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**VERBALIZATION OF CONCEPT OF BEAUTY IN GONE WITH**  
**THE WIND (M. MITCHELL)**

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### Abstract

The concept of BEAUTY is of a special interest due to its being a basic, universal concept as well as due to variability of its content caused by constant development and change in understanding of the category of beautiful. Initial stage in studying the means of verbalization of the BEAUTY concept in this research is represented by lexicographical analysis of key representative lexemes of the concept: an adjective beautiful and a noun beauty, the latter also serving as the name of the concept studied. The concept of BEAUTY in the novel *Gone with the Wind* is especially dense, largely due to the specifics of embodying the Southern Myth with its specific imagery (proud Southern belle, noble gentleman, etc.) and the Lost Cause motifs. Analysis of dictionary entries has shown that the principal meanings of the lexeme beauty are represented by: 1) beautiful person, especially woman; 2) pleasing and impressive qualities; 3) fine example of its kind. Continuous sampling was used to identify 65 lexical units verbalizing the concept of BEAUTY, presented in 1710 sentences of Margaret Mitchell's work being analysed. The analysed lexemes pertain to the following thematic groups: personal beauty (appearance and mental image); beauty of flora and fauna; beauty of things and artistic works. The research has shown that in Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind* beauty of a person is manifested in lexemes that reflect both surface and spiritual beauty. Thus, positive assessment of a character's inner world is of no less importance than their appearance.

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## 1. Introduction

Currently, a significant part of linguistic research is conducted within the framework of an anthropocentric approach that assumes studying linguistic phenomena in the context of human consciousness, categorization and conceptualization processes. A concept, being a principal unit of conceptualization is a complex and multi aspect phenomena, requiring all-round and systemic understanding. Due to this, conceptual studies are getting more and more traction in linguistics. The concept of BEAUTY is of a special interest due to its being a basic universal concept as well as due to variability of its content caused by constant development and change in understanding of the category of beautiful.

Topicality of this research is determined by importance of studying aesthetic concepts, which serve as the most important references for human world perception and is defined by a necessity to understand the concept of BEAUTY in Margaret Mitchell's (2011) novel *Gone with the Wind*. The goal of the research assumes resolving the following tasks: 1. Conduct lexicographical analysis of key representative lexemes of the concept of beauty and identify its synonymic chain in the English language. 2 Perform continuous sampling of lexical units from Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind*. 3 Describe lexical units that verbalize the concept of BEAUTY in the novel and classify them in accordance to thematic groups.

## 2. Problem Statement

Beauty is a key aspect in the category of aesthetic values. The concept of beauty exists in every language being a common pan-human aesthetic category, but in each language it has specifics in its manifestation. According to Persina and Solonchak (2015) the core of the concept contains national and cultural background.

Concept formation is influenced by such factors as special and ethnic peculiarities and differences in ethnic-specific worldview (Shardanov & Dzasezheva, 2016). In order to identify the main and additional cognitive attributes of a concept, it is necessary to systematize the linguistic means and conduct their semantic description (Karatyshkova, 2013).

Brevity and richness of dictionary definitions allows us to expand the principal ideas that the ethnic group has about the word and obtain information on its linguistic worldview (Bulgacova & Sedelnikova, 2015).

According to etymological dictionaries of the English language, first use of the word *beauty* was recorded in the 13th century. This word had been borrowed from Old French as *biauté* and *beaute*, which may be traced back to a Latin adjective *bellus* meaning *pretty, handsome*. The adjective *beautiful* was formed only in the middle of the 15th century. Later, other derivatives appeared: *beautify, beauteous, beautifier* (Online Etymology Dictionary, URL).

During a lexicographical analysis, the authors established the meanings of representative lexemes of the concept—an adjective *beautiful* and a noun *beauty*. This analysis was conducted on the material from online dictionaries Cambridge Dictionary, Collins Dictionary, Oxford Learner's Dictionaries,

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Dictionary.com. Dictionary.com provides the following definitions for the key lexeme *beauty*:

1) the quality present in a thing or person that gives intense pleasure or deep satisfaction to the mind, whether arising from sensory manifestations (as shape, colour, sound, etc.), a meaningful design or pattern, or something else (as a personality in which high spiritual qualities are manifest); 2) a beautiful person, especially a woman; 3) a beautiful thing, as a work of art or a building; 4) a beautiful feature or trait in nature or in some natural or artificial environment; 5) an individually pleasing or beautiful quality; grace; charm.

