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CHILDHOOD-RELATED PARADIGM IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF DISCOURSE

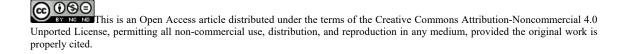Ludmila V. Kuznetsova (a)*, Yuliya V. Vedeneva
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Abstract

The article considers the features of childhood-related paradigm and explores the ways it is embodied in different types of English discourse. The authors explore the linguistic representation of childhood related concepts in discourse of art and literary poetic discourse as they play a significant role in the process of shaping children's worldview and help develop their artistic tastes. The authors focus on minitexts that represent the titles of paintings produced by British and American artists depicting scenes and characters referring to the theme of childhood and minitexts exemplified by titles of children's poems created by British and American authors. The paper presents a mixed approach to the study of mini-format naming units of paintings' and poems' titles addressed to children that helps achieve the beneficial effect of revealing insights into cognitive, pragmasemantic and discursive aspects. The themes exposed in the linguistic units of the named titles correlate with the historical development of the childhood-related concept: it has linguistic, cultural and educational features that affect the formation and development of the personality. The paper gives a critical analysis of a scientific understanding of the children's world infrastructure and focuses on the unusual involved in the creation of the titles' artistic imagery and aesthetic effect.

Keywords: Art discourse, poetic discourse, childhood-related paradigm, title, minitext, concept.

1. Introduction

At various stages of its development society undergoes certain changes that are instantly reflected in the linguistic view of the world. The science of language reached a new level of research, which led to a communicative and pragmatic "turn", manifested in the change of the main branches of human knowledge and the tendency to integrate them in scientific research. While early linguistics was system-oriented in terms of paradigmatics, modern linguistics is actively developing within the framework of a pragmatically-oriented communicative field.

In the 20th century, the view on the study of language phenomena from the standpoint of linguistics changes. Communicative and pragmatic rethinking of language takes place, which entails priority variations in the paradigm of scientific knowledge. Thus, the text begins to be analyzed as a pragmatic value that is created of certain author's intentions.

1.1. Pragmatically-oriented text study

The text is considered as a pragmatic unit that is created to solve certain tasks planned in terms of the author's intention. Scientific understanding of the text space is traditionally based on a set of methodologically relevant criteria which allow its adequate interpretation or maximum disclosure of its semantic content in combination with formal and structural characteristics.

1.2. Minitext phenomenon

The study of the text is performed in accordance with various methodological criteria. For instance, the distribution of the corresponding language (morphological, syntactic, and lexical) and non-linguistic variants of text parameters is considered and analyzed, taking into account the genre features of not only artistic, but also pragmatically oriented non-artistic texts from the standpoint of communicative and pragmatic variation. Scientists emphasize the need for special research attention to the degree and nature of various minitexts, but heterogeneous in their functional characteristics. In communicative linguistics, the text is analyzed not only from the author's message, but also disclosed in a meaningful way, taking into account the objective factors inherent in a particular text fragment.

2. Problem Statement

A new round in text analysis is implemented within the framework of various methodological interpretations. For example, the order of lexical, morphological and syntactic variants of texts, as well as the level and features of changes in small-format text units, is studied from the point of communicative and pragmatic variation. This feature entails the limit of such texts in volume, but at the same time such texts are heterogeneous in functional characteristics. According to the researchers, communicative linguistics considers the text not only as the author's creation with all the features inherent in an individual speech work, but also seeks to reveal certain norms in each type of text that are inherent in both its logical and grammatical structure. Analyzing linguistic and structural manifestation of art tokens, we label them as small-format texts, or minitexts (Kharkovskaya et al., 2019, pp. 23-36). The researchers assert that the major typologically relevant property of small-format texts is 'a limited volume of words … otherwise bearing typical features of all the classical standards of textuality', meaning that they

express maximum information formulated with minimal linguistic input (Kharkovskaya et al., 2017, p. 63).

