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MYTHOLORIC SPACE OF AMERINDIAN PROSAIC TEXTS:
COGNITIVE-SEMIOTIC AND NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVES
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S.V. Volkova. Mytholoric space of Amerindian prosaic texts: cognitive-semiotic and narrative perspectives. The paper suggests a new cognitive facet of ethnolinguistics for exposing ethno-cultural features embodied in mytholoric characters of literary prosaic texts. The term "mytholoric" is a coinage that reflects syncretic unity of mythic and folk lore of Amerindian culture. Myhtoloric space is defined as cognitive and semiotic construct that incorporates different types of mytholoric characters. *Author's mytholoric character* is a cumulative cognitive and semiotic textual construal, which reflects behavior and deeds of the person who stands for the interests of Amerindian in modern American society and tries to adapt to the rules of existing in that new world. It has been proved that metamorphosis is a dominant linguistic means in creating mytholoric and author's mytholoric character. Semiotic and cognitive analysis made it possible to construe the model of the main character, interpreted as ethnocultural symbol. Narrative analysis of the Amerindian prosaic texts outlined the ways and means of narrative perspectives highlighting metamorphosis and reverse perspective as the major ones in creating and interpreting the mytholoric space in literary text. The paper suggests linguistic and cognitive mechanism of reverse perspective in literary text. Models of mytholoric space are determined by the genre of the literary text and eclecticism of mytholoric characters.

Keywords: Amerindian, reverse perspective, metamorphosis, mytholoric characters, mytholoric space.

Волкова С.В. Мифолорное пространство америндианских прозаических текстов: когнитивно-семиотический и нарративный аспекты. В статье предлагается новое направление в отечественной лингвистике – когнитивная этнолингвистика, – открывающее перспективы исследования средств формирования и способов включения конституентов мифолорного пространства в общее семантическое пространство современного художественного текста. *Мифолорное пространство* определяется как когнитивно-семиотический конструкт, инкорпорирующий разные типы *мифолорных* образов. Мифолорно-авторский образ определяется как кумулятивный когнитивно-семиотический конструкт, отображающий особенный тип личности, поведение и поступки представителя америндского общества, который пытается адаптироваться в современном мире американского общества. Семиозис мифолорно-авторского образа осуществляется посредством метаморфозы, когнитивно-семиотическая природа которой служит воплощению идеи преобразования образа персонажа в знак этнокультуры. В работе дана характеристика нарративных способов интерпретации мифолорного пространства, к которым относятся метаморфоза и обратная перспектива. Представлен лингвокогнитивный механизм обратной перспективы в художественном тексте. В работе построены модели мифолорного пространства, тип которых определяется жанром художественного текста и эклектикой мифолорных образов.

Ключевые слова: америндский, обратная перспектива, метаморфоза, мифолорные образы, мифолорное пространство.

Волкова С.В. Міфолорний простір амеріндіанських прозових текстів: когнітивно-семіотичний і наративний аспекти. У статті пропонується новий напрям вітчизняної лінгвістики – когнітивна етнолінгвістика, що відкриває перспективи дослідження засобів формування і способів

уключення елементів міфолорного простору в загальний семантичний простір сучасного художнього тексту. Міфолорний простір визначається як когнітивно-семіотичний конструкт, що інкорпорує різні типи міфолорних образів. Міфолорно-авторський художній образ є кумулятивним когнітивно-семіотичним конструктом, що втілює риси особистості, представника аmeріндіанської культури, який адаптується до нових умов існування в сучасному американському суспільстві. Семіозис міфолорно-авторського образу відбувається засобом метаморфози, когнітивно-семіотична природа якої слугує втіленням ідеї перетворення образу персонажа в знак етнокультури. У роботі схарактеризовано наративні способи інтерпретації міфолорного простору, до яких віднесено метаморфозу і зворотну перспективу. Запропоновано лінгвокогнітивний механізм зворотної перспективи в художньому тексті. Побудовано моделі міфолорного простору, тип яких визначається жанром художнього тексту й еклектикою міфолорнії образів.

Ключові слова: аmеріндіанський, зворотна перспектива, метаморфоза, міфолорні образи, міфолорний простір.

1. Introduction

A handful of Native novelists – Navarr Scott Momaday (Kiowa), Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo), Louise Erdrich (Ojibwa), Linda Hogan (Chicksaw), James Welch (Blackfoot), and Gerald Vizenor (Ojibwa) – constitute the **material** of investigation. The plural nature of Native American literatures stems from the plurality of Native American cultures (Kiowa, Laguna Pueblo, Chicksaw, and so on) and the multiplicity of different genres (stories, novel-myth, novel-legend, essay, literary tale).

The history of Native American Literature is often divided between works published before and after Navarr Scott Momaday's 1969 Pulitzer Prize for *House Made of Dawn*. Momaday's Pulitzer brought academic and public attention to Native writers. Lincoln states that it is not often, indeed seldom, that a writer word for word, character by character, action to action, story following story, surprises, upsets, delights, saddens, amazes a reader – as this one does [Lincoln 1985: 1]. The floodgates opened up interest in a host of other contemporary Native authors as a result of Momaday's award. Lincoln refers to the period surrounding Momaday's achievement as a Native American Renaissance [Lincoln 1985: 11].

