

THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF FIGURATIVE COMPARISON IN A LITERARY TEXT

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Annotation

This article focuses on the structure and functions of comparison in a literary text. It also discusses differences between metaphor and figurative comparison (simile).

Keywords: text, figurative comparison, semantic, stylistic, simile, sign.

Введение

A figurative comparison is a comparison of two objects which have some common feature for both of them, in order to more vividly and visually characterize one of them. Words denoting compared objects are usually linked together by conjunctions "as" or "like". In this case, various structural options for comparison are possible. Sometimes it directly indicates the sign of the compared objects :

"Not is as beautiful as a weathercock" (O. Wilde).

Sometimes such a direct indication is not given, and the nature of the similarity between the compared objects is only implied:

Look at the moon. How strange the moon seems: she is like a woman rising from a tomb. She is like a dead woman" (O. Wilde)

"My heart is like a singing bird" (Ch.G. Rosetti)

"The irregular houses were like the broken exteriors of cliffs lining deep gulches and winding streams." (O. Henry)

The characteristic noted in comparison may not be the quality of the object, but its action or state: "Under the carver's hand it cuts like clay, it folds like silk, it grows like living branches, it leaps like living flame." (Carlyle)

"Never! She'll never wind and twine herself about her papa's heart like" "Like the ivy?" suggested Miss Tox. "Like the ivy," Mrs. Chick Assented. "Never! She'll never glide and nestle into the bosom of her affections like -- the "Startled fawn?" suggested Miss Tox. "Like the startled fawn," said Mrs. Chick." (Dickens)

Comparison includes three components: the subject of comparison (what is being compared), the object of comparison (what is being compared with) and the sign (module) of comparison. N.D.Arutyunova names the same elements differently : an object (what is being compared), an image (what is being compared with) and a sign (on the basis of which the first two are compared). [Arutyunova, p.28]. So, the object of comparison in the sentence "My heart is like a singing bird" (Ch.G. Rosetti) is the heart, the image is a singing bird, and the sign, obviously, is a feeling of happiness: the poet's heart is as filled with joy as the song of a bird enjoying the beauty of life. A prerequisite for the stylistic device of comparison is the similarity of one feature with the difference of others. Moreover, similarity is usually seen in those features and characteristics that are not essential, characteristic of both compared objects (phenomena), but only for one of the members of the comparison. For example: "The gap caused by the fall

of the house had changed the aspect of the street as the loss of a tooth changes that of a face." The only feature that these two heterogeneous concepts (street and face) have in common is empty space. Naturally, the empty space (between houses) is not a characteristic feature of the concept - the street; equally, it is not a characteristic feature, a sign of the concept of a person. A random sign is raised by comparison to the position of an essential one. In the next phrase "a square forehead as coarse in grain as the bark of an oak" - coarse in grain is a characteristic, constant sign of oak bark; a complete divergence of other features, realities at the same time, it is an accidental, insignificant external sign for the concept of the forehead.

Both the quality of the object (phenomenon) and the action can act as a sign, which in comparison is common to the two compared members of the sentence. For example: "Susan Nipper detached the child from her new friend by a wrench - as if she were a tooth." (Ch. Dickens) Here the comparison is based on the nature of the action (mode of action): detached by a wrench. The nature of the movement evokes a comparison with two objects to which this action can be directed: a child in the arms of a friend of Suzanne Nipper and a bad tooth that needs to be removed. Again, the basic principle of stylistic comparison is preserved: the mode of action (by a wrench) is characteristic when applied to a diseased tooth; this mode of action is random, unexpected in application to the child. "Mr. Dombey took it (the hand) as if it were a fish, or seaweed, or some such clammy substance." In this example, one comparison term (the hand) is compared with a number of dissimilar items (fish, seaweed, etc.). Moreover, in the second row of comparison, such objects are given that have common permanent features (clammy). It should be born in mind that not every comparison is a stylistic means. Very often, comparison is used to logically compare two objects and does not carry any figurative characteristics:

This Swedish sprinter runs like Mathew Jones, and can easily get the first place tomorrow hated all those products of new art as I did. [Galperin 2007].

There are two terms in English that mean comparison: simile and comparison. The first of them expresses the concept of comparison as a stylistic means; the second has a broader meaning and is applicable both to a figure of speech and to non-figurative comparisons.

