

Subjective modality as an anthropocentric attribute of a text and a linguistic personality

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Subjective modality is one of the leading textual categories, as singled out by contemporary researchers of the text categorial apparatus since it penetrates the whole text space and is the main constituent of the author's image. The article aims to explore the category of subjective modality as one of the fundamental text categories that determines the specifics of all other categories in a fictional text. Various points of view as to the nature of the phenomenon of modality and the criteria for singling out its types are summarized. The two main types of modality – objective and subjective – are described in detail, though it is emphasized that the boundary between them is mostly conventional. The means of expressing modality are analyzed. The article focuses on subjective modality as a manifestation of the author's world mapping in a fiction text and underlines that only subjective modality becomes a textual category. This type of modality gains even more importance within a framework of the anthropocentric paradigm, which is the leading one in modern philological research. The article also highlights the correlation between the category of subjective modality and the categories of evaluation and intentionality. The author's attitude and intentions become clearer through it, making subjective modality the most essential text attribute. At the same time, its axiological orientation reflects fiction texts' pragmatics through using individual stylistic devices and other linguistic and literary expressive means. With the development of philological science and the separation of text linguistics into an independent scientific discipline, modality has also begun to be considered a category of text in recent decades. The study of subjective-modal factors in the text has enabled scientists to conclude that modality is a category, that it is inherent in the text, and that subjective modality is a universal category of the literary text.

Keywords: philology, terminology, subjective modality, anthropocentrism, axiology, pragmatics, stylistics, text category.

Introduction

Though the textual category of the subjective modality has attracted numerous researchers' attention for a long time (Bakhtyn, M. [2]; Vynohradov, V. [4]; Bally, Ch. [1]), it is especially urgent now since it is directly related to the theory of anthropocentrism that views a language as a product of human activities. According to the anthropocentric principle, a person is considered the centre of the universe, as the creator of the individual world mapping who gets to know the world around and creates the means of fixing and transferring the knowledge about it to other people as well as expressing emotions connected with the world phenomena perception. In our research,

we proceed from the idea of anthropocentrism as a general concept reflecting the anthropological nature of language and speech represented in a literary text.

The problem of modality is one of the most topical in modern philology as well as one of the most complex, since nowadays there is no generally accepted theory of modality yet, there are no clear criteria for distinguishing objective and subjective modality, and there is no uniform idea about semantics and formal means of expressing subjective modality. That partially explains the fact that several foreign (Bybee, J.[19]; Fleischman, S.[19]; Gavins, J. [20]; Nuyts, J.[21]) and native (Dotsenko, O. [6]; Marina, O. [10]; Smushynskaya, I. [15]) scholars still focus on it.

A text of fiction transforms the real or unreal world according to the author's individual perception, worldview, and moral and aesthetic ideals. The subjective approach can be traced in the process of selecting each linguistic unit to create a text; thus, in our opinion, text subjective modality is revealed. It is common knowledge that the whole volume of subjective modality is realized at the level of the text of fiction as a whole through the units of different levels of the language hierarchy. The analysis of its linguistic manifestations allows researchers to trace the nuances of developing modal connotations to find out the author's favourite linguistic means and tropes by which the author realizes subjective and modal connotations in dealing with the depicted object in the text of fiction.

1. The category of modality: foundations for differentiating objective and subjective modality

Modality is recognized as a language universal attribute belonging to the main categories of the natural language, which "is traced in various forms in different language systems while in the languages of the European system, it embraces speech as a whole" [4, p. 46]. The term *modality* is ambiguous and is used to define a wide specter of heterogeneous phenomena, which differ by their semantics, form, type of text form, and referring to different styles. The issue of the limits of the category gets different interpretations by various researchers.

Etymologically, the term *modality* originates from the French word *modalite*, which dates back from the Latin *modus* and denotes "measure, mode, mood" [14, p. 376]. Initially, the term belonged to classic formal logic, where linguists borrowed it and then researchers of other spheres (psychologists, musicians, programmers, etc.). The common basis for all of them is an interpretation of modality as a means of characterizing the mode of action or the attitude toward the action.