- The language norms and traditions of small-format texts are based on the national culture of a particular country during a certain period of its formation, being a representation of a cultural stereotype and a component of global consciousness. Any culture includes two main components: the cultural base formed over the course of history (the static component) and the constantly changing current cultural trends (the dynamic component). Dynamic development of culture implies the emergence and change of certain rules (patterns) of people's behavior in the process of historical, social, and cultural development of the nation as a whole (Savitsky, 2019, p. 70).

- The language of a certain epoch is a cultural phenomenon that identifies the national meaning in a certain historical period. Thus, the information in small-format texts defines while analyzing the syntactic level of the text structure. According to the small-format texts of art tokens, the recipients can trace the development of national and cultural component of communicative space, which is realized in the process of nomination. It involves the relationship and interaction of communicative purpose with the functional paradigm names.

The development of the historical childhood concept is created and maintained by specialists in the field of children's education - teachers, psychologists, sociologists, etc. In world practice, it is generally recognized that children inevitably influence the formation and development of culture. Paintings on the topic of childhood contribute to the creation of a historical canvas of a particular national culture. The world of childhood is wide and vast. It has linguistic, cultural, and educational features that affect the formation and development of the personality. Thus, it is extremely important to have a scientific understanding of the children's world infrastructure.

3.   Research Questions

In this work, the volume of material from the analyzed sample includes 2,000 units of picture titles. They include 1,000 art tokens by British artists and 1,000 art titles by American artists who worked in various historic eras.

Discussing the concept of childhood in the history of British art, it should be noted that in various periods it is actively involved in the topic of childhood and family values. Despite the fact that the thematic variability of concept vectors in the study of childhood in the British pictorial heritage is quite extensive, it seems appropriate to focus on the analysis of the nine concept vectors: gender, personification, leisure, family, time, place, education and professional skills, animal world, vegetation items.

Due to the fact that the time parameters of the sample material are represented by epochs from the 20th to the 21st century, it is important to trace the evolutionary aspects art tokens made by British artists. The studied antonyms were classified not only according to their conceptual features, but also within the historical parameters. Thus, there are two periods of creation: the 20th and the 21st centuries. Let us

analyze possible reasons for variation in the conceptual organization of the material represented by the titles for childhood paintings made by British artists.

In the process of analyzing the conceptual variability in the art tokens of the 20th century by British artists, it was found that the most quantitatively oriented concept in terms of lexical marking is the conceptual vector 'gender'. The names of paintings that verbalize this segment contain lexical units identifying gender of the characters depicted in the paintings, such *as "a girl"* and *"a boy". The structure of the analyzed sphere includes the following painting titles: Helen Allingham "Boys Fighting", "The Goose-Girl", George Dunlop Leslie "Portrait of a Young Girl", "A Boy at the Beach", James Sant "A Boy on a Farm", "Young Girl with Her Doll".*

Minimal difference in the conceptual fields within lexical markers distinguishes the segment 'gender' from the segment 'personification'. In the 20th century, the current vector is represented by the personal names of the characters depicted on paintings: *Minna, Timothy, John, Julian, Robin, Ophelia, Alice*, *Effie, Lucy, etc.* These names are common to Britain of 20th century and are reflected in the art tokens by British artists: Helen Allingham *"Robin", "Lucy",* James Sant *"Ophelia".*

Based on the statistics from the BBC (n.d.), we found out that the most popular female names in Britain during this historical period are *Emily, Sophie, Alice, Lucy, Maria, Mary*. Among the most common male names we can see *Oliver, Jack, Thomas, James, George, John*. It was noticed that artists use the most common names peculiar to the British nation in their art tokens. This linguistic feature characterizes the desire of painters to demonstrate the national characteristics not only with the help of painting skills, but also with the help of lexical units. In this case the names of the characters are a characteristic of a nation in a particular period of its social development.

At the present stage of painting development, the topic childhood also occupies an important place in art. Many British artists paint exclusively children and create family studies. Their paintings are characterized by striking clarity of children's images and emphasis on detail.