The term simile usually refers to the product of individual artistic creativity. Figurative stylistic comparisons should be distinguished from logical ones. In a logical comparison, all the properties of the two objects are taken into account, but one is singled out and compared: "Not was a big man, as big as Simon", but with sandy hair and blue eyes." (D. Garnett) or "The boy seems to be as clever as his mother." In the last sentence, the son and mother belong to the same class of objects - human beings, so here there is not a figurative, but a logical comparison.

A figurative comparison usually excludes all the properties of objects except for one that is common to them: "[...] she perceived the educational process as a kind of ritual dance that had nothing to do with scientific studies (T. Grekova)";

"I could see the roof as pink as a slice of salt ham from the top of my garden" (V. Pritchett).

Cf.: She sings like a professional soloist. She sings like a nightingale .

Changes in agriculture are as slow as they were last year.

Our agricultural reform is as slow as a snail.

He speaks French like a born. He speaks French like a machine-gun.

Obviously, the first examples are ordinary comparisons (comparison), and second are figurative (simile). It is also obvious that a figurative stylistic comparison is created by comparing two concepts that are radically different from each other in terms of semantics. The above examples compare a woman and a songbird, a French speaker and a machine gun, the level of agricultural development and a snail. The situation is completely different in the case of a comparison between an amateur and a professional singer; a person who speaks fluent French and is a native Frenchman; the level of development of production today and the level of last year. It is easy to see that comparison is based on a logical principle, while in stylistic comparison there is always an element of fiction, fantasy. The figurative comparison is stronger, the more obvious the discrepancy, the difference between two specific objects. It is known that the secret of any stylistic effect is unpredictability, the collapse of expectation, because the recipient of information is ready to see everything, but not what he then receives in reality. [Morohovsky, p.188]. However, it is not always possible to distinguish figurative comparison from ordinary, non-stylistic logical comparison. Sometimes two concepts belong to the same semantic plane of expression, and yet the result of using such a construction is a stylistic device. In the expression "Oh, John could do this forty times better than I", despite the fact that although John and the speaker are people, the obvious exaggeration (hyperbole) makes the statement a real figurative comparison. In comparison, objects and phenomena of reality appear not in identity, but in differentiation. This distinction is supported by the formal means of the language. However, both in metaphor and in comparison, a similar feature is one feature characteristic of one series of phenomena, and random for another.

Let's compare the following two sentences: My verses flow like streams. My verses flow in streams. In the first sentence, the words verses and streams are used in their basic meanings: each word is independent of the other. In the second sentence, the word verses is used in its subject-logical meaning, while the word streams is used in the interaction of two meanings: logical and contextual. The sign of flow here becomes characteristic of the concept of verses. In streams acts here as a modifier to the verb to flow.

As we know, metaphor and figurative comparison are elements of comparison. The difference between these stylistic means is that two comparable concepts in comparison still remain far apart in the presence of common features, while the metaphor indicates the equality of these two concepts, despite their difference. Using a metaphor, we seem to believe that the called object is in fact equivalent to the object - the referent.

figurative comparison : Your eyes are like the sun.

Metaphor : You are my sunshine.

Thus, it must be remembered that a metaphor is another name given to an object; word, phrase, sentence used instead of another (more accurate, but less colorful). In turn, figurative comparison is always used to name two different objects (while being a figure of combination, not substitution) In addition (and this is the main difference), the comparison contains one more component: a word or a group of words indicating the idea of comparison or comparison. Such formal signals are conjunctions like, as, as if, as though, than. This function can also be performed by the verbs to resemble, to remind one of, the verb combinations to bear a resemblance to, to have a look of and others.

Unlike a metaphor, a figurative comparison can be as precise as the author of the statement wishes to highlight a specific feature or indirectly indicate its presence. Empirical studies show that more often figurative comparisons are used with explanations of their implicit meanings. This confirms the fact that the speaker uses this stylistic device when he wants to associate an unusual or special quality of an object with the named object. So, a literary text differs from other types of texts in that, in order to give it aesthetic value and reflect objective reality from the point of view of the author's perception, figurative and expressive means are widely used in it. They are divided into the actual visual means that exist in the language (expressive means), and stylistic devices (stylistic devices), which are created by the author of the literary text. One of the last, most striking, is a figurative comparison, which is a likening of two objects of reality belonging to different classes in order to create a colorful image perceived by the reader. This figure of speech is used to make the description more expressive and vivid. It is a powerful tool for characterizing phenomena and to a large extent contributes to the disclosure of the author's worldview, revealing the writer's subjective - evaluative attitude to the facts of objective reality.

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