Love medicine"

deeper feelings and emotions as well as the inner world of personalities.

According to the number of revealed literary devices, we created a chart demonstrating their use in the text (fig. 1).

**Conclusions.** This research is focused on the linguistic analysis of the text and investigation of various factors that influence on author's idiosyle on basis of Contemporary Native American novel "Love Medicine" written by Louise Erdrich who is widely known and successful American author. In this research we determined literary devices that show some personal preferences of Louise Erdrich and are of great importance because they represent her individual style of writing.

During our study we carried out the linguistic analysis of the text and compared denotations of linguistic items and their contextual meanings. Moreover, the proportion of usage of literary devices in the text has been calculated. According to the results of the research, the most frequent literary device used by the author is metaphor. It amounts to approximately 40%. We discovered that epithets and similes appear somewhere in the region of 16% and 15% respectively. In addition, the chart illustrates that personification and anaphora are commonly used. Last but not least are examples of using onomatopoeia, anaphora and symbols. Although the proportion of these figures of speech in text is relatively small compared to other literary devices, however they play an important role within the narrative.

**Further research** in the field is of great importance for exploring how individual experience and cultural background of the author influence on his style of writing, identifying unique features characteristic for a particular author and for further application of findings in the field of computer word processing, corpus analysis tools and automatic text analysis systems.

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