In their interpretation of modality, literary critics base on the definition of modality by linguists and logicians: "1) a linguistic grammatical category denoting how the content of a sentence relates to reality and expressed by the forms of the verb moods, intonation, introductory words and so on; 2) logical modality of a proposition – the proposition characteristics depending on the nature of reliability it expresses – whether it expresses supposition, reality or necessity of something; so, according to their modality, all propositions are divided into apodictic, asserting and problematic" [11, p. 63–64]. Logicians classified all propositions into asserting (propositions of reality), problematic (propositions of supposition), and apodictic (propositions of necessity), as well as reliable propositions and probable ones [7, p. 193]. Thus, in general terms, the semantic area of modality was outlined.

Researches into the category of modality in linguistics and logic are combined by two

approaches that distinguish two types of modality – objective and subjective. The former, the objective one, is based on the relationship between proposition and reality. It serves as the basis for logic to divide all statements into real, probable, and necessary regarding their reliability or falsity. At the same time, in the language, it is reflected in invariant meanings (real/unreal) of the objective modality of the utterance.

The subjective approach presents the grounds for singling out subjective modality based on the speaker's attitude toward the message. Logic treats it as the degree to which the subject of speech knows the existing objective situation and divides all statements as reliable, probable, and problematic. The notion of evaluation of the broad meaning of the word, including intellectual and emotional qualification of the message constitutes the content of the subjective modality in linguistics.

Subjective modality, as we have already said, is associated with the categories of intentionality and evaluation, depending on the author's individuality and many extralingual factors.

2. Subjective and evaluative modality

The speaker can present the same reality as causing different emotional attitudes and assess its different aspects. In the message, this reality can acquire certain emotional or rational characteristics; it can be compared to something, related to something else, or opposed to it; some parts of the message can be stressed or singled out.

Subjective modal meanings are extremely varied. Their most general, primary grouping depends on opposing evaluative, characterizing meanings, and proper evaluative [13, p. 383].

Scholars regard as evaluative and characterizing those meanings that combine expressing subjective attitude to the message and its characteristics that can be viewed as non-judgmental, which proceed from the fact itself, an event, their features, attributes, the character of its temporal development or its relations and connections with other facts or events.

Proper evaluative meanings belong to the sphere of subjective modality. These are various connotations that render the speaker's personal, subjective attitude to the content of the message: agreement or disagreement; acceptance or rejection (confident, categorical or softened, weakened); positive or negative assessment (satisfaction, preference, approval or disapproval, censure, condemnation); different types of will expression (decision, appeal, inducement, warning, threat); surprise, bewilderment or misunderstanding; the desire to understand or clarify something; the desire to highlight (emphasize, stress) something in the message, to strengthen some part of the information contained in it, to focus on something; the presentation of something as genuine or inauthentic, corresponding or not corresponding to reality. As has already been mentioned, all proper evaluative meanings and their connotations can accompany those meanings that have been referred to as evaluative and characterizing. Thus, the opposition between evaluative-characterizing and

proper evaluative meanings appears remarkably conventional. Therefore, all the above-mentioned meanings can be referred to as subjective modalities. This wide range of evaluative meanings presupposes determining specifics of realizing the category of subjective modality within fiction texts. This is also predetermined by the broad interpretation of the subjective modality essence: the multi-aspect approach contains in its specific basis an expression of relations to what is reported, how it is reported, by whom it is reported, to whom it is reported, etc., and the relation of the message to reality [12]. With this approach, it is possible to trace what language means and how exactly the author uses to convey their attitude to the depicted object. The nuances of using and combining linguistic means employed to increase the emotional and expressive impact on the reader will help to determine the features of the writer's style. Based on the foregoing, it can be argued that the category of subjective modality correlates with the category of evaluation.

T.A. Kosmeda describes the category of evaluation as a universal linguistic category. "From the point of view of axiological pragmalinguistics, the category of evaluation is not only a certain structural and semantic assignment (an aspect of semantics), not only a function that accompanies the statement (an aspect of syntax) but above all a phenomenon based on a special selection of speech means, with taking into account factors affecting on the formation of the estimated value, for example: 1) the subject of the assessment; 2) object of assessment; 3) type of assessment; 4) the basis of the assessment (objective and subjective factors, mode, etc.)" [8, p. 31].