The Native American Renaissance took three forms: confidence on the part of contemporary Native authors in reclaiming their heritage in their own literary expressions; concern with finding and re-evaluating early literary works by Native authors; and renewed interest in anthropologies of translations of traditional artistic impressions – myths, prayers, ceremonies, rituals, love songs, oratory, etc. [Lundquist 2004: 38].

Therefore, Native literary themes pivot around various descriptions and confrontations with the causes and effects of native fragmentation, while at the same time imagining how healing from such debilitating fragmentation may occur. Consequently, Native writers share a common approach to creating the space full of cultural metaphors [Toelken 1976]. Cultural metaphors, according to noted folklorist Barre Toelken, shape individual and collective assumptions about the world operates [Toelken 1976: 15-16]. Navajo, for example, have the tendency to recreate the pattern of the circle at every level of the culture highlighting set of concepts, codes, patterns and assumptions grounded in the characters of prosaic texts. The characters, which are constructed on this or that cultural metaphor, form the mytholoric space [Volkova 2016] defined in my work as cognitive and semiotic construct that incorporates different types of mytholoric characters [Volkova 2017].

My **objective** in writing this paper is therefore two-fold. In cognitive semiotics perspective I state that mytholoric space consists of author's mytholoric characters identified as ethnocultural symbols which incorporate different codes. Decoding them helps to draw up their ethno-cultural implicatures, and to make the link between image, sign and symbol. In narrative perspective I reveal that metamorphosis and reverse perspective are effective means that serve as narrative tools for construing the character interpreted as ethnocultural symbol. While illustrating semiotic and narrative perspectives of interpretation the mytholoric space in literary text, the paper integrates

linguocognitive, ethnocultural and semiotic **methods** showing the net of mind and language in highlighting ethnocultural concepts, values and way of thinking, embedded in the mytholoric characters, which constitute mytholoric space of prosaic text.

2. Author's mytholoric character as ethnocultural symbol

American anthropologist Edward M. Bruner claims that "Every telling is an arbitrary imposition of meaning on the flow of memory, in that we highlight some causes and discount others; that is, every telling is interpretive. The concept of an experience, then, has an explicit temporal dimension in that we go through or live through an experience, which then becomes self-referential in the telling" [Bruner 1986: 7].

From Bruner's words it may be inferred that there is a reality in our experience or consciousness and then our interpretation of that reality follows through verbal expression.

Meaning is not inherent in objects, objects do not signify by themselves. Meaning, rather, is constructed by what is known as a competent observer, that is, by a subject capable of 'giving form' to objects [Martin 2006: 10].

Donald Sandner explains that "life symbols make of a culture what it is specifically, and govern the thoughts and feelings of the people, who are part of it" [Sandner 1991: 14-15].

Sandner reminds us, referring to an American anthropologist Leslie Alvin White, that "all human behavior originates in the use of symbols" [Sandner 1991: 15].

In modern prosaic texts created by such contemporary Amerindian writers as Navarr Scott Momaday, Lesli Marmon Silko, Linda Hogan central characters find themselves on the border of two different worlds – native and another, alien to them in way of life, values, attitude to people, animals and so on so forth. Each of these worlds influences on the main character and changes his inner world in some way.

For instance, it occurs with a central hero in novel-myth *House Made of Dawn* who behaves, thinks and feels differently in different narrative situations:

Narrative situation 1 'Hero and his native world': "*In the morning sunlight the Valley Grande was dappled with the shadows of clouds and vibrant with rolling winter grass. The clouds were always there huge, sharply described, and shining in the pure air. Such vastness makes for illusion, a kind, a kind of illusion that comprehends reality, and where it exists there is always **wonder** and **exhilaration**. [...] Then he saw the **eagles** across the distance, two of them, riding low in the depths and rising diagonally toward him. He did not what they were first, and he stood watching them, their far, **silent flight erratic** and **wild** in the bright morning. They arose and swung across the skyline, veering close at last, and he knelt down behind the rock, **dump with pleasure and excitement**, holding on to them with his eye.*" (House Made of Dawn, 16). Watching the birds' behavior Abel is going to make magic contact with their souls: he kneels down and this sign means 'I honor you and express deep respect'. Such deep feeling that looks like great estimation in attitude to the birds, which are considered to be sacred ones in Amerindian culture, is the expression of some magic interconnection between this human being and eagles, the signs of Great Spirit. So, in his native world the **hero is** strong, powerful **Eagle**.