The word *beautiful* is defined as follows: having beauty; possessing qualities that give great pleasure or satisfaction to see, hear, think about, etc.; delighting the senses or mind.

Analysis of dictionary entries allows concluding that the notional component of this concept is built around the following meanings: external beauty, beautiful features and traits, positive aesthetic assessment.

### 3. Research Questions

The object of this research consists of lexical means of representation of the concept of BEAUTY in Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind*.

### 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify lexical units involved in verbalization of the concept of BEAUTY in Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*.

### 5. Research Methods

Principal research methods were the method of conceptual analysis, the method of linguistic description, context interpretive method of linguistic analysis, function-semantic and structure-semantic methods, continuous sampling, as well as the quantitative estimation method.

### 6. Findings

*Gone With the Wind* stays in a row of works written in the mainstream of the Southern literary tradition. As most representatives of the Southern movement, M. Mitchell draws on the Southern Myth. However, in *Gone With the Wind* this myth is getting a specific interpretation: the first part of the novel is dedicated to debunking the myth, while in the second part, values of the American South are glorified (Savchenko, 2015).

The concept of BEAUTY in the novel *Gone with the Wind* is especially dense, largely due to the specifics of embodying the Southern Myth with its specific imagery (proud Southern belle, noble gentleman, etc.) and the Lost Cause motifs.

Among the most frequent representatives of the BEAUTY concept in the novel in question is the lexical unit *beautiful*. In the novel, the word *beautiful* is often used to express the beauty of the world

around. So, this lexeme is used to manifest the image of family estate, which is a signature image for the Southern consciousness. For example: ...*the **beautiful** white-columned house that crowned the hill like a Greek Temple.*

Representatives of the American South preserve a specific attitude to their family estates, land of their fathers. For example: *Her love for <...> this **beautiful** red earth that was blood coloured, garnet, brick dust, which so miraculously grew green bushes starred with white puffs, was one part of Scarlett which did not change when all else was changing.*

In Jerald O'Hara's view, the land is so magnificent and beautiful that it appears as the only real value, the thing "to work, fight and die for". For example: *Land is the only thing in the world that amounts to anything. <...> I offer you the most **beautiful** land in the world – saving County Meath in the Old Country....*

The lexeme *beautiful* is also used to assess manifestations of human beauty, both surface and internal. For example: *You are so fine and strong and good. So **beautiful**, not just your sweet face, my dear, but all of you, your body and your mind and your soul* (Mitchell, 2021). In this context, beauty of Scarlett O'Hara is manifested by means of such units as *beautiful, fine, good, sweet.*

The lexical unit *beautiful* serves to embody the image of a "proud Southern belle". For example: *...woman is **beautiful** who is so sure of her charm that she can be generous and gracious to all.* Representatives of spiritual beauty in this case are the words *charm, generous, gracious.*

The lexeme *beautiful* is often used to describe the beauty of architectural objects and clothes. For example: *...her father's house <...> whose lines were as **beautiful**...; She thought it the most **beautiful** and most elegantly furnished house she had ever seen...; The lavender barred muslin was **beautiful** with those wide insets of lace...; How **beautifully** gold brooches glitter.* This lexical unit expresses the beauty of works of art. For example: *...playing the piano and writing things, which sounded **beautiful**...; It would be a **beautiful** song...; What a **beautiful** waltz.*

The concept of BEAUTY in the work under consideration is also represented with the lexeme *pretty*. The lexical unit *pretty* serves to describe the person's comeliness and attractiveness. For example: *He only thought that she was **pretty** <...> and that, today, her eyes were as green as the hills of Ireland.*

For young Scarlett O'Hara, external manifestation of beauty has an incredible power. A beautiful dress and delicate complexion are evaluated by the female protagonist as "a pledge to victory over the fate". For example: *...when life has been so pleasant that defeat is an impossibility and a **pretty** dress, and a clear complexion are weapons to vanquish fate.*

