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5В020500 **– филология: қазақ тілі мамандығы бойынша бакалавриат**

**СЕМИНАР САБАҚТАРЫ**

**LFSKEL 2302 – Language Features of Symbols of the Kazakh, English Languages**

2 курс, қ/б, күзгі семестр

**ПӘННІҢ ҚҰРЫЛЫМЫ, КӨЛЕМІ ЖӘНЕ МАЗМҰНЫ**

**Lecture themes:**

**Lecture 1**

1. What is a language?

Language has been studied for many years and from different perspectives. Ancient Greek philosophers elaborated on its proper use and purpose, modern scholars analyzed how it is produced and perceived. Everything that has so far been said about language can be ascribed to a certain general conception on talking about this issue. There are four such different approaches to talking about language: treating it as a social fact, as natural behavior, as a mental organ, or as an abstract objevt.

 Language as a social phenomenon was first described by Ferdinand de Saussure who claimed that providing only historic description of languages (as it was done at his time) should not be the only approach to this complex entity. He maintained that crucial information about language can be obtained from its common users, who in most cases do not posses practically any theoretical knowledge about their native tongue and yet are competent speakers. Moreover, as Saussure assumed language use reflects the contemporary structure which should enable synchronic language analysis (language used at a given point in time) in addition to diachronic analysis concerned with the past linguistic forms. The social aspect of using language, or speech was called *parole* by Saussure, while the underlying knowledge of linguistic structure was known as *langue*.

 Another view on language, mainly language as behavior partially derived from the behaviorist psychology and philosophy. Linguists representing this attitude focused on different languages used by various people rather than on linguistic universals, as they assumed that linguistic data is best gathered by observation of human behavior and interaction. Apart from that, it was assumed that meaning of sentences is not observable, thus it must be analyzed referring to introspective judgments. What follows this assumption is the definition of language provided by linguists who represent this approach. They maintain that language is: the totality of utterances that can be made in a speech community.

According to the third approach language started by Noam Chomsky language is a mental organ. Having noticed certain similarities among languages Chomsky expressed the view that they cannot be explained by environmental factors or be accidental and there needs to be a special mental ability embedded in human brains. He defined language by means of generative grammar: a finite set of rules which would enable users to make an unlimited number of expressions. Representatives of this approach support the view that it is not particular languages that should be analyzed, but the Universal Grammar, or the mental organ that allows humans to speak.

The last group is constituted by scholars who claim that language is an abstract object as it does not occupy any space or time. Thus this view is in opposition to Chomsky’s ideas, but linguists who agree with it emphasize that the analysis of the best abstract models of language can bring helpful effects on the entire area of study.

Language reflects not only reality, but also interprets it, creating special reality where man lives. A.M. Haidegger, an outstanding thinker of the last century named language “The house of reality”. In our thesis we considered language as a way by which we go through into nation’s mentality, into outlook of ancient people to the World and their society. Echoes of past times going through centuries are preserved in today’s proverbs, sayings, phraseological units, metaphors, symbols of culture and etc.

It’s known that person becomes ‘a person’ only when he acquires language and culture of his nation. All refinements of nation’s culture reflect in language, which is specific and unique. Huge part of information about the World comes to a person through linguistic channel that’s why person lives rather in the world of concepts, created by him for intellectual, spiritual and social needs, than in the world of objects and things; enormous information comes to him through a word and human’s success in society depends on how good he possessed the language, and not so much on possession of cultural speech, but rather on his abilities to understand secrets of language. Philosophers even say that understanding thoroughly a word which names any object or event, it’s possible to say that it become easier to capture the real world.

One of the most valuable source of the information about the culture and mentality of the nation are phraseological units, metaphors, symbols and others, because they keep the myths, legends and traditions of the target culture. Well-known Russian linguist B.A.Larin wrote: “Phraseological units always indirectly reflect the nation’s outlook, social system and ideology of its epoch”. The same can be said about metaphors, symbols and others.

**Lecture 2**

1. Language and thought

The relation of language to thought has been extensively discussed, but the discussion itself has generally been narrowly focused one, an dominated by a small set of questions: Does language determine thought? Does thought exist independent of language? Is the character of our experience of the world, and even our philosophical outlook, determined by the structure of our language? Almost invariably we soon reach a viewpoint that is referred to as the “Whorf hypothesis” or the “Sapir-Whorf hypothesis”, at which point a well-known passage from Sapir’s writings (rather than Whorf’s) is often cited: “The fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to large extend unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached.” Later, Sapir elaborated this idea with a dangerous linguistic flourish that was to be quoted frequently in order to attack this linkage of thought and language: “Such categories as number, gender, case, tense, … are not so much discovered in experience as imposed upon it because of the tyrannical hold that linguistic form has upon our orientation in the world.”

Glossary:

Extensively – общирно

Determine – определять

experience of the world

philosophical outlook

structure of language

viewpoint

“Sapir-Whorf hypothesis”

‘real world’

Sufficiently – достаточно

Distinct – отчетливый

Extend – простераться

Unconsciously – бессознательно

Merely – только

linguistic flourish

**Lecture 3**

Language and culture

It has been seen that language is much more than the external expression and communication of internal thoughts formulated independently of their verbalization. In demonstration the inadequacy and inappropriateness of such a view of language, attention has already been drawn to the ways in which one’s mother tongue is intimately and in all sorts of details related to the rest of one’s life in a community and to smaller groups within that community. This is true of all people and all languages; it is a universal fact about language.

Anthropologists speak of the relations between language and culture. It is, indeed more in accordance with reality to consider language as a part of culture. “Culture” is here being used in the anthropological sense to refer to all aspects of human life insofar as they are determined or conditioned by membership in a society. The fact that a man eats and drinks is not itself cultural; it is a biological necessity that he does so for the preservation of life. That he eats particular foods and refrains from eating other substances, though they may be perfectly edible and nourishing, and that he eats and drinks at particular times of day and in certain places are matters of culture, something “acquired by man as a member of society”, according to the now-classic definition of culture by the English anthropologist Sir Edward Burnett Tylor. As thus defined and envisaged, culture covers a very wide area of human life and behaviour; and language is manifestly a part, probably the most important part, of it.

Although the faculty of language acquisition and language use is innate and inherited, and there is legitimate debate over the extent of this innateness, every individual’s language is “acquired by man as a member of society”, along with and at the same time as other aspects of that society’s culture in which he is brought up. Society and language are mutually indispensable. Language can have developed only in a social setting, however this may have been structured, and human society in any form even remotely resembling what is known today or is recorded in history could be maintained only among people speaking and understanding a language in common use.

There is no reason to believe that animal behaviour has materially altered during the period available for the study of human history, say the last 5,000 years or so, except, of course, when man’s intervention by domestication or other forms of interference has itself brought about such alterations. Nor do members of the same species differ markedly in behaviour over widely scattered areas, again apart from differences resulting from human interference. Bird songs are reported to differ somewhat from place to place within species, but there is little other evidence for areal divergence. By contrast with this unity of animal behaviour, human cultures are as divergent as are human languages over the world, and they can and do change all the time, sometimes with great rapidity, as among the industrialized nations of the 20th century.

The processes of linguistic change and its consequences will be treated below. Here, cultural change in general and its relation to language will be considered. By far the greatest part of learned behaviour, which is what culture involves, is transmitted by vocal instruction, not by imitation. Some imitation is clearly involved, especially in infancy, in the learning process, but proportionately this is hardly significant.