Artists often depict children while playing games and relaxing, and this is reflected in the painting titles. Thus, the most significant in quantitative view is the conceptual segment 'leisure'. Art tokens that verbalize this concept contain lexical markers related to the topic of recreation, games, and hobbies. The lexical units that identify these features are *a surprise, to sleep, hide-and-seek, a stroll, a dream, a doll, Christmas, New Year*. For example, there are the painting titles made by British artists that depict the concept 'leisure': George Bernard O'Neill *"The Sword Dance", "The Surprise", "Hide and Seek",* Ruth Addinall*"Girl in an Armchair"*, *"Girl and Doll", "Ready For A Stroll".*

One of the most significant conceptual vectors of the modern childhood world in British paintings is the concept 'education'. Children are passionate about the process of education, because the children's world is objectively oriented on world exploration. British children are also fond of reading interesting books, thus, in painting titles there are such lexical units as "a lesson", "to read": George Bernard O'Neill *"The First Lesson" "A Good Read",* Ruth Addinall *"Young Girl Reading".* Since childhood is inextricably linked with the world studying, artists could not avoid the topic of education. The sample actively includes the noun "*a lesson"* in painting titles. This diversity contributes to a broader description of childhood world and the spheres of children's hobbies.

The thematic diversity and wide usage of linguistic markers in paintings titles by British artists based on children's images symbolize the heterogeneity, vastness and depth of the childhood world. Due to the linguistic diversity in the titles to paintings, British artists strive to demonstrate the significance and completeness of childhood topic in the cultural heritage of the country.

4.   Purpose of the Study

Analyzing the formation of the pictorial heritage of American artists, whose works identify childhood topics, it is necessary to take into account the characteristics of the period when these works were created. The 20th century in the heritage of American fine art is characterized by the search for new color solutions in painting, as well as an impressive genre composition, the attraction to the image of the actual world situation and everyday life. This feature is clearly evident not only in the genre scenes depicted on the canvases, but also in their titles. American artists mention the time, the place depicted in the picture, and the process of acting.

Thus, the most quantitative conceptual vectors are the universal concepts 'time' and 'place'. The conceptual marker 'time' in painting titles reveling the childhood topic in the USA pictorial heritage corresponds to lexical units associated with time characteristics. Such lexical units are represented by nouns that denote the category of time – *"time"*, periods of the day – *"day", "morning", "afternoon", "night"*, time parameters that identify meals – *"lunchtime", "teatime",* seasons – *"season", "spring", "summer", "fall" ,"winter".* Examples of works that refer to the universal vector *"time"* in 20th century of American pictorial heritage include the following titles: Mary Cassatt *"Summertime",* George Sheridan Knowles *"Summer Fun", "A Bedtime Story",* Edward Henry Potthast *"Playtime", "In the Summertime".*

Also, one of the most quantitatively represented conceptual vector is the universal segment "*place*". This group includes painting titles that contain lexical units related to the location of objects and spatial characteristics. Such linguistic markers are indicative language units *"garden", "road", "pond", "park", "home", "seaside",* etc. Art tokens that verbalize this segment are Mary Cassatt *"Children On The Beach", "Under the Horse Chestnut Tree",* Adam Emory Albright *"Children at the Beach", "Over the Mountain", "Along the Fox Run".*

Pointing out the place, time, and process which the children are involved in, artists contribute to the disclosure of a more detailed, extensive, and accurate depiction of the childhood world. It is important to show the versatility and diversity of children's world, because at a tender and young age, children are interested in all sides of the unknown and mysterious world. This characteristic leaves an indelible imprint not only on the thematic diversity of the images, but also contributes to the presence of a wide range of topics in painting titles.

Analyzing the most significant names of the characters in paintings made by American artists, we note that in the USA of the 20th century the most common names were *Alison, Caspar, Susan, Sarah, Robert, Elsie, Emma,* etc. We can see such names in art tokens, such as William Sergeant Kendall *"Beatrice",* John Singer Sargent *"Dorothy Vickers", "Charlotte Cram", "Helen Sears".*

The modern pictorial heritage of the USA demonstrates humanistic and democratic principles: painters are usually free to choose a thematic field and implement their compositional solutions. Due to these changes in art, modern American painters tend to depict real scenes in their canvases. At the present

stage of art development in the USA, artists depict children with all their spontaneity and unbiased attitude to reality.