Narrative situation 2 'Hero in another, alien world': "*Now, here* [Лос Анджелес], *the **world** was open at his back. He had lost **his place**. He had been long ago **at the centre**, had known where he was [...].*" (House Made of Dawn, 92). Antithesis *native world :: alien world* is activated by means of literary details serving as triggers of the meaning that interpreter should 'reread': "*Why should Abel think of **fishes**? He **could not understand the sea**; it **was not of his world**. It was an enchanted thing, too, for it lay under the spell of the moon*" (House Made of dawn, 87). In alien world the hero is at a loss. He thinks about fishes, which are helpless at some period of time. Narrator expresses his character inner state by putting rhetoric question (*Why should Abel think of fishes?*), speaking about the sea, which is not his [Abel] world. The word *fish* is the trigger, that recollects in reader's memory the episode about fishes, given by the author in the earlier narrative

on page 79 in *House Made of Dawn*: "*There is a small silversided **fish** that is found along the coast of southern California. In the spring and summer it spawns on the beach during the first three hours after each of the three high tides following the highest tide. These fishes come by the hundreds from the sea. They hurl themselves upon the land and writhe in the light of the moon, the moon, the moon; they writhe in the light of the moon. **They are among the most helpless creatures on the face of the earth.** Fishermen, lovers, passers-by catch them up in their bare hands*" (House Made of Dawn, 79). In another world the **hero** is **helpless fish**.

Interpretation of the given above narrative situations makes us think about metamorphosis of hero's mind. At first he was alone: "*Abel was running. **He was alone and running**, hard at first, heavily, but then easily and well. The road curved out in front of him and rose away in the distance. He could not see the town. It was dawn. The valley was gray with rain, and snow lay out upon the dunes. The first light had been deep and vague in the mist, and then the sun flashed and a great yellow glare fell under the cloud. The road verged upon clusters of juniper and mesquite, and he could see the black angles and twists of wood beneath the hand white crust; there was a shine and glitter on the ice. **He was alone and running, running**"* (House Made of Dawn, Prologue, 1). And at the end of his symbolic running he became unsubdued: "*He was running and a cold sweat broke out upon him and his breath heaved with the pain of running, but he was **unsubdued**. His legs buckled and he fell in the snow, but he was **unsubdued** and got up and ran on. The rain fell around him in the snow and he saw his broken hands, how the rain made streaks upon them and dripped soot upon the snow. And he was **unsubdued**, got up and ran on*" (House Made of Dawn, 185). Passing through many difficulties the hero remains unsubdued, he continues his running being strong, tough and full of willing to work for his people.

He passes through some internal changes that lead to another his world understanding and world perception. The following scheme illustrates the mechanism of such metamorphosis (Fig. 1):
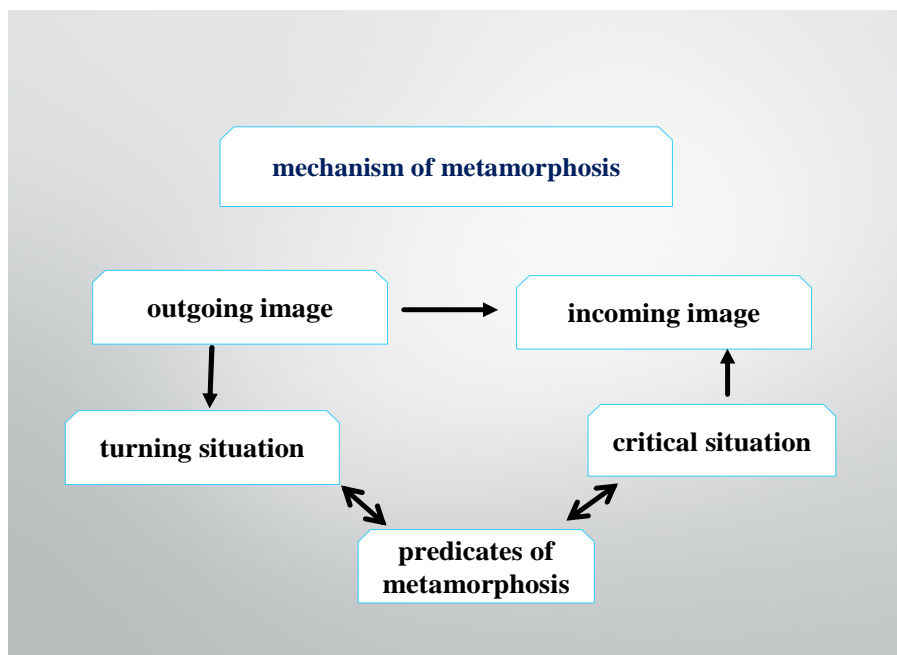

Figure 1. Mechanism of metamorphosis

Outgoing image is revealed in the first narrative situation which I titled as 'Hero is alone' (see the sample above).

Turning situation is developed in some narratives that contrast the central hero and his antagonist who is a white man: "*The white man was **large** and **thickset**, **powerful** and **deliberate in his movements**. The white man held the rooster up and away in his left hand while its great wings*

*beat the air. The **albino** was **huge** and **hideous** at the extremity of the terrified bird. It was then her eyes were drawn to the **heavy, bloodless hand** at the throat of the bird*" (House Made of Dawn, 39);

"*He rode beside Abel, turned suddenly upon him, and began to flail him with the rooster. The white man was **too strong and quick** for him. The white man leaned and struck, back and forth, with only the mute **malice** of the act itself, careless, undetermined, almost composed in some final, **preeminent sense**. The bird was dead*" (House Made of Dawn, 39);

"*The **white man laughed** and each time ended in a strange, inhuman cry. **Abel grew silent**, watching him, with a hard, transparent mask upon his mouth and eyes*" (House Made of Dawn, 73).