In different types of texts, modality is implemented differently. It manifests itself most clearly in literary texts. Despite the existing general rules of construction, they "retain a significant proportion of the "active unconscious", which often blows up the correctness and affects the nature of the organization of the statement" [5, p. 25]. Indeed, the distinctive features of literary texts are figurativeness, aesthetics, and absolute anthropocentricity.

V. M. Britsyn develops O.S. Melnychuk's idea as to subjective modality as an expression of external syntactic relations and designation of extra-sentential information. V.M. Britsyn writes: "The cognitive interpretation of modality consists in understanding it as a category that describes the mental-sensual angles of the speaker's reflection of reality or influence on it. This approach shows that this cognitive category is formed not only within a sentence, it is often based on wide text arrays, sometimes it is necessary to refer to the discourse for its detection" [3, p. 160].

Text modality is one of the anthropocentric characteristics of the text.

3. Functions of subjective modality in a text

Considering that in the very structure of a literary text, a particular point of view of the writer is seen, a certain system of the author's assessments, which constitute the content of the subjective modality, this text category is considered fundamental, setting the specifics of all the others.

At their core, the textual categories, which include the category of subjective modality (L.Ye. Krasovitska [9], V.V. Taran [16], T.V. Teletska [17]), are functional-semantic, in which "the content plan is formed by concepts similar to concepts expressed by grammatical categories, and the plan of expression is represented by linguistic means related to different levels of the language" [17, p. 17]. These categories are formed by a set of linguistic means of different levels of the language system, which acquire different expressive, evaluative, and emotional connotations in a literary text. The specificity of the text category of modality lies not only in the interaction of different linguistic units but also in the combination of categorical meaning and the meaning generated by the text. Consequently, the category of subjective modality, through linguistic means, united by standard semantics, performs semantic and text-forming functions in the text.

"In works of fiction, the conductors of text modality are often represented by relative text segments" [5, p. 115]. V.V. Vynohradov pointed out that when interpreting a text as a "holistic unity", one cannot do without its division. This view is also shared by modern scholars of the text: "An uninterrupted continuum does not make it possible to dwell on something separate, particular and prevents an adequate understanding of what is happening" [5, p. 65]. Linguists distinguish between volume-pragmatic (for example, volume or chapter) and context-variable (for example, the author's speech and some personage's speech) division of the text. Both of these principles of text division interact and interpenetrate each other. In the author's speech, within a framework of a context-variable division of the text, the narration, description and reasoning of the author are distinguished. Descriptions, in turn, are divided into portrait, landscape, and interior descriptions. "Each type of division can be considered depending on what meaning the author attaches to this type of context-variable division" [16, p. 72].

The general orientation of subjective modality is fully implemented at the entire text level. Modality permeates the entire text, but in its purest form, it is presented in the author's speech. Analysis of the manifestations of subjective modality in the author's speech allows us to trace the nuances of the formation of modal meanings to identify the author's favorite language means and techniques, with the help of which the subjective-modal meanings of a work of art are realized and a vivid artistic image is created. The author is not an outsider in the context; they inform the reader about the world around them, and this information is refracted through the prism of his artistic thinking. Their point of view is always a living continuous line of

observations, which does not go into the past without a trace but, together with the author, passes from the past to the present and rushes into the future. "When creating an imaginary world, the writer cannot be impartial to this world. Presenting it as a real one, he, according to his method of artistic representation, either directly or indirectly expresses his attitude to the depicted" [5, p. 23].

Each writer has a specific set of means for implementing subjective modality, which is characteristic only for this author and reflects their artistic and speech style features. "The functional and semantic unity of the text determines the content plan of textual categories. The selection, combinatorics, distribution, and communicative-semantic relations of text elements determine the expression plan" [9, p. 22].

In our opinion, within the framework of a literary text, subjective modality covers a range of diverse and multifaceted ways of qualifying the message that exist in natural language, is realized by certain means, and thus forms the text and serves as an expression of the author's position.

As G.P. Nemets claims, "other artistic means of expressing the attitude to the reported message and the reported message to reality find their place in the language (irony, satire, comic, sarcasm, sardonic, etc.). They are not viewed as figurative means since they are only a contextual semantic factor that provides the possibility of their creation; however, depending on the place and conditions of their use, they serve as exponents of modal relations" [12, p. 312]. The features of information transfer and the transformation of the expression plan into the content plan in a literary text determine the specifics of the modality implementation.