The lexeme *pretty* is quite often used to describe clothing items. For example: *Suellen <...> produced her Irish-lace collar, somewhat worn but still **pretty**...; Aunt Pitty had made her a **pretty** green mantelet...*

The noun *beauty*, which also serves as the name of the concept being studied serves in the novel as a means to embody the beauty of the Old South, nostalgia for the time passed. For example: *The old days had no glitter but they had a charm, a **beauty**, a slow-paced glamour. <...> I am afraid of facing life without the slow **beauty** of our old world that is gone.*

The lexeme *beauty* is used to foreground the image of one's own home. A characteristic feature of a Southern estate is a romanticized pastoral scenery. For example: *She never looked out of her window at*

*green pastures and red fields and tall tangled swamp forest that a sense of **beauty** did not fill her.* In the centre of the scenery there is an estate, surrounded by evergreen trees and fragrant flowers.

The lexical unit *nice* is also found as a representative of the concept of BEAUTY. In most cases, the lexeme *nice* expresses a general positive assessment of personal qualities. For example: *Hugh is **nice** <...> and he's from nice folks, as you know, and he's honest.*

This lexical unit is also used to foreground a person's surface beauty. For example: *He was a **nice** boy with a riot of soft brown curls...; There were too many **nice** officers...*

According to dictionaries, the lexeme *good-looking* serves to describe a person with beautiful appearance, in particular, those with attractive facial features: "someone who is good-looking has an attractive face" (Collins Dictionary, URL). In *Gone with the Wind*, this lexeme is quite rare and serves to describe male appearance. For example: *...he's a **good-looking** devil...; ...**good-looking** men.*

The range of meaning of the lexeme *handsome* is not limited to male beauty. In the text in question it is used to verbalize both male and female beauty. For example: *And when Ashley came riding along, so **handsome**, so different...; She was a **handsome** woman, to be sure, but all that pretty, sweet softness had gone from her face.*

Quite often the lexeme *handsome* serves to foreground the beauty of architectural structures and clothing items. For example: *...a **handsome** gold cigar case was thrown carelessly into the basket...; ...his waistcoats, they were indescribably **handsome**...; ...the dress was incomparable, so rich and **handsome** looking...; ...many **handsome** homes had once stood...*

The lexical unit *lovely* has a marked emotional meaning. This lexeme represents positive assessment of the object's attributes, but usually transmits no specific information on appearance attributes of the object being described. It may be noted that the domain of this lexeme is limited to contexts where emotional perception prevails over the rational one.

In the text in question, the lexeme *lovely* quite often serves to describe the beauty of architectural structures and clothing items. For example: *Your pink gown is **lovely** and suitable to your complexion...; view for herself the **lovely** laces and frocks and frills...; they were carrying on in such **lovely**, **lovely** dresses...; ...her **lovely** twin bracelets...; ...the **lovely** homes beneath shady trees...; ...the **lovely** old dwelling facing on the square... This lexeme manifests beauty of a person. For example: *How fair a gem gleams on a **lovely** wrist; He, Frank Kennedy, had swept this **lovely** creature.**

A positive assessment of properties or attributes of an object is indicated with the lexeme *pleasant*. In *Gone with the Wind*, the lexeme *pleasant* often is a means for foregrounding a picture of the American South with its picturesque scenery and friendly inhabitants. For example: *It was a **pleasant** land of white houses, peaceful plowed fields and sluggish yellow rivers, but a land of contrasts, of brightest sun glare and densest shade; ...in the **pleasant** sunshine of the early autumn afternoon.* This lexeme is also used in descriptions of mimic gestures and looks. For example: *He gave her a smile, so **pleasant**, so grateful...; her flashing smile and the **pleasant** light in her green eyes...*

The lexeme *fine* is among the most frequent representative of the concept of BEAUTY in the novel. This lexical unit expresses positive assessment.