Critical situation coincides with describing the hero's feeling in another world, when he thinks of his past, of his being in the centre of events: "Now, here, *the world was **open at his back**. He **had lost his place**. He had been long ago at the center, had known where he was, had lost his way, had wandered to the end of the earth, was even now reeling on the edge of the void"* (House Made of Dawn, 92); "*He tried to think **where the trouble had begun**, what the trouble was. There was trouble; he could admit that to himself, but he had no real insight into his own situation. Maybe, certainly, **that was the trouble** …*" (House Made of Dawn, 93).

And incoming image is highlighted in final running of the hero, when he is no longer alone, he is unsubdued that symbolizes hero's rebirth.

Semiosis of the main character as ethnocultural symbol based on metamorphosis provokes me to make some analogy between the main character who changes his mind, worldview, behaviour and butterfly, who also passes through some changes during its life period.

In early Christianity, the butterfly was a symbol of the soul. In China, it was used as a symbol of conjugal bliss and joy. The butterfly was particularly revered by the tribes of the American southwest. Its dance is performed by both Navajo and Hopis. In the Hopi tradition, unmarried girls of the butterfly clan wore their hair in the shape of butterfly wings to advertise their availability. To Native Americans, the butterfly is a symbol of change, joy and colour. The exquisite butterfly was considered a miracle of transformation and resurrection [Lake-Thomb 1997].

Butterfly symbolizes the power of air, the ability to float upon a breeze. It is known for its darting flight, thus, it represents the mind and the ability to change it when necessary. Butterfly encodes the never-ending cycle of life; therefore, its medicine bestows not only the ability, but the clarity of mind needed before self-transformation [Alexander 2005].

Symbols act powerfully, according to Sandner, to "change the psyche by converting energy into a different form, a form that can heal" [Sandner 1991: 14]. Jung in his theory of the importance of symbolism [Jung 1964] came to the conclusion that symbols act as transformers, their function being to convert libido from a 'lower' into a 'higher' form. This kind of psycho/social/spiritual healing processes thrust patients into liminal space – a space where the sick person is willing to leave one mode of being (a death) and enter into another (a rebirth).

In *House Made of Dawn* the main character also passes from one mode of his life into another. Having found himself at the abyss he is willing to enter new stage of his developing, to be reborn. He makes his ritual running and understands that he is not alone and he has a chance to start a new life. Semiotic model of such character is construed in the form of Butterfly (Fig. 2):
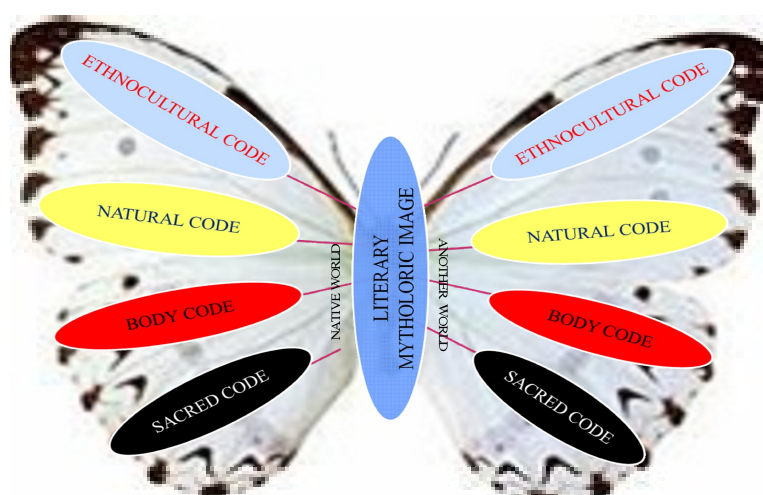
Figure 2. Semiotic model of author's mytholoric character

The model illustrates that the character belongs to two worlds: native and alien. He incorporates some codes (ethnocultural, natural, body and sacred) which are mirrored in these two worlds. And at last he passes through his own rebirth making his ritual running, changing his attitude to the world, realizing his sacred function in the world and starting a new life.

The semiotic facet is a useful tool to illustrate the basic semantic or thematic oppositions underpinning a text. It also allows, however, a demonstration of textual dynamics by plotting essential stages or transformations in a story and following the narrative trajectory of the subject.

3. Narrative perspective of mytholoric space interpretation

Text is a set of narratives [Schmid 2003], in which verbal signs imply different information about signified object. Postmodern narrative incorporates modes of narration, which at once departs from traditional ways of depicting events.