American painters pay considerable attention to thematic diversity. In an effort to reveal the childhood world broadly and truthfully, artists depict children in the process of studying and during educational activities. It is necessary to note that the conceptual vector *'education and professional skills'* in the sample material, includes a very extensive list of words. The analyzed concept uses such markers as: "*a school", "a picker", "a lesson", "a ballerina", "a pupil", "a sweeper",* etc. The conceptual vector under study includes the following painting titles: Donald Zolan *"The Thinker", "Little Ballerina",* Adam Emory Albright *"The Berry Pickers",* "*School Boys", "The Young Fisherman".*

Showing various episodes from children lives, American artists also pay great attention to the topic '*leisure'*, as children study the world through games and activities in their free time. This item is also very voluminous in terms of verbalization and is formed by the following lexical markers: *"a dreamer", "love", "treasure", "a friend", "walking",* etc.; Mark Lovett *"I Wonder", "Best Friends", "Flowers For Mommy",* Donald Zolan \ *"Gone Fishing", "Tender Beginning",* Bob Byerley *"Bubbles".*

Thematic variability of language units that function as markers of the childhood concept contributes to a more complete and accurate perception of this topic by the recipient. Modern American painters demonstrate the complexity and versatility of childhood world in the analyzed titles. Thus, a recipient receives information about the cultural heritage of the country, about the rich and eventful childhood, which is associated with the realities of American life.

Referring to the names of the characters in painting titles of the 21st century *Em,*, we note the usage of proper names, such as *Mathew, Ann, Matinee, Sabina, Christi, Laurie, Bella, Martin, Jessica, Erik, Elise –* Bob Byerley *"Make Em Laugh",* Donald Zolan *"A Gift For Laurie", "Sabina",* Carolyn Blish *"Matthew", "Christi".* According to sociological observations, these proper names are the most common in modern American society. Based on official statistics provided on the website www.scb.se, it was found that the most popular female names among American residents during this period are *Rebecka (Rebecca), Emma, Anna and Sara (Sarah),* the most common male names in the United States during this period are proper names *Martin, Alexander, Adrian, John, William, Thomas.*

Comparing the names recorded in the official statistics with the names indicated in painting titles, we note that American painters use the most common and popular male and female names in their art tokens. Characters' names in art tokens are most common to the American nation in a particular historical period. Moreover, artists focus the recipient's attention on the national features of the USA cultural life in a certain period of time.

5. Research Methods

The reflection of the linguistic and cultural specifics of the world of childhood in the framework of literary discourse, represented by minitexts of the titles of English-language poems for children is of great research interest. The research material is formed by a corpus of titles of English-language poetic works for children's audience, selected by a continuous sampling method from authentic anthologies and author's collections of children's poetry in English. The research complex comprises 2000 linguistic units.

On the one hand, the choice of anthologies and author collections of essays as a linguistic base is dictated by the desire to achieve objectivity of the study results of poetic texts, the characteristics of which do not depend on the individual preferences of authors, literary schools or genres, as it is in preparation for the publication of anthologies and compilations the chronological principle, and on the other, takes into account the opinion of experts about the quality of poetry for children.

Poetic fragments intended for a target audience of 7-12 years old have a certain degree of complexity of formal organization and a greater informational potential than poetic texts intended for children at the initial stage of acquaintance with poetry in English (for example, nursery rhymes). In the course of observations, it was noted that the younger the age of the reader, the more pronounced the age specificity of poetic works is, and vice versa, the specifics of children's literature is transformed in terms of contents and formal organization as the readership grows older. The interest of young readers leaves an imprint on the entire system of genres in literature for children. The age differentiation of the potential children's readership forces the author to take into account a huge number of factors, from the careful choice of the subject of the message to the way it is verbalized. The content and form of poetic works intended for children's audiences are the result of the author's work, depending on the age parameters of the recipients. Children's poetry is doubly specific: it is characterized by a special artistic reflection of reality through the poetic word of the author, and, in addition, the described reality is refracted through the prism of children's thinking.