Though the use of language, any skills, techniques, products, modes of social control, and so on can be explained, and the end results of anyone’s inventiveness can be made available to anyone else with the intellectual ability to grasp what is being said. Spoken language alone would thus vastly extend the amount of usable information in any human community and speed up the acquisition of new skills and the adaptation of techniques to changed circumstances or new environments. With the invention and diffusion of writing, this process widened immediately, and the relative permanence of writing made the diffusion of information still easier. Printing and the increase in literacy only further intensified this process. Modern techniques for almost instantaneous transmission of the written and spoken word all over the globe, together with the rapid translation services now available between the major languages in the world, have made it possible for usable knowledge of all sorts to be made accessible to people almost anywhere in the world in a very short time. This accounts for the great rapidity of scientific, technological, political, and social change in the contemporary world. All of this, whether ultimately for the good or ill of mankind, must be attributed to the dominant role of language in the transmission of culture.

Language is transmitted culturally; that is, it is learned. To a lesser extent it is taught, when parents deliberately encourage their children to talk and to respond to talk, correct their mistakes, and enlarge their vocabulary. But it must be emphasized that children very largely acquire their mother tongue (i.e., their first language) by “grammar construction” from exposure to a random collection of utterances that they encounter. What is classed as language teaching in school either relates to second-language acquisition or, insofar as it concerns the pupils’ first language, is in the main directed at reading and writing, the study of literature, formal grammar, and alleged standards of correctness, which may not be those of all the pupils’ regional or social dialects. All of what goes under the title of language teaching at school presupposes and relies on the prior knowledge of a first language in its basic vocabulary and essential structure, acquired before school age.

If language is transmitted as part of culture, it is no less true that culture as a whole is transmitted very largely through language, insofar as it is explicitly taught. The fact that mankind has a history in the sense that animals do not is entirely the result of language. So far as researchers can tell, animals learn through spontaneous imitation or through imitation taught by other animals. This does not exclude the performance of quite complex and substantial pieces of cooperative physical work, such as a beaver’s dam or an ant’s nest, nor does it preclude the intricate social organization of some species, such as bees. But it does mean that changes in organization and work will be the gradual result of mutation cumulatively reinforced by survival value; those groups whose behaviour altered in any way that increased their security from predators or from famine would survive in greater numbers than others. This would be an extremely slow process, comparable to the evolution of the different species themselves.

**Lecture 4**

**Semiotics**, also called **semiotic studies** or (in the [Saussurean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_de_Saussure) tradition) **semiology**, is the study of [signs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sign_%28semiotics%29) and sign processes ([semiosis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiosis)), indication, designation, likeness, [analogy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analogy), [metaphor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphor), [symbolism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbol), signification, and communication. Semiotics is closely related to the field of [linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), which, for its part, studies the structure and meaning of [language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language) more specifically. Semiotics is often divided into three branches:

* [**Semantics**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantics): Relation between signs and the things to which they refer; their *denotata*, or [meaning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meaning_%28linguistics%29)
* [**Syntactics**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syntax): Relations among signs in formal structures
* [**Pragmatics**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatics): Relation between signs and the effects they have on the people who use them

Semiotics is frequently seen as having important [anthropological](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthropology) dimensions; for example, [Umberto Eco](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umberto_Eco) proposes that every cultural phenomenon can be studied as communication.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-caesar-0) However, some semioticians focus on the [logical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logic) dimensions of the science. They examine areas belonging also to the [natural sciences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_science) – such as how organisms make predictions about, and adapt to, their semiotic [niche](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_niche) in the world (see [semiosis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiosis)). In general, semiotic theories take *signs* or [sign systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sign_systems) as their object of study: the communication of information in living organisms is covered in [biosemiotics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biosemiotics) or zoosemiosis.

Syntactics is the branch of semiotics that deals with the formal properties of signs and symbols.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-1) More precisely, syntactics deals with the "rules that govern how words are combined to form phrases and sentences."[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-2) [Charles Morris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_W._Morris) adds that semantics deals with the relation of signs to their [designata](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reference#Semantics) and the objects which they may or do denote; and, pragmatics deals with the [biotic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biotic) aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological, and sociological phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs.

##  Terminology

The term, which was spelled ***semeiotics***, derives from the [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek) σημειωτικός, (*sēmeiōtikos*), "observant of signs"[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-3) (from σημεῖον - *sēmeion*, "a sign, a mark"[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-4)) and it was first used in English by [Henry Stubbes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Stubbes)[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-5) in a very precise sense to denote the branch of medical science relating to the interpretation of signs. [John Locke](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Locke) used the terms **semeiotike** and **semeiotics** in Book 4, Chapter 21 of [*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An_Essay_Concerning_Human_Understanding) (1690). Here he explains how science can be divided into three parts:

All that can fall within the compass of human understanding, being either, first, the nature of things, as they are in themselves, their relations, and their manner of operation: or, secondly, that which man himself ought to do, as a rational and voluntary agent, for the attainment of any end, especially happiness: or, thirdly, the ways and means whereby the knowledge of both the one and the other of these is attained and communicated; I think science may be divided properly into these three sorts.

—Locke, 1823/1963, p. 174

Locke then elaborates on the nature of this third category, naming it Σημειωτικη (*Semeiotike*) and explaining it as "the doctrine of signs" in the following terms:

Nor is there any thing to be relied upon in Physick,[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-6) but an exact knowledge of medicinal physiology (founded on observation, not principles), semiotics, method of curing, and tried (not excogitated,[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-7) not commanding) medicines.

—Locke, 1823/1963, 4.21.4, p. 175

In the nineteenth century, [Charles Sanders Peirce](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Sanders_Peirce) defined what he termed "[semiotic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Sanders_Peirce#Philosophy:_logic.2C_or_semiotic)" (which he sometimes spelled as "semeiotic") as the "quasi-necessary, or formal doctrine of signs", which abstracts "what must be the characters of all signs used by...an intelligence capable of learning by experience",[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-8) and which is philosophical logic pursued in terms of signs and sign processes.[[10]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-9) Charles Morris followed Peirce in using the term "semiotic" and in extending the discipline beyond human communication to animal learning and use of signals.

[Ferdinand de Saussure](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_de_Saussure), however, founded his semiotics, which he called semiology, in the social sciences:

It is... possible to conceive of a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. It would form part of social psychology, and hence of general psychology. We shall call it semiology (from the Greek semeîon, 'sign'). It would investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them. Since it does not yet exist, one cannot say for certain that it will exist. But it has a right to exist, a place ready for it in advance. Linguistics is only one branch of this general science. The laws which semiology will discover will be laws applicable in linguistics, and linguistics will thus be assigned to a clearly defined place in the field of human knowledge.

—Cited in Chandler's "Semiotics For Beginners", Introduction.

##  Formulations

[Color-coding](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color_code) hot- and cold-water faucets is common in many cultures but, as this example shows, the coding may be rendered meaningless because of context. The two faucets were probably sold as a coded set, but the code is unusable (and ignored) as there is a single water supply.