In the work in question, the lexeme *fine* often foregrounds a positive assessment of personal qualities. For example: *...she's married to a mighty **fine** man...; ... was a **fine** old gentleman...; ...what*

will the South be like without all our **fine** boys... Oftentimes, this lexeme serves to express the beauty of flora and fauna. For example: ...by the two **fine** old oaks...; for it was a **fine** spring day and his fields were beautiful....

The lexeme *fine* also foregrounds aesthetic assessment in description of objects or architectural structures. For example: ...a **fine** fur hat...; ...dashingly pretty in her **fine** clothes...; ...fitted out with the **finest** of plush upholstered furniture...; ...handsome new rifles of English make with shining stocks of **fine** wood...

In the novel, the beauty of clothing items is also expressed with the lexeme *resplendent*. In the text, *resplendent* is used to describe military uniform. For example: They were such **resplendent** uniforms, brave with shining buttons and dazzling with twined gold braid on cuffs and collars Beauty and shining of uniforms are also emphasized with lexemes shining и dazzling.

A significant number of lexical units in the *Gone with the Wind* novel serve to foreground spiritual beauty of a person. For instance, quite frequent in the lexeme *honourable*. Genteelness is an integral feature of a Southern gentleman. For example: Ashley was so **honourable**, so truthful, so kind and he saw so straightly (Mitchell, 2021).

In the work in question, such words as *heroic*, *gallant*, *tender* are used to foreground the image of estimable sons of the South—"fearless, so whole-hearted in their devotion to the cause, so delicately courteous". For example: Had there ever been such men as these since the first dawn of the world, so **heroic**, so **gallant**, so **tender**? (Mitchell, 2021).

Spiritual beauty is also expressed in the novel by such lexical units as *refinement* and *courteous*. Among the lexical units expressing the spiritual beauty, one may also name the word *kindness*. The image of Melanie Wilkes is an embodiment of kindness and mercy in the novel. For example: Melanie was young but she had in her all the qualities this embattled remnant prized, poverty and pride in poverty, uncomplaining courage, gaiety, hospitality, **kindness** and, above all, loyalty to all the old traditions. Melany is an ideal of a Southern lady: she is kind, proud, silently brave but, first, she is committed to values and traditions of the Old South.

The lexeme *hospitality* also expresses spiritual beauty. Keeping traditions of hospitality is a typical feature of all true Southerners. For example: John Wilkes, silver-haired, radiating the quiet charm and **hospitality**...

Good upbringing may be another attribute of spiritual beauty of a person. This attribute is usually foregrounded by means of the lexeme *well-bred*. For example: Remember, a **well-bred** female's place is in the home and she should know nothing about this busy, brutal world. Let us note that this fragment serves to depict a Southern lady, a guardian of the hearth.

The lexical unit *polite* emphasizes such features and politeness, courtly manners, gentle hood. For example: ...they were always so exquisitely **polite** to her...; the gracious Mrs. Kennedy, who treated them more **politely** than anyone else in town.

In addition to the lexical units listed above, in the novel the concept of BEAUTY is verbalized also with the following lexemes: *stylish*, *enchanting*, *glamorous*, *gentle*, *dazzling*, *admirable*, *courteous*, *peaceful*, *serene*, *placid*, *sensitive*, *splendour*, *breath-taking*, *artistic*, *luminous*, *sublime*, *well-modulated*, *honest*, *modest*, *respectful*, *truthful*, *well-tailored*, *generous*.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, we may conclude that the concept of BEAUTY is determined as an important value orientation of human behaviour. This concept has a high density and is nominated with a large number of lexemes.

Lexical units that represent the concept of BEAUTY in the Mitchell's (2021) novel *Gone with the Wind* may be counted as pertaining to the following topical areas: surface beauty and mental image; beauty of flora and fauna; beauty of things and artistic works.

The research has shown that in the Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind* personal beauty is primarily foregrounded by means of lexemes expressing spiritual beauty (*honourable, honest, hospitality, kindness, unselfish*), that is, a positive assessment of the inner world of a character is no less important than assessment of one's appearance.

It should be noted, that this research covers the most productive way of foregrounding the concept of BEAUTY, its lexical verbalization. In the future, this research may be supplemented by analysis of examples pertaining to idiomatic and syntactic manifestation of the concept of BEAUTY in the work in question.

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