In my analysis of mytholoric space in literary text, in finding the means of interconnection between two worlds – real one referring to the objective reality, in which the hero accidently finds himself, and mytholoric, full of myths, legends and symbols, which influence the character of the hero and play an important role in reader's perception him as ethnocultural symbol, who came to the world to perform some sacred mission, – such narrative technique as *reverse perspective* is the most effective one in connecting similar plots and structures, predictable situations, episodes, conflicts and resolutions [Volkova 2016]. The concept of 'reverse perspective' is borrowed from Pavel Florensky's work *Reverse Perspective* (2002), in which he explains perspectival relations in icon painting of the fourteenth, fifteenth and part of the sixteenth centuries [Florensky 2002].

Applying the principle of reverse perspective onto linguistic interpretation of the text *reverse perspective* is regarded in two dimensions: 1) as narrative way of forming mytholoric images by means of cumulating literary details divergently put in the space of the text and 2) as the way of interpretation the mytholoric space and its elements by mapping and projecting events and motifs of the characters [Volkova 2016: 376]. Linguistic and cognitive mechanism of reverse perspective is based on repetition, parallelism, similarity, analogy, mapping and projecting.

Reverse perspective in narrative is the method that marks an important milestone in the development of central character as ethno-cultural symbol. Reverse perspective in literary text is something different from retrospective narration defined by Genette [Genette 1980]. Retrospective means that narrative is broken by some other narrative, which has reference to the events happened with the hero in the past. This 'other narrative' introduces some additional information and is connected to the main narrative by means of word-trigger.

To explain the mechanism of reverse perspective in narrative (Fig. 3) it should be understood that the text manifests one space with different levels, different images, and different textual worlds. In the case with reverse perspective the narrative isn't interrupted by another narrative. Just the other way round, as the narrative contains lexical triggers, which activate reader's cognition and return him to some previous event in the text in order to realize and fulfill some conceptual gaps for understanding the actions and motifs of the character.
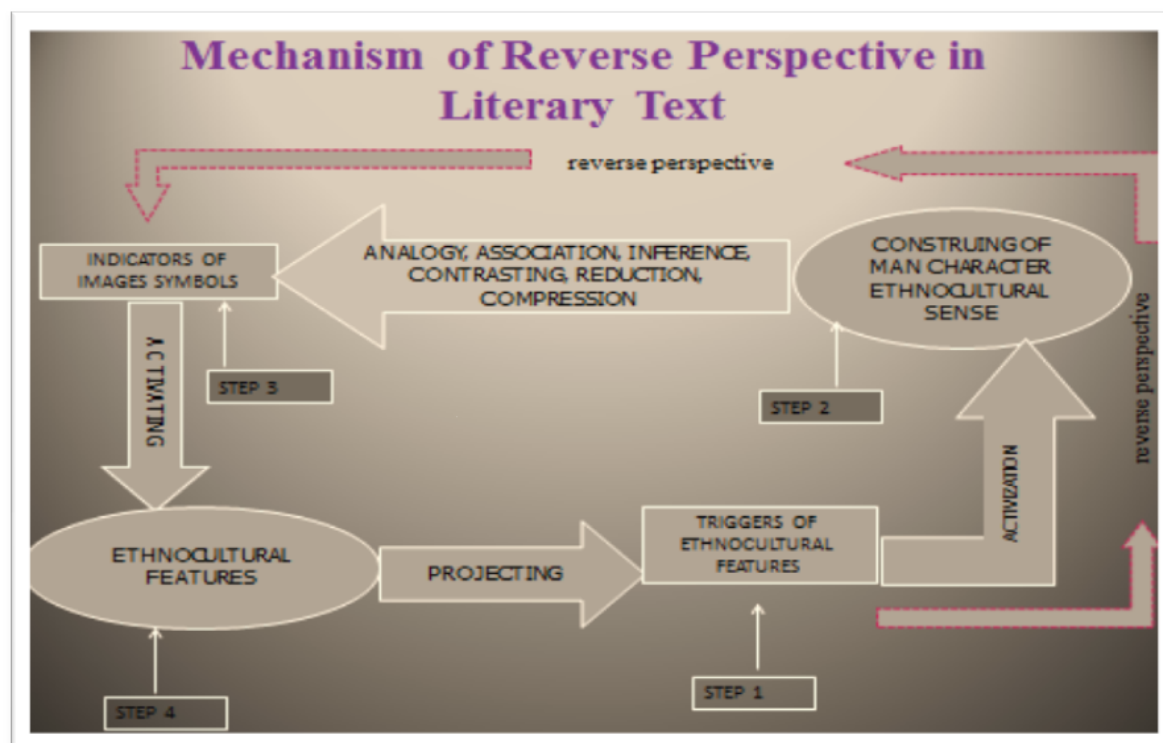

Figure 3. The mechanism of reverse perspective in literary text

Different spaces are interconnected in textual world. Their interconnection is invisible at first glance. But there are literary details which trigger some association or analogy between different events happening in different spaces. Mapping one event onto another helps to explain the intentions and behaviour of the main character and, what is the most important, to identify the main character as mytholoric image-symbol. Reverse perspective is the means of interpretation as it is triggered by key word that is repeated in different fragments of the text.