Semioticians classify signs or sign systems in relation to the way they are transmitted (see [modality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modality_%28semiotics%29)). This process of carrying meaning depends on the use of [codes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_%28semiotics%29) that may be the individual sounds or letters that humans use to form words, the body movements they make to show attitude or emotion, or even something as general as the clothes they wear. To [coin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neologism) a word to refer to a *thing* (see [lexical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lexical_%28semiotics%29) words), the [community](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community) must agree on a simple meaning (a [denotative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denotation_%28semiotics%29) meaning) within their [language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language). But that word can transmit that meaning only within the language's grammatical structures and codes (see [syntax](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syntax) and [semantics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantics)). Codes also represent the [values](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value_%28semiotics%29) of the [culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture), and are able to add new shades of [connotation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Connotation_%28semiotics%29) to every aspect of life.

To explain the relationship between semiotics and [communication studies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication_studies), [communication](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication) is defined as the process of transferring data from a source to a receiver. Hence, communication theorists construct models based on codes, media, and contexts to explain the [biology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biology), [psychology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology), and [mechanics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mechanics) involved. Both disciplines also recognize that the technical process cannot be separated from the fact that the receiver must [decode](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decode_%28semiotics%29) the data, i.e., be able to distinguish the data as [salient](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salience_%28semiotics%29) and make meaning out of it. This implies that there is a necessary overlap between semiotics and communication. Indeed, many of the concepts are shared, although in each field the emphasis is different. In *Messages and Meanings: An Introduction to Semiotics*, [Marcel Danesi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcel_Danesi) (1994) suggested that semioticians' priorities were to study [signification](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sign_%28semiotics%29) first and communication second. A more extreme view is offered by [Jean-Jacques Nattiez](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Jacques_Nattiez) (1987; trans. 1990: 16), who, as a [musicologist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musicology), considered the theoretical study of communication irrelevant to his application of semiotics.

Semiotics differs from [linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics) in that it generalizes the definition of a sign to encompass signs in any medium or sensory modality. Thus it broadens the range of sign systems and sign relations, and extends the definition of language in what amounts to its widest analogical or metaphorical sense. Peirce's definition of the term "semiotic" as the study of necessary features of signs also has the effect of distinguishing the discipline from linguistics as the study of contingent features that the world's languages happen to have acquired in the course of human evolution.

Perhaps more difficult is the distinction between semiotics and the [philosophy of language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_language). In a sense, the difference lies between separate traditions rather than subjects. Different authors have called themselves "philosopher of language" or "semiotician". This difference does *not* match the separation between [analytic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analytic_philosophy) and [continental philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continental_philosophy). On a closer look, there may be found some differences regarding subjects. Philosophy of language pays more attention to [natural languages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_language) or to languages in general, while semiotics is deeply concerned about non-linguistic signification. Philosophy of language also bears a stronger connection to linguistics, while semiotics is closer to some of the [humanities](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanities) (including [literary theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_theory)) and to [cultural anthropology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_anthropology).

[Semiosis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiosis) or *semeiosis* is the process that forms meaning from any organism's apprehension of the world through signs. Scholars who have talked about semiosis in their sub-theories of semiotics include [C. S. Peirce](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Sanders_Peirce), [John Deely](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Deely), and [Umberto Eco](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umberto_Eco).

##  History

The importance of signs and signification has been recognized throughout much of the history of [philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy), and in psychology as well. [Plato](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato) and [Aristotle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle) both explored the relationship between signs and the world, and [Augustine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo) considered the nature of the sign within a [conventional](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_%28norm%29) system. These theories have had a lasting effect in [Western philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_philosophy), especially through [Scholastic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholasticism) philosophy. More recently, [Umberto Eco](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umberto_Eco), in his [*Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umberto_Eco#Semiotics), has argued that semiotic theories are implicit in the work of most, perhaps all, major thinkers.

Early theorists in this area include [Charles W. Morris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_W._Morris).[[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-10) [Max Black](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Black) attributes the work of Bertrand Russell as being seminal.[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-11)