5.1. The concept of family and family relations

Children's poetry aims to tell its readers about what is close and familiar to children, what they understand and are interested in. Thus, the main theme of English-language children's poems under consideration is the children's world and things directly related to it. The author of a poetic fragment intended for a children's audience should carefully choose the subject of their work. The successful result of the author's work is defined by their ability to find a field of human knowledge, the boundaries of which are set entirely by children's interest.

One cannot imagine the notion of childhood without the theme of family and family relations, because the concept of family is life-forming for children, it creates the basis for further world perception. The importance of the family in the life of the younger generation cannot be overestimated. For a child, a family is a whole world in which he or she is not just born, but lives, acts, makes his first discoveries, learns to love and hate, to be happy and sad. The family acts as the first social institution where children acquire the initial experience of communication, the ability to live among other members of society. We believe that concepts related to family form the basis of the cognitive base of the young generation and largely determine the vector of their further development. Taking into account these factors, it should be noted that intra-family relations are characterized by a certain structure and at the same time they differ in various ways of verbalization in the studied fragment of poetic discourse. The family is not limited to the concept of a nuclear family, which includes parents, siblings, and is also represented by other immediate relatives who play a role in the child's life at this stage of development: *Parents! (J. Foster), My Mum Wears a Jelly Bra (K. Costello-McFeat), My Family's Fond of Gadgets (K. Nesbitt), My Sister Laura (S. Milligan), Grandad's Garden (M. Simpson), Auntie Betty Thinks She's Batgirl! (A. Shavick), For Years I*

Asked Uncle Harry (V. Bloom), Grandma's Jigsaw Puzzle (R. Stevens), Some Aunts and Uncles (M. Peake), Godmother (D. Parker).

5.2. The concept of friends and friendship

Regardless of the national, linguistic and cultural affiliation, it is impossible to imagine the people a child communicates with without peers. Friendship gives a child not only people with the same interests, but also an ability to learn to respect and trust another person. Friendship becomes an excellent tool and indicator of the degree of socialization of a child. It is in a friendly relationship that a child learns to communicate fully on an equal basis, which is impossible, for example, in a parent-child relationship. In communication with peers, the child learns various forms of communication, those that he or she rarely uses with adults. Communicating with other children of their own age, the child can show their will, leadership qualities, they can argue and quarrel with them. Peer friendships help children acquire important social and emotional skills, such as sensitivity to other people's thoughts, feelings, and emotional states. When a child knows how to make friends, he/she can easily adapt to any team and is comfortable with people and in society. It is very important that children learn to be friends, this will help them in later life to communicate well with others. There is no doubt that having close friends who can support you in any situation creates a positive outlook for the child: after all, you can spend time with friends, share secrets, and not feel alone. In small-format texts of titles of English-language poetry for children, the theme of friendship and communication with peers is regularly reflected, since it is an integral part of children's reality: *About Friends (B. Jones), To A Friend Who Sent Me Some Roses (J. Keats), My Friend Tree (L. Niedecker).*

Children perceive the surrounding reality through getting acquainted with specific people and objects, rather than abstract concepts. The property of the child's mind to perceive everything concretely, literally, the inability to rise above the situation and understand its general, abstract or figurative meaning is one of the main difficulties of children's thinking, which is clearly manifested in the knowledge of the world. To create the thematic clearness and maturity of minitexts of titles of English children's poems, an author has to take into consideration a psychological factor of the development of the younger generation. Consequently, we have such a peculiarity of the English poetic discourse as concretization of the described phenomena, characters and events (Vedeneva et al., 2018, p. 40).

It was noticed that in the minitexts of titles of English-language poems for children the theme of friendship is often revealed by referring to specific characters designated by their first names: *Waltzing Matilda (A. Barton), Playing Tennis with Justin (D. Harmer), The Adventures of Isabel (O. Nash), Since Hanna Moved Away (J. Viorst).* Often the title minitexts of English-language poetic fragments for children are two-name combinations, represented by the combinations first name + family name: *Gillian Costigan (C. Gittins), Timothy Winters (C. Causley), Brendon Gallacher (J. Kay).* The usage of proper names in minitexts of titles of English-language poetic works for children contributes, in our opinion, to the implementation of one of the main functions – to provide a certain pragmatic impact on the recipient and the desire to get a response in the form of an appeal to the text of the poem. By naming the main character / heroine, the author does not attribute any properties to them, and thus encourages the young reader to independently search for an answer to the question of what they are notable for.