To understand the connotative meaning of a word *trigger* I turn to *Macmillan English Dictionary* [2002] which gives such its definition: as a noun 1) the part of a gun that you move with your finger to make the gun fire; 2) something that produces an immediate result; and as a verb 1) to make something happen; 2) to cause someone to have particular feelings or memories; 3) to cause someone to do or say something, as trigger a response / reaction [Macmillan English Dictionary 2002: 1537].

In the first narrative situation (Fig. 3 step 1) I underline the triggers, which are ethno-cultural implicatures, describing the author's character as author's mytholoric one: "*They* [Abel and white man] *went out into the rain and darkness. All around was silence, save for the sound of the rain and the moan of the wind in the wires. **Abel looked** at him **with eagle eyes**. He stood **as if he were male eagle** watching from the very top of a mountain. The white man raised his arms **as if to embrace him**. Then he closed his hands upon Abel and drew him closer. Abel felt the blue shivering lips upon him, felt even the scales of the lips and the hot slippery point of the tongue, **like a snake's sting**. He was sick with terror and revulsion, and he tried to fling himself away, but the white man held him close. The hands of the albino lay **as if silver rope curving Abel's throat**. In his terror*

Abel leaned inside the white man's arms and drove the knife up under the bones of the breast and across. Abel threw down the knife and the rain fell upon it and made it clean" (House Made of Dawn, 73-74).

The number of comparisons, based on linguistic and cognitive operations of analogy, association, with their key lexemes (eagle and snake) which are verbal images with symbolic meaning help us to construe main character as ethno-cultural symbols (Fig. 3 step 2). Abel is associated with Eagle (*looked with eagle eyes, male eagle*) and his action is approved with *the rain*, the symbol of purification, which '*fell upon it* [the knife] *and made it clean*', while the actions of white man are compared with those of the snake (*as if to embrace him, like a snake's sting*).

The comparisons also become triggers of reverse perspective. To interpret the semiotic sense of them we should return to the very beginning of the novel when eagles' flight is described and followed by the narrator's running commentary on their killing a black rattlesnake (Fig. 3 step 3): "*They were golden **eagles**, a male and a female, in their mating flight. She carried a **black rattlesnake**, it hung shining from her feet. And then she let it go. It fell slowly, writhing and rolling, floating out like a bit of silver thread against the wide backdrop of the land. First the **male eagle** let the carrion drift by; then suddenly he **hit the snake** in the head, crackling its long body like a whip. At the top of his glide he let go of the **snake**. Abel watched the **eagles** go. **It was** an awful, **holy sight, full of magic and meaning**"* (House Made of Dawn,16).

In the excerpt which describes one of the animals' day of life the words *eagles* and *snake* are repeated several times. Lexical repetition makes us turn to a *Guide to Native American Nature Symbols*, *Stories and Ceremonies* [Lake-Thom 1997] to learn how to interpret good and bad signs, their symbolic meaning embedded in these verbal images: "*Eagles are always very special and good signs. They represent protection, wealth, wisdom, foresight, strength, and spirituality*" [Lake-Thom 1997: 109]; "*The Rattlesnake can be used for good or bad power. The Rattlesnake that is predominantly black in color is a bad power*" [Lake-Thom 1997: 153]. So, the interpretation of that 'holy sight' described in the given above abstract leads to the revelation of the following symbolic meaning: The Good (Eagles) destroys the Evil (Black Rattlesnake).

The two narratives have equivalent syntactic constructions' structure (*he hit the snake in the head* SPOA = *Abel drove the knife up under the bones of the breast* SPOA), stylistic comparative device (*like a bit of silver thread, as if silver rope, like a snake's sting*), common motif (the fight between Good and Evil in which Good is the winner).

4. Eclecticism of mytholoric characters, narratives and genres in Amerindian novels
In art, the term "eclecticism" is used to describe the combination of elements from different historical styles in a single work, chiefly in architecture and, by implication, in the fine and decorative arts (Fig. 4):

Figure 4. Samples of eclectic in architecture and arts

The sample of narrative eclectic is the novel-legend *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969) by N. Scott Momaday.

In three major sections of this work, Momaday has organized events into twenty-four triads (units of three paragraphs each). Each triad tells about particular Kiowa reality spread in three different genres: myth, history and personal witness. While the entire work proceeds chronologically, each unit is organized vertically or synchronically, thus demonstrating the timelessness of mythic events and their interaction with or influence on particular moments of life as lived by tribal members – on Momaday in particular.