Conclusions

Modality is a universal language category that belongs to the main categories of natural language.

In the functional-semantic aspect, this category is represented by two types – objective and subjective. The objective modality expresses the correlation of the utterance with reality, while the subjective modality conveys the speaker's attitude to the statement. The division of modality into objective and subjective is conventional, as it is caused by the need for a more detailed consideration of the means of their implementation and other features. The category of subjective modality

is considered one of the essential characteristics of the text, which arises directly from the language and, at the same time, constitutes speech as an independent object of linguistics.

In modern philology, there are various approaches to the study of the category of modality. Consideration of the category of modality in the anthropocentric aspect is a development of V.V. Vynogradov's ideas. The concept of textual modality is closely related to the concept of subjectivation, which emphasizes subjective authorial meanings and transforms them through the language.

The formation of the anthropocentric paradigm of scientific knowledge led to a turn of linguistic studies towards a person as a linguistic personality. Within the framework of anthropocentric linguistics, the fundamental guidelines are presented by the theory of linguistic personality that has developed in modern linguistics, the stimulus for the formation of which was the awareness of the priority of the personal principle in language. The category of subjective modality as an anthropocentric characteristic of the text correlates with such textual categories as the category of evaluation and intentionality. Modality as a textual category is represented only by the subjective type of modality, which is realized in a literary text as a manifestation of the author's attitude.

We understand the textual modality of a work of fiction as a textual category that necessarily permeates the entire text space and includes a set of diverse means expressing the speaker's attitude to the utterance's content. Therefore, subjective modality is viewed as the fundamental category predetermining features of other textual categories.

The representation of subjective modality in a literary text is carried out through linguistic, speech, and proper textual elements. This arsenal of means intentionally allows us to consider the literary text from an anthropocentric perspective.

Subjective modality as a manifestation of the author's attitude is realized in a certain text as the worldview and world mapping of a linguistic personality.

The category of text modality is an anthropocentric characteristic of both the text and the linguistic personality. The study of the manifestations of subjective modality allows us to deepen our understanding of the literary text in the anthropocentric aspect and reveal the author's intentions.

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Суб'єктивна модальність як антропоцентрична характеристика тексту та мовної особистості

Суб'єктивна модальність посідає провідне місце у переліку текстових категорій, що виокремлені сучасними дослідниками категоріального апарату тексту, оскільки пронизують увесь текстовий простір та є головною складовою образу автора. Мета статті – розглянути категорію суб'єктивної модальності як одну з фундаментальних текстових категорій, що визначає специфіку всіх інших категорій у тексті художньої літератури. Узагальнено різні точки зору щодо природи явища модальності та критеріїв виділення її типів. Детально описуються два основних типи модальності – об'єктивна та суб'єктивна, хоча підкреслюється, що межа між ними здебільшого умовна. Аналізуються засоби вираження модальності. У статті йдеться про суб'єктивну модальність як вияв авторського віддзеркалення світу в тексті художньої літератури та підкреслюється, що лише суб'єктивна модальність стає текстовою категорією. Цей тип модальності набуває ще більшого значення в рамках антропоцентричної парадигми, яка є провідною в сучасних філологічних дослідженнях. У статті також висвітлюється співвідношення категорії суб'єктивної модальності з категоріями оцінки та інтенційальності. Вияв авторської позиції та намірів робить суб'єктивну модальність найважливішою ознакою тексту, а її аксіологічна спрямованість відбиває прагматику художніх текстів через застосування індивідуальних стилістичних засобів та інших мовних та літературних прийомів. З розвитком філологічної науки, з виокремленням лінгвістики тексту в самостійну наукову дисципліну, модальність в останні десятиліття почала розглядатися і як категорія тексту. Дослідження суб'єктивно-модальних чинників у тексті уможливило вчених зробити висновки про те, що модальність є категорією, що вона притаманна тексту, і що суб'єктивна модальність є універсальною категорією художнього тексту.

Ключові слова: філологія, термінологія, суб'єктивна модальність, антропоцентризм, аксіологія, прагматика, стилістика, текстові категорії.