6. Findings

An integral part of a child's socialization is an educational process, which has an institutional nature in the modern world. A full-fledged comprehensive development of a child is certainly impossible to obtain without the participation of such an educational institution as school. It is noteworthy that in English-speaking countries, children begin their education at the age of three or five years, while the process of compulsory education takes a time period of at least ten years. The role of school is hard to overestimate, which, in turn, is clearly reflected in the type of discourse we are considering. In a number of examples, the author's reference directly to the lexical unit "school" in the meaning "educational institution": *Why We Need School (A. Durant); Welcome Back to School (K. Nesbitt), First Day at School (R. McGough), What I Love about School (R. McGough).*

6.1. The concept of schooling

The existence of any school is impossible to imagine without the main participants of the educational process – the teacher and the student. The main actors of the learning process are notified by verbalization of the corresponding lexemes contributing to the implementation of the denotative meaning of the concept "*School*" within the English-language literary poetic discourse. We have noted that the mention of the teacher/teachers in minitexts of titles of English-language poems for children occurs much more often than students: *My Teacher Took My Ipod (K. Nesbitt),The I-Spy Book of Teachers (B. Moses), When the Teacher Isn't Looking (K. Nesbitt), What Teachers Wear In Bed! (B. Moses).*

Doing homework is a compulsory component of school reality. The minitext titles of English-language poetry for children, which include the "homework" lexeme, form a very large semantic group. For example, *The Marvelous Homework and Housework Machine (K. Nesbitt), Homework! Oh, Homework! (J. Prelutsky), My Dog Does My Homework (K. Nesbitt), My Mother Does My Homework (K. Nesbitt).*

6.2. The concept of leisure

Leisure activities play an important role in shaping the child's personality. This type of activity is often called recreational, i.e., a recreation area, restoring physical and spiritual strength. Another function of leisure is the development of abilities and interests, which often involves free communication with interesting people. Leisure is an area of children's reality in which the personal interests and preferences of children themselves come to the fore. Acting some other than family and school roles, they reveal their inner potential and fulfill the need for self-expression and self-esteem. Choosing an interesting type of leisure activity, a child focuses on their own desires and preferences. The main thing in leisure is the hedonistic, non-utilitarian nature of spending free time, freedom from the usual duties, and the implementation of those aspects of internal development that are difficult to implement in other areas of practice. Therefore, leisure in the view of the younger generation is contrasted with school workdays, social obligations and loads of homework.

The simplest type of children's leisure is recreation that can be both active and passive. Its main objective is to restore the energy spent on everyday chores by getting distracted from tension and deriving an emotional release. The examples are many: a walk, a board game, watching movies, visiting

exhibitions, theaters, museums, listening to music, a conventional conversation, an exchange of opinions, a leisurely observation of natural phenomena and changes occurring around: *Tasting The Sea (B. Moses), Quiter Than Snow (B. Doherty), The Shooting Stars (J. Carter), A Minute to Midnight (J. Rice), Cracks In The Pavement (M. Swinger), The Music I Like (I. McMillan*), *Football in the Rain (D. Orme), Basketball's My Favorite Sport (K.Nesbitt), I Tried to Ride a Skateboard (K. Nesbitt)*. This sort of rest is an integral part of the child's life. The ability to see many things in the most insignificant manifestations of the surrounding reality helps to apprehend social life.

7. Conclusion

We have analyzed the main aspects that reflect the conceptual and content elements of the childhood-related paradigm of minitexts of titles in different types of modern English-language discourse. The presented study gives ground to believe that all the components of childhood-related paradigm are interrelated and interdependent, and it is their interaction that forms the specific features of this type of discursive space.

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