The eclectic of different narratives (mytholoric, autobiographic and historical) in one textual world looks like triptych in painting (Fig. 5):

Figure 5. Triptych in painting

Based on the technique of triptych in painting and design I have construed the triptych model of narrative (Fig. 6) in the novel *The Way to Rainy Mountain*. It looks like the combination of three narratives (mytholoric, historical and autobiographical):
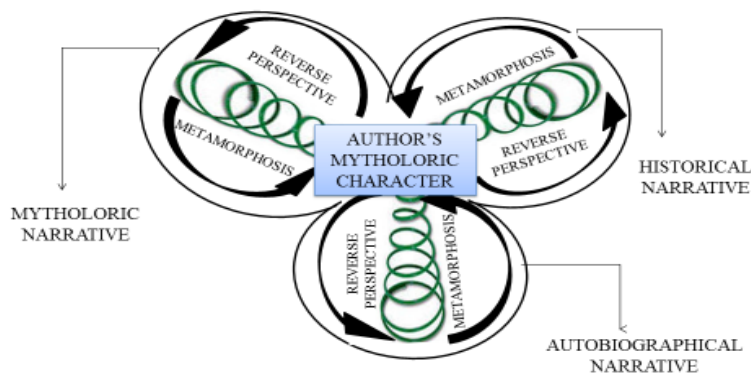

Figure 6. Triptych model of narrative in the novel *The Way to Rainy Mountain*

Each narrative in this novel tells the story, and the narration develops in a spiral. The main narrative technique in each of the narrative is reverse perspective as in each of the triads we find triggers of ethnocultural images and due to them may return to the details given in any of twenty-four triads.

Sample of step-by-step narrative is in novel-essay *Dwellings* (1995) by Linda Hogan. In the preface to the novel Hogan explains: "*It has been my lifelong work to seek an understanding of the two views of the world, one as seen by native people and the other as seen by those who are new and young on this continent. It is clear that we have strayed from the treaties we once had with the land and with the animals. It is also clear, and heartening, that in our time there are many – Indian and non-Indian alike – who want to restore and honor these broken agreements*".

Dwellings consists of 17 essays. As a writer of Chickasaw heritage, Linda Hogan seeks to restore the balance and to offer ancient wisdom about nature in mythological yet contemporary terms. Narrative model of mytholoric space in this novel looks like step-by-step vision (Fig. 7):
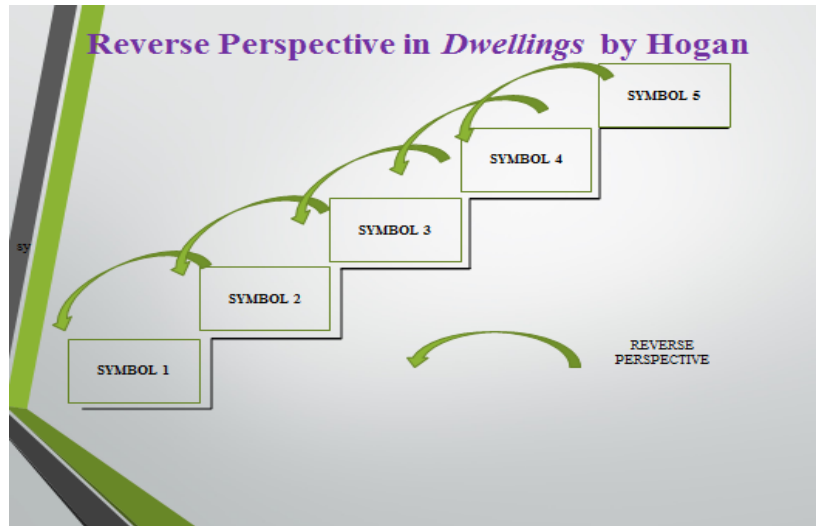

Figure 7. Step-by-step model of mytholoric space in the novel-essay "Dwellings"

With each step the narrator develops the theme showing the eclecticism of ethnocultural concepts (Fig. 8), which are of great value for Amerindians:
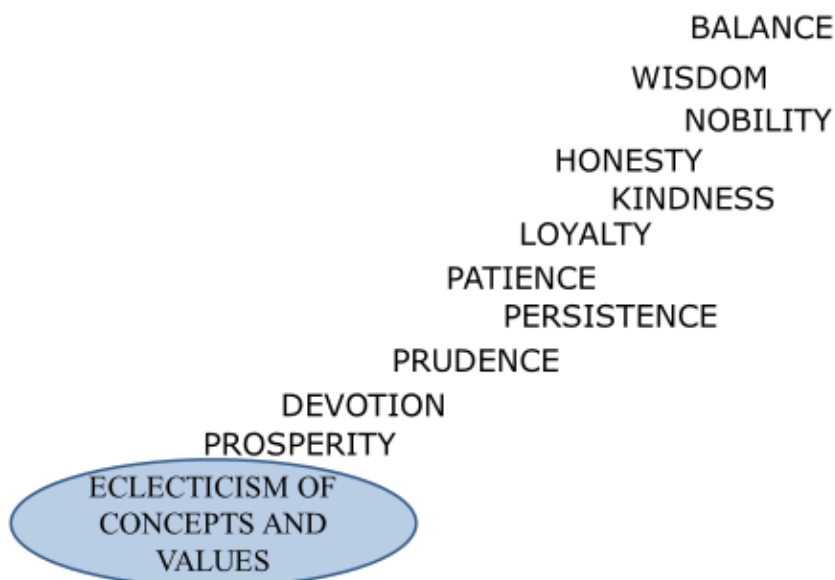

Figure 8. The eclecticism of ethnocultural concepts in *Dwellings*

In *Dwellings* reverse perspective as semantic bridge makes it possible to project the sense of one event onto the other and hence connect them semantically. So, fragments which are joined semantically may be both close and far from each other in the text:

(1) *In earlier days, before the springs and caves were privately owned, **they were places of water healing for Indian people**, places where **conflict between tribes and people was left behind**, neutral ground, a sanctuary outside the reign of human differences, law, and trouble. Men and women travelled across the wide green plains, down the red mountains and rounded hills, to rest inside earth's cauldron* (29-30).

(2) *One of the Indian women talks about **water medicine**. She was sick and had lost her faith in the medicine ways, she says, and has come back to the **healing waters** of the earth. We are welcome here. I love this inner earth, its murmuring heartbeat, the language of what will consume us. Above is the beautiful earth that we have come from. Below is heat, stone, fire. I am within the healing of nature, held in earth's hand* (35).

In the second excerpt our attention attracts the expression *healing water*. And it's not clearly understood: Why are we welcome here? What for? Then we return to the legend about healing places (excerpt 1) and realize that there were water healing places without conflict, separating the land between Indian people and New World people, but it was freedom and harmony between man and nature.

So, the narrative model here looks like step-by-step model (Fig. 8) with ethnocultural symbol dominating on each of the steps. The narrative iconically resembles [Freeman 2007] the multiconceptuality of Amerindian worldview, representing the eclecticism of images, symbols and concepts. The coherence and cohesion between them through the whole novel-essay is possible to interpret by means of reverse perspective.

5. Conclusion

In the book *The pleasure of the text* [Barthes 1975] Barthes declares the choice between pleasure and the more ravaging term to be precarious, revocable, the discourse incomplete, but of course he cannot come up with "coming" which precisely translates as what the original text can afford: ideological structures, intellectual solidarities, the propriety of idioms, sacred armature of syntax. It is a powerful gush of words, a ribbon of infra-language [Barthes 1975: 7]. Interpreting this 'gush of words' may be possible if we read the text not only for deriving pleasure from it, but also for revealing invisible meanings hidden in its narrative structure. So, cognitive linguistics approach to interpretation of the text is just the focus combining semantic, semiotic, syntactic and narrative analyses.

Cognitive linguistics, in its insistence that language is a phenomenon of the mind and can therefore only be properly understood in relation to the mental processes of which it is a manifestation, is a radical rejection of linguistics and its modular view of language as practiced for much of the twentieth century from Saussure to Chomsky. As Langacker points out: 1) the language is a self-contained system amenable to algorithmic characterization, with sufficient autonomy to be studied in essential isolation from broader cognitive concerns; 2) grammar (syntax in particular) is an independent aspect of linguistic structure distinct from both lexicon and semantics; and 3) if meaning falls within the purview of linguistic analysis, it is properly described by some type of formal logic based on truth conditions [Langacker 1990].

Today's readers are no longer passive receivers of an author's constructed world. They are instead supposed to participate and take an active role in ascertaining a text's meaning before them, to ruminate on the plausible interpretations of a given narrative so as to work things out for themselves.

Every text is a system of signs organized according to codes and subcodes which reflect certain values, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and practices [Chandler 2007: 157]. Codes transcend single narratives, linking them together in an interpretive framework, which is used by their

producers and interpreters. In reading texts, we interpret signs with reference to what seem to be appropriate codes. Textual codes do not determine the meanings of texts but dominant codes do tend to constrain them. In the paper the dominant code is considered to be ethno-cultural one which greatly influenced the revealing ethno-cultural meanings hidden in those verbal signs that describe the characters, interests, beliefs of man and animal characters.

This is the case with Amerindian writers' prosaic texts, expecting the readers to be active participants, to cooperate with the author during the reading process in creating the narratives' meanings. They have made use of strategies and techniques that both violate readers' expectations, and simultaneously invite them not to sit passively before the text. By employing techniques and strategies which are associated with postmodern fiction writers seek to present different contradictory outcomes for events on the one hand, and to accentuate the ethno-cultural values and concepts on the other.

Text is a set of narratives in which verbal signs imply different information about signified object. Postmodernist narrative incorporates modes of narration which at once departs from traditional ways of depicting events. The study highlights narrative techniques peculiar for postmodern prosaic texts. Special scientific attention is paid to the technique of reverse perspective which helps to connect similar plots and structures, predictable situations, episodes, conflicts and resolutions, and finally reveal the markers of mytholoric space and the way of the embedding of its elements into the semantic space of prosaic text. Linguistic and cognitive mechanism of reverse perspective is based on repetition, parallelism, similarity, analogy.

Given results of textual analysis with special focus on mytholoric space and author's mytholoric character from narrative and cognitive semiotic perspectives can yield for textual linguistics, ethnocultural linguistics, and cognitive linguistics.

The cognitive facet of ethnolinguistics suggested in the paper may find further application in developing the principles for narrative and semiotic construing the models of different spaces and characters in prosaic as well as in poetic texts. In **prospect** I intend to characterize the principles of syntax and narrative interconnection in iconically resemblance the ethnocultural meaning in literary text.

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