##  Some important semioticians

* [Charles Sanders Peirce](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Sanders_Peirce) (1839–1914), a [noted logician](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_logic) who founded philosophical [pragmatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatism), defined *semiosis* as an irreducibly triadic process wherein something, as an object, logically determines or influences something as a sign to determine or influence something as an interpretation or *interpretant*, itself a sign, thus leading to further interpretants.[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-12) Semiosis is logically structured to perpetuate itself. The object can be quality, fact, rule, or even fictional ([Hamlet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_Hamlet)), and can be (1) *immediate* to the sign, the object as represented in the sign, or (2) *dynamic*, the object as it really is, on which the immediate object is founded. The interpretant can be (1) *immediate* to the sign, all that the sign immediately expresses, such as a word's usual meaning; or (2) *dynamic*, such as a state of agitation; or (3) *final* or *normal*, the ultimate ramifications of the sign about its object, to which inquiry taken far enough would be destined and with which any actual interpretant can at most coincide.[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-13) His *semiotic*[[15]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-14) covered not only artificial, linguistic, and symbolic signs, but also semblances such as kindred sensible qualities, and indices such as reactions. He came *circa* 1903[[16]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-15) to [classify any sign](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotic_elements_and_classes_of_signs_%28Peirce%29) by three interdependent trichotomies, intersecting to form ten (rather than 27) classes of sign.[[17]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-16) Signs also enter into various kinds of meaningful combinations; Peirce covered both semantic and syntactical issues in his speculative grammar. He regarded formal semiotic as logic *per se* and part of philosophy; as also encompassing study of arguments ([hypothetical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abductive_reasoning), [deductive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deductive_reasoning), and [inductive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inductive_reasoning)) and inquiry's methods including [pragmatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatism); and as allied to but distinct from logic's pure mathematics. For a summary of Peirce's contributions to semiotics, see Liszka (1996) or Atkin (2006).
* [Ferdinand de Saussure](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_de_Saussure) (1857–1913), the "father" of modern [linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), proposed a dualistic notion of signs, relating the *signifier* as the form of the word or phrase uttered, to the *signified* as the mental concept. It is important to note that, according to Saussure, the sign is completely arbitrary, i.e. there was no necessary connection between the sign and its meaning. This sets him apart from previous philosophers such as Plato or the Scholastics, who thought that there must be some connection between a signifier and the object it signifies. In his [Course in General Linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Course_in_General_Linguistics), Saussure himself credits the American linguist [William Dwight Whitney](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Dwight_Whitney) (1827–1894) with insisting on the arbitrary nature of the sign. Saussure's insistence on the arbitrariness of the sign has also influenced later philosophers and theorists such as [Jacques Derrida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Derrida), [Roland Barthes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roland_Barthes), and [Jean Baudrillard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Baudrillard). Ferdinand de Saussure coined the term semiologie while teaching his landmark "Course on General Linguistics" at the University of Geneva from 1906–11. Saussure posited that no word is inherently meaningful. Rather a word is only a "signifier," i.e. the representation of something, and it must be combined in the brain with the "signified," or the thing itself, in order to form a meaning-imbued "sign." Saussure believed that dismantling signs was a real science, for in doing so we come to an empirical understanding of how humans synthesize physical stimuli into words and other abstract concepts.
* [Jakob von Uexküll](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jakob_von_Uexk%C3%BCll) (1864–1944) studied the [sign processes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sign_process) in [animals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal). He borrowed the German word for 'environment', [*Umwelt*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umwelt), to describe the individual's subjective world, and he invented the concept of [functional circle](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Functional_circle&action=edit&redlink=1) (*Funktionskreis*) as a general model of sign processes. In his *Theory of Meaning* (*Bedeutungslehre*, 1940), he described the semiotic approach to [biology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biology), thus establishing the field that is now called [biosemiotics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biosemiotics).
* [Valentin Voloshinov](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valentin_Voloshinov) (1895–1936) was a [Soviet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union)/Russian linguist, whose work has been influential in the field of [literary theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_theory) and [Marxist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marxism) [theory of ideology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideology). Written in the late 1920s in the USSR, Voloshinov's *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (tr.: Marksizm i Filosofiya Yazyka) developed a counter-Saussurean linguistics, which situated language use in social process rather than in an entirely decontexualized Saussurean *langue*.
* [Louis Hjelmslev](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Hjelmslev) (1899–1965) developed a formalist approach to Saussure's structuralist theories. His best known work is *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*, which was expanded in *Résumé of the Theory of Language*, a formal development of *glossematics*, his scientific calculus of language.
* [Charles W. Morris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_W._Morris) (1901–1979). In his 1938 *Foundations of the Theory of Signs,* he defined semiotics as grouping the triad [syntax](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syntax), [semantics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantics), and [pragmatics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pragmatics). Syntax studies the interrelation of the signs, without regard to meaning. Semantics studies the relation between the signs and the objects to which they apply. Pragmatics studies the relation between the sign system and its human (or animal) user. Unlike his mentor [George Herbert Mead](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Herbert_Mead), Morris was a behaviorist and sympathetic to the [Vienna Circle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vienna_Circle) [positivism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positivism) of his colleague [Rudolf Carnap](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf_Carnap). Morris was accused by [John Dewey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Dewey)[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiotics#cite_note-17) of misreading Peirce.
* [Thure von Uexküll](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thure_von_Uexk%C3%BCll) (1908–2004), the "father" of modern [psychosomatic medicine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychosomatic_medicine), developed a diagnostic method based on semiotic and biosemiotic analyses.
* [Roland Barthes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roland_Barthes) (1915–1980) was a French literary theorist and semiotician. He would often critique pieces of cultural material to expose how bourgeois society used them to impose its values upon others. For instance, the portrayal of wine drinking in French society as a robust and healthy habit would be a bourgeois ideal perception contradicted by certain realities (i.e. that wine can be unhealthy and inebriating). He found semiotics useful in conducting these critiques. Barthes explained that these bourgeois cultural myths were second-order signs, or connotations. A picture of a full, dark bottle is a sign, a signifier relating to a signified: a fermented, alcoholic beverage – wine. However, the bourgeois take this signified and apply their own emphasis to it, making ‘wine’ a new signifier, this time relating to a new signified: the idea of healthy, robust, relaxing wine. Motivations for such manipulations vary from a desire to sell products to a simple desire to maintain the status quo. These insights brought Barthes very much in line with similar Marxist theory.
* [Algirdas Julien Greimas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algirdas_Julien_Greimas) (1917–1992) developed a structural version of semiotics named *generative semiotics*, trying to shift the focus of discipline from signs to systems of signification. His theories develop the ideas of Saussure, Hjelmslev, [Claude Lévi-Strauss](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_L%C3%A9vi-Strauss), and [Maurice Merleau-Ponty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice_Merleau-Ponty).
* [Thomas A. Sebeok](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_A._Sebeok) (1920–2001), a student of Charles W. Morris, was a prolific and wide-ranging American semiotician. Though he insisted that animals are not capable of language, he expanded the purview of semiotics to include non-human signaling and communication systems, thus raising some of the issues addressed by [philosophy of mind](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_mind) and coining the term [zoosemiotics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoosemiotics). Sebeok insisted that all communication was made possible by the relationship between an organism and the environment it lives in. He also posed the equation between semiosis (the activity of interpreting signs) and life – the view that has further developed by [Copenhagen-Tartu biosemiotic school](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copenhagen-Tartu_biosemiotic_school).
* [Juri Lotman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juri_Lotman) (1922–1993) was the founding member of the [Tartu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tartu)-[Estonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estonia) (or Tartu-Moscow) [Semiotic School](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tartu-Moscow_Semiotic_School). He developed a semiotic approach to the study of culture and established a communication model for the study of text semiotics. He also introduced the concept of the [semiosphere](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semiosphere). Among his Moscow colleagues were [Vladimir Toporov](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Toporov), [Vyacheslav Vsevolodovich Ivanov](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vyacheslav_Vsevolodovich_Ivanov), and [Boris Uspensky](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boris_Uspensky).
* [Umberto Eco](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umberto_Eco) (1932–present) made a wider audience aware of semiotics by various publications, most notably *A Theory of Semiotics* and his [novel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novel), [*The Name of the Rose*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Name_of_the_Rose), which includes applied semiotic operations. His most important contributions to the field bear on interpretation, encyclopedia, and model reader. He has also criticized in several works (*A theory of semiotics*, *La struttura assente*, *Le signe*, *La production de signes*) the "iconism" or "iconic signs" (taken from Peirce's most famous triadic relation, based on indexes, icons, and symbols), to which he purposes four modes of sign production: recognition, ostension, replica, and invention.
* [Eliseo Verón](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliseo_Ver%C3%B3n) (1935–present) developed his "Social Discourse Theory" inspired in the Peircian conception of "Semiosis".
* The Mu Group ([Groupe µ](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groupe_%C2%B5)) (founded 1967) developed a structural version of [rhetorics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhetorics), and the [visual semiotics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_semiotics).

**Lecture 5**

*Symbol and its types*

*Language symbols*

*Speech symbols*

*Conceptual (metaphysical) symbols,*

*Arbitrary (hypothetical) symbols*

*Hermetic (esoteric) symbols*

Symbol is a multi-notion conventional sign which represents, apart from its inherent and immediate designatum, an essentially different, usually more abstract designatum, connected with the former by a logical link. (Shelestiuk 1997: 125)[[1]](#endnote-1) In semantic terms, in symbols we deal with a hierarchy of meanings, where the direct meaning constitutes the first layer of sense and serves as a basis for the indirect (secondary) meaning - the second layer of sense, both of them united under the same designator (a name, a visual image, a significant object or person, etc.)

In (Shelestiuk 1997) I discussed the indispensable characteristics of symbols, which are, in fact, the complex structure of a symbol and the equally important status of meanings in it. Other important, if not indispensable, features of symbols are: imaginativeness; motivation; immanent polysemy; archetypal nature; integration into the structure of secondary semiotic systems and universality in various cultures. I will not dwell here on each of these features, but regard some of them as I outline the essentials of the theory of symbols.

There may be more than one secondary concept associated with the immediate designatum in symbol. This feature is termed immanent polysemy in (Shelestiuk 1997); Philip Wheelwright (1968: 220) seems to mean the same when he speaks of ambiguity and vagueness of symbols. Immanent polysemy of a symbol means its innumerable implications: a cluster of conceptually disparate meanings related to a symbol (for example, fire – hearth and home; masculine principle; passion; the sun; purification); a circle of equonymous meanings (fire – purification – funeral pyre, purgatory, Gehenna); or a sense perspective - a chain of meanings, where, as the thought moves away from the direct meaning, links of abstract metaphors / metonymies may be followed by links of their concrete realization in other domains (fire - vigor - masculine principle - fertilization; fire – passion - heart; fire - the sun – God - spirit).

Among symbols we specify language and speech symbols. Language symbols are fixed in people’s mind as stable associative complexes, existing in the lexical meaning of a word as ‘a symbolic aura’, i. e. a number of semes of cultural-stereotype and archetypal or mythological character. Cultural-stereotype symbols are contemporary and comprehensible for all the representatives of a culture, with a transparent logical connection between a direct and a secondary meaning, the latter being easily deducible. Archetypal symbols, consistent with K. G. Jung’s archetypes, are symbols based on the most ancient or primary ideas of the ambient world. In archetypes the connection between the direct and secondary meaning is often darkened.

Examples of cultural stereotypes: e.g. rose – beauty, love; wall – obstacle, restriction of freedom, estrangement; mountain – spiritual elevation, also courage associated with overcoming difficulties; way – movement in time, progress, course of life. Examples of archetypes: the sky – father; the earth – mother; egg - primordial embryo, out of which the world developed; snake - god of the underground world, of the dead; bird – mediator between the earth and the heaven, this world and the other world; tree (of life), mountain (of life) – the world itself.

Unlike language symbols, speech symbols are variables, rather than constants. Here the direct meaning of a word is used to denote the author’s subjective, individual ideas. Thus, in literature the cultural-stereotype and archetypal contents of a word are specifically interpreted.

For example, the archetypal meaning of the river is linear time of human life, where the source is the world of souls, the middle part is the course of earthly life, and the lower reaches are the world of the dead. The archetypal meaning of the sea is primordial chaos, the world before creation, the abode of the creator or many deities, the eternal cycle of birth and death (interpretations from the second volume of (Tokarev 1988: 374, 249)). These archetypal meanings are originally transformed by T. S. Eliot in ‘The Dry Salvages’ to elaborate on his idea of time, measured by human life, and the infinity, and on the dialectic of human ‘microcosm’ and ‘macrocosm’ around him (‘the river is within us, the sea is all about us’). (Arinstein 1984: 268)

Another example: the cultural-stereotype meaning of wall - obstacle, restriction of freedom, barrier, estrangement - in ‘Mending Wall’ by Robert Frost is transformed into prejudices based on the primitive instinct of self-preservation.

The most interesting cases in literature are conceptual (metaphysical) symbols, arbitrary (hypothetical) symbols and hermetic (esoteric) symbols, specific to the literary current of symbolism.

Conceptual symbols are recurrent images of an individual author embodying certain philosophic ideas, which build up his picture of the world, such as T. S. Eliot’s the waste land, the hollow men, W. B. Yeats’ Byzantium, Wallace Stevens’ cry, E. E. Cummings’ now and others.

Arbitrary symbols are those which admit of numerous interpretations owing to too broad a context or to a high stochasticity factor in a text.[[2]](#endnote-2) For example, the symbol of a blackbird from Wallace Stevens’ ‘Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird’ admits of at least 13 interpretations, and even so, the context of each of the thirteen stanzas is insufficient for its unambiguous treatment.

Hermetic (esoteric) symbols are conventional signs, understood only by the few with pertinent knowledge of a code. Such symbols were characteristic, for instance, of medieval alchemy. With respect to literature they are part and parcel of symbolism – the literary trend which sought to evoke through symbols, understood by the initiated, subtle relations and affinities between the material and spiritual worlds. Many symbols of W. B. Yeats are hermetic, as in ‘The Second Coming’, where hawks and falcons (primitive instincts) hide the moon (ancient civilization, intellect) and herald the rise of a new civilization (the interpretation is from (Brooks 1977)).

To understand the three above-mentioned types of symbols to the fullest one must look into the correlation of the author’s individual thesaurus with his world outlook, in other words, call into play what was termed ‘paradigmatic context’ by Tzvetan Todorov (1982).

**Lecture 6**

### Concept and symbol

A concept is largely viewed as a complex of objective logical content and an aura of cultural-stereotype and non-discursive archetypal associations related to it. Using Claude Levi-Strauss’s structuralist model we can represent concepts as nodal points in the ‘picture of the world’ of an individual or a social community. These nodal points are connected together paradigmatically and syntagmatically by relatively stable, yet dynamically developing relationships.

The core of a concept includes a denotatum (i.e. ‘extension’, the range of objects to which a concept and a correspondent name may apply) and a designatum (i.e. ‘intension’, or signification, the internal content of a concept, the inventory of properties that constitute its complete formal definition or description).The periphery of a concept is constituted by its implications – the cultural-stereotype and archetypal associations.

Alongside with the objective logical and cultural-stereotype content, concepts possess the emotive-evaluative (axiological) content, owing to which people form specific attitudes to objects and phenomena and build up hierarchies of values of the material and spiritual world. Two other aspects of a concept are cognitive and pragmatic (praxiological) significances, which reflect the principles of cognition (e.g. mythological, religious, scientific determinism) and the practice of using a given concept in accordance with the accumulated knowledge. The emotive-evaluative, cognitive and pragmatic components of concepts enable us to complete the conceptual ‘picture of the world’ - which is actually the psychic image of material world - to the level of ideology, which includes a conceptual structure of common beliefs and convictions; a hierarchy of values, ideals; principles of cognition; the range of application of concepts, etc. It is worth mentioning, that an individual’s ideology is largely determined by the mentality of an ethno-social group to which he or she belongs, by the Jungian ‘collective conscious’ and subconscious, i.e. habitual and latent mechanisms of thinking, which people unwittingly apply in their day-to-day life (Grineva 2003: 390).

At present many scholars maintain, that, since a word meaning reflects a concept, it has a structure identical with the latter. However, a word meaning is more restricted in content than a concept, inasmuch as it is merged with a certain name, possessing a certain pattern of grammatical employment, and used in concrete contexts and discourses, which cut off associations, irrelevant for a situation. Nevertheless, like a concept, a meaning of a word possesses such components as denotatum; designatum (signification) - consisting of a generic ‘hyperseme’ and specific ‘hyposemes’(differential semes); the semes of implication (strict, loose and negative); and emotive-evaluative semes (Yartseva 1990, Nikitin 1983).

Symbols are subdivided into simple (formal semiotic) and complex (cultural). A formal semiotic symbol denotes a) Ch. Pierce’s conventional sign, a unity of material designator and an ideal designatum, corresponding to a class of objects (denotata, or referents); b) a graphic character of notation (e.g. H2O; ©; ®; e2-e4). A complex symbol is, on the one hand, the latent aura of cultural-stereotype, archetypal and individual symbolic semes implied by a concept; and on the other hand - a sign, the designator of which is an object or phenomenon of reality, a mental image, a picture, a scheme, or a correspondent name (word), and the designatum is complex: the primary designatum is a correspondent concrete, image-bearing notion and the secondary designatum (-a) is a generalized, abstract notion or idea. This dual nature of the complex symbol permits to describe it either a noumenon (the ‘essence’ of a concept) or a phenomenon (an objective manifestation of a concept). Probably, owing to this duality there are two basic models of the complex symbol in the philosophic thought: in E. Cassirer’s model of ‘symbolic forms’ symbol is but a transformed form of a concept, clothed in this or that material vehicle; in Hegelian model it is a material object through which the abstract meaning, different from its concrete meaning, shows itself.

The model, which makes its reference point the material vehicle of a symbol (designator), which possesses a complex of meanings (designata), is represented below.

Figure 1. The structure of a complex symbol

Designator

Primary designatum

Secondary designatum 1

Secondary designatum 2

Secondary designatum 3

Secondary designatum 4

The model, which views a symbol as a function of a concept, i.e. an aura of its cultural-stereotype and archetypal associations, permits to specify several kinds of symbols according to the layers of consciousness1:

*1) Prototypal symbols – the primary generalizations of objective contents of reality, emerging in early childhood*. According to G. Duby, the deepest mental layer is connected with biological reactions and reflexes of a human being. This layer is immobile, or nearly immobile, as it changes together with the evolution of the biological characteristics of man (Duby 1996: 20). Here belong perceptive reactions to light and darkness, warmth and cold, colors, quantities, symmetry/ asymmetry, space properties, such as up and down, back and front, narrowness and width, spatial characteristics of objects, sounds, rhythm, scents, etc. Owing to these reactions a child’s mind is able to fixate prototypes - primary images of material world in day-to-day existence: the images of his or her home, crib, toys, trees in the window, etc., as well as the prototypal embodiments of emotions – fear (a Witch), pleasure and beauty (a Fairy), etc. A prototype acts as the primary-image denotatum of a concept. In prototypal symbols a concrete image-bearing notion and the corresponding emotion are merged together; in fact, there is no other generalized notion but emotion and evaluation, associated with this concrete notion.

*2) Archetypal (mythological) symbols* are based on the most ancient mythological vision of the world. Like the previous kind, they originate from prototypes – the primary subconscious images; in fact, they overlap with prototypal symbols. What distinguishes them from the latter is that archetypal symbols are often incorporated in a myth - a narrative structure which seeks to connect objects and explain the material world with the help of mythological ideas. Most archetypes are universal images, present in all cultures, which fact gives ground for the assumption that they are inborn (Jung 1996a, Frye 1973, Hübner 1996, Eliade 1996).

Archetypes include: a) archetypal images, motives and symbols (deluge, sowing and reaping, tree, mountain, river, primordial ocean, etc.); b) K. Jung’s personified archetypes of Animus and Anima, hero, fool, wise old man/ woman, child, shadow, Prometheus, as well as other personal and professional archetypes (mother, father; craftsman, peasant, teacher, warrior, etc.).

Archetypal symbols are characterized by a denotative ‘cleft’ in the designatum - the primary designatum and the secondary designatum appear. Unlike the immediate connection between a notion and its emotive-evaluative quality in prototypal symbols, the link between notions in archetypal symbols is provided by mythological metaphor or metonymy (Shelestiuk 2003). Compare the archetypal symbolic meanings of *sun, moon, stars* – deities, persons or souls, faces, ‘eyes’ in the sky; various geometric figures, e.g. *circle* – the sun, the sky, infinity; *tree, mountain, river* as models of the world; elements, e.g. *water* – god(-dess), mother, feminine principle, primordial waters, and others.

Archetypal symbols often reflect such features of mythological thinking as animism (anthropomorphic, zoomorphic), totemism, they are characterized by irrational syncretism of notions (bricolage), concreteness of secondary designata. Archetypal meanings of concepts are hidden in the depths of human mind, but they appear in many modern symbols.

*3) Stereotype symbols* represent the layer of trivial logic of the majority of people of a given community, reflect their common mentality. The bases of these symbols are stereotypes - schematic images (‘schemas’) and beliefs, sometimes emotionally colored, which result from the generalization of accumulated knowledge about objects, gained from common experiences shared by members of a community. Growing from prototypes and archetypes, stereotypes divest themselves of syncretism and mythological analogy; they are based on retrieval of essential properties of various instances of the same object, and on causal logic. They are collective psychological phenomena and also social tools, as they are inculcated in individuals during their education to regulate their way of thinking and conduct (Yadov 1970: 134). Though stereotypes are largely determined by the inertia of tradition and convention, they are more ‘mobile’ than archetypes and tend to change gradually from generation to generation along with the social development.

In stereotype symbols the ground of transposition from the primary designatum to secondary abstract designata is transparent; it is a natural logical (metaphorical, metonymical) link between them.Stereotype symbolic semes of a concept are usually numerous, so stereotype symbols may have many secondary designata, e.g. water may symbolize purity, cleansing and renovation, fertility, ‘juice of life’ - hence the power that does good; less frequently it symbolizes danger, death and destruction as an engulfing and raging element; it may also symbolize dilution, slowness, dormancy (hence introversion), stagnation (passiveness), coolness, depth (emotion), mystery, etc. (Biedermann 1996).

Stereotypes may, like archetypes, be similar in all cultures, or they may have the national-ethnic character - in this case they are determined by natural, geographic, historical, religious and cultural conditions – e.g. birch as a national symbol of Russia; shamrock as a national symbol of Ireland. To this group also belong emblematic symbols, specific of communities and various social groups, the outfits and peculiar trappings in public institutions, e.g. Eton and Harrow schools in Britain.

The first three groups of symbols are fundamental, they provide life settings and values for members of a community, affect their unconscious and conscious behavior 2.

*4) Ideological symbols* arise from the ideological layer of a concept, based upon the meanings of fundamental layers. These symbols, alongside with abstract concepts, are terms of philosophies and theories. Their secondary designata are abstract ideas; their primary designata are also generalized concepts, although more ‘concrete’, image-bearing than secondary ones. Such symbols may appear in various forms of public consciousness – philosophy (metaphysics), ethics, aesthetics, religion, mystic teachings, social and political life, etc. - with various meanings. For example, water represents ‘arche’, a primary element, in Thales of Miletus’s philosophy; in Christianity - baptism, i.e. death of a pagan and spiritual birth of a Christian. From the socio-political perspective water represents, among other things, one of the victuals necessary for survival; hence the issue of water shortage in some places, with the whole range of social and cultural consequences - for example, the argument, that water as the essence of life is sacred, and its control by external profit-making agencies is a violation (as in V. Strang’s book *The Meaning of Water*)3.

*5) Individual (subjective) symbols* are those, in which a sign, its primary and secondary designata are used to codify individual ideas. Their authors specifically interpret prototype, stereotype, archetypal or conceptual contents.

Symbols and concepts are media of cultural, historical, social and individual meanings of things. Through them the human mind ascends from concrete to abstract and descends from abstract to concrete, cognizing the meaning of things. They affect the development of human psyche in a global way, as they embrace all levels of consciousness – from the prototypal structures of the subconscious to the level of ideology. As the historian S. Kara-Murza puts it, ‘symbols form their own world, where they cooperate or compete – by the effort of our conscience and imagination. So we can live in the material world spiritually, organizing our day-to-day life under the influence of symbols … Each of us settles their personal biography with the help of symbols, so that it fits into the time and space where we happen to live… The world of symbols legitimizes human life, provides it with meaning and order… It also regulates the history of a nation or community, connecting its past, present and future. With respect to the past, symbols create a common memory, thus making people a nation; similar to how brothers and sisters become a family, united by the symbols of their past – however vague and fragmentary – such as the mother’s song, the father going to war, the grandfather’s death. With respect to the future, symbols unite people into a nation, indicating where to direct their steps and what to fear. Through symbols we feel our connection with our ancestors and descendants; this imparts immortality to human life, and permits us to accept our personal death calmly and consciously. We acquire a ‘Cosmic’ feeling, supporting us in our troubles and the vanity of everyday life’ (Kara-Murza 2002: 521).

Two important features of concepts and symbols are their constancy (stability, relative immutability) and universality in various cultures - concepts and symbols are specific ‘constants’ of culture, which tend to preserve their semantics (Stepanov 1997: 77). At the same time, both concepts and symbols are capable of change and variability in time and space. The dialectic of universality/ variability, as well as immutability/ changeability of concepts and symbols, is the subject of our further discussion.

**Lecture 7**

### Intertextual Existence, Archetypal and Stereotype Essence

Universality of concepts and symbols in various cultures is determined by two factors: *intertextuality* of their existence and *archetypality and conventionality (*‘*stereotypeness)* of their nature.

Concept and symbol are units of *intertextual communication –* they are conveyed across cultures and generations through ‘cultural texts’. Intertextuality, as many scholars see it, is reference to individuals’ entire cultural experience and linguistic memory, but not only intended or unintended citations and allusions to earlier literary, mythological, historical, etc. sources. The fixed components of these experience and memory ensure that external objects and events resonate with our conceptual vision of them. Of special significance is the linguistic memory, which, according to B. Gasparov, presents ‘a colossal conglomerate, accrued and developed during the whole lifetime of a man. Every thought that a man wishes to express, at the very moment of its generation, wakens this mnemonic citation conglomerate and actualizes those of its components, which we for some reason associate with the image of our future thought’ (Gasparov 1996: 106). Our linguistic memory contains 1) formal constants: a) ‘communicative fragments’ (words, word combinations, whole phrases) together with the images that they bear, b) ‘communicative contours’ (syntactical, rhythmical, melodic, stylistic, genre, verbal potentials of utterances), c) ‘communicative space’ (the discourse, in the entirety of communicative settings, purpose of communication, interlocutors in their social roles, statuses and identities, etc.); 2) constants of content associated with this or that ‘linguistic image’ (the terminology belongs to B. Gasparov). Thus, intro-cultural, cross-cultural and historical intertextuality is the first factor determining universality of conceptual and symbolic contents.

*Archetypal and stereotype nature* of cultural signs, such as concepts and symbols, is the second factor of their universality. Archetypes are ancient mythological structures, universal to mankind. According to S. S. Averintsev, ‘identical in character archetypal images and motives … are discovered in mythologies and arts of cultures, never contacting with each other, directly or indirectly, which fact excludes their explanation by mere borrowing’ (Averintsev 1994b: 110).

It should be noted, that there is some ‘mysticism’ about the term ‘archetype’. In fact, in modern science it is frequently viewed as obsolete, and practically no research is conducted on this phenomenon. However, there are a few hypotheses, both materialist and idealist, about the nature of archetypes, dating back to the first half of the 20th century.

C. G. Jung’s believed that human thinking, like nature, is determined by universal natural laws, and archetypes are the primary patterns (gestalts) of unconscious images, systems of psychic settings, which are somehow incorporated in brain structure. They are inherited by the offspring as the information about mental structure of individuals and whole ethnoses. According to Jung, archetypes are the chthonic part of human soul, through which the soul is connected to nature, or at least, the connection of the soul to nature (earth) and the world is most conspicuous in archetypes. In other words, archetypes manifest ‘the influence of the earth and its laws’ on human soul. On the one hand, they form very strong instinctive preconceptions, on the other hand they greatly help in the process of instinctive adaptation’ (Jung 1996b: 136).

Although at present there are no proofs of archetypes as hereditary material structures, there is a possibility of theoretical substantiation of Jung’s hypothesis from genetic and neurobiological perspectives. According to I. I. Kondrashin, ‘neuron and neuropile structure of cerebrum is the material basis - metaphorically, the hardware - for all its reflex-algorithmic arches and analytical functional centers (software), and ultimately for human mentality in general’ (cited in (Grineva 2003: 71)). The primary composition of these arches and centers depends on the genome inherited by a human from his ancestors; it forms the elementary basis for human mentality (possibly, with archetypes as its components), although the qualitative ‘filling’ of this mentality largely depends on individual upbringing, education and personal experience (Grineva 2003: 72).

The idealist view postulates the existence of certain universals of content – the meanings which thread through cultures, conditioning unity of conceptual world models and symbolism (Jung 1996a, Frye 1973, Hübner 1996, Eliade 1996). These meanings are called, in hermeneutic tradition, ‘anagogical’, i.e. pertaining to the fourth and ultimate spiritual meaning, found beyond the literal, allegorical, and moral meanings of objects of reality or texts. Alternatively, in R. Otto’s theological tradition, they are called ‘numinous’, i.e. supernatural, suggestive of the presence of divinity, which a human being contemplates in objects of nature.

In idealist view archetypes are images of the subconscious, replicating real objects, but both images and real objects ascend to ultimate ideal anagogical senses. Archetypal symbols of *the city, the garden, of food and drink, of the quest or journey, of light and darkness, of sexual fulfillment in the form of marriage, etc.* are not the forms of being a man creates because nature induces him to – *they are themselves forms of nature*. On the other hand, nature, in its entirety, is more like a *living body*, than something inanimate. Therefore archetypes of physical world, such as *sea, wood, meadow, sunrise, sunset, seasons, etc.,* and archetypes of human life, such as *sowing, harvesting, birth, initiation, marriage, death –* are connected as units of the same order (Frye 1973). K. Hübner suggested that the purpose of universal ‘numinous forces’ is to bring order into the world, so they reveal themselves in human society as mythological concepts (1996: 120).

No matter how we explain archetypes - by the workings of numinous (anagogical) forces, or by the hypothetic natural mechanism of archetype inheritance, they seem to exist and determine the universality of many symbols and basic abstract concepts in human society. There are numerous correlations of images and ideas in cultures, which are not explained by intertextuality, borrowing from one culture into another, or translation from one generation to another.

**Lecture 8**

### The problem of a stable kernel in concepts and symbols. Evolution of meaning

Poststructuralist tendencies have shifted the accents from archetype and stereotype-based *universality* of concepts and symbols to their *variability.* Deconstruction critics believe that there is neither firm foundation for thinking (meaning ascription, understanding), nor its end - in the form of finding the final meaning, or ‘sense’. Thinking cannot arrive at a final statement about its subject, it is always thinking it anew.

Jacques Derrida uses metaphors of ‘presence’ and ‘differAnce’ to reason about this: presence is the illusion of original sense, inalienable from its sign; differAnce is what exists in reality, the trace of meaning, trailing its way from text to text - which is separated in time, delayed to the future and always different from the original meaning (Derrida 2000b: 18, 2000c: 321). He claims that inaccurate reiterations, substitutions, transformations are always involved in the history of meaning (and in history as such), ‘the beginning of which can be awoken, and the end - anticipated’ owing to the illusory ‘presence’ of meaning. However, ‘meaning’ is *subjective reality* – it has never been itself, but derived from inconceivable beginnings and replaced by signs. So the sign does not replace anything prior to it that is stable and static. The center (i.e. the sense) is not a fixed place, but a function, permitting an interminable play of sign replacers. Thus the central – intrinsic and transcendental – designatum is never fully present outside a system of differences. The absence of a transcendental designatum expands the field of meaning and the ‘play of meanings’ ad infinitum (Derrida 2000a).

The aptness of a word to change its meaning has been illustrated already by Socrates, in his arguments about the essence of things. He made his interlocutors define certain concepts, and then, ‘immersing’ these concepts into new and new contexts, made them contradict their initial definitions – thus proving their invalidity. The original knowledge of an interlocutor thus ‘deconstructed’, there was no return to the incipient meaning of a concept, as it was erased by an internal shift (differAnce). According to Derrida, the ‘sense’ remains as a trace, which in vain ‘calls for finding its meaning’ (Stegmeier 1999).

To prove his point Derrida alludes to the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss’ argument that myth has no common semantic source, that ‘everything begins with structural relationships’(Derrida 2000a: 457). It is remarkable, that initially Levi-Strauss was not an agnostic of the intrinsic meaning - he believed that this meaning should be sought in nature. In this he proceeded from the theory of the ‘nature / culture’ opposition, elaborated upon by ancient sophists. This theory asserted that nature determines the ‘essence’, or ‘sense’, of things; its concepts are universal and independent of culture. On the other hand, culture embraces concepts, which depend on the system of norms adopted in a given society and undergo modifications from one social structure to another. However Levi-Strauss ‘met with a scandal’, when he discovered that certain universal anthropological concepts, e.g. incest prohibition (perhaps also other prohibitions, such as food taboos, various taboos that function during important life events such as birth, marriage, and death etc.), are grounded both in nature and culture – they are biologically determined and also reflected in the system of norms and taboos. Since there is no clear-cut demarcation line between natural and social phenomena, nature cannot be a criterion for deriving the intrinsic meaning of concepts. It can be inferred, reasons Derrida, that a meaning is a mere function, relationship in the network of related anthropological concepts. The example of the incest prohibition demonstrates the transphenomenal nature of meaning of social and cultural concepts, their inscrutability and, eventually, absence of their ontological foundation (Derrida 2000a: 453).

 Other poststructuralist thinkers speak on the subject of meaning in the same vein. The apologist of ‘syntagmatic thinking’ Roland Barthes believes that the postmodern age has transformed a sign to the effect that it has no designatum whatsoever - it assumes a meaning dependent on the signs neighboring it. In his article *Imagination of Sign* Barthes claims that syntagmatic thinking is more progressive than symbolic thinking, which experiences the reality - sees its meaning - as a ‘fathomless many-faced abyss’ appearing through external forms. It is also more progressive than paradigmatic thinking, which, in the spirit of C. Levi-Strauss, views a meaning as a ‘distinctive function’ – a relation of a sign with other virtual signs, similar and distinct at the same time. Syntagmatic thinking also equates meaning with the relationships between signs, but not in language as an abstract system, but in actual speech. Signs in speech are free from the burden of intrinsic meaning – rather, they name whatever a speaker chooses to name by them. Moreover, their neighborhood with other designators develops their conventional semantics, so syntagmatic thinking is pragmatically-oriented and developing. Finally, this type of thinking stimulates ‘the pleasure of reading’ because any text is perceived as a play of designators (Barthes 1989: 250-251).

 The theory of intertextuality propounded by Julie Kristeva also denies cognition of the ultimate sense (or the intrinsic meaning) of signs – as signs are used in various contexts it becomes blurred, and generally tends to be lost. In pan-intertextual perspective a concept emerges as an unstable phenomenon, prone to modifications of its designatum - in particular, of its symbolic semantics, and variability of denotata. The reference of a sign to objects and phenomena of reality is replaced by a textual system with its own rules of reference; and as the narrative is perceived as a textual mosaic, any text is opened up to ongoing commentaries. Instead of meaning, a researcher should focus on citation, intra- and intertextual dialogue of meanings, and their permanent modifications.

Many scholars, however, warn against the understanding of intertextuality the global dilution of actual sense in a perspective of citations or syntagmatic interactions. For example, G. Agger points out that an ongoing regression will entail a loss of perspective, to the point where origin, context, and purpose fade and results become uncertain. This view is supported by A. Gemzøe’s statement that intertextuality involves a critical confrontation with 1) the subject, sense and pragmatic function of any text, 2) representation of reality as the main function of any sign, 3) the essence of narrative and 4) the work as an autonomous entity (Agger 1999).

True, intertextuality is present in any actualized sign - it results from the inducement of information by the language memory of a speaker or reader, dependent on certain extralinguistic and linguistic contexts. To repeat the quotation from B. Gasparov, ‘every thought that a man wishes to express, at the very moment of its generation, wakens this mnemonic citation conglomerate and actualizes those of its components, which we for some reason associate with the image of our future thought’ (Gasparov 1996: 106). This phenomenon may be explained by *mimesis –* the imitative representation of the world by various semiotic systems - lying at the core of sign production (simeosis) 4. With reference to texts, mimesis entails that any text is a ‘non-disposable double’ (J. Derrida’s term) that always stands in relation to what has preceded it. We may agree with that, with a reservation that there is an essential difference between an analytical interpretation of a text, which seeks to elicit its invariable subjects, ideas and implications, and its ‘attitudinal’ interpretation, which will purposefully bring out some of its less conspicuous semantics and slide over some of its marked points.

We have pointed out earlier in this article that intertextuality is an important aspect of the existence of any concept and symbol. There is no denying that a concept, designated by a certain sign, is not static, many semes of ‘loose’ implication are subject to a kaleidoscopic shift of priority, new semes emerge, archaic semes are forgotten, connotations change. This is caused both by changes in extralinguistic reality, and by intertextuality. But there is a stable core in a concept – it is the core of its designatum (hyperseme and differential semes), as well as semes of strict implication. This stability is evident in names of natural kinds and natural phenomena; they have not changed essentially throughout centuries and are little dependent on a culture or society. For example, it is hard to imagine that the core semes of the concept ‘river’ will ever radically change; it will always be ‘any natural stream of water that flows in a channel with defined banks’. Encyclopaedia Britannica points out, that modern usage includes rivers that are multichanneled, intermittent, or ephemeral in flow and channels that are practically bankless. Yet such cases are not representative; and the concept of channeled surface flow remains central to the definition of ‘river’ (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2005 Ultimate Reference Suite).

Less evident is the stability of general and abstract concepts associated with humanitarian - spiritual, ethic and aesthetic domains (e.g. good, evil, right, wrong, beauty, ugliness, honor, wisdom, fortune), as well as social, political, economic, and scientific-cognitive domains. The semantics of such concepts is to a larger extent mobile and subject to changes dependent on extralinguistic causes – cultural and historical changes – and intertextual influences. It is common knowledge that good and evil, benefit and harm (loss), beauty and ugliness were understood differently in various societies and epochs. The ethical opposition of good and evil appears to be the most controversial among them. For example, while in the age of capitalism there is a tendency to identify good and evil with the concepts of benefit and loss, in the past they were frequently radically opposed. The Russian historian Lev Gumilyov points out the antagonism, with which the 14th century Russians, Tartars and Byzantine Greeks viewed the moral based on capitalist social relations: ‘The manifestations of economic interests, ruling in the new social and economic structure of Western Europe, were strange and repulsive to them. Even Khan Dzhanibek, when he learnt that the Genoese had taken advantage of the massive murrain and famine in the Black Sea coastal steppes to buy cheaply children for the slave-trade, became indignant and sent his troops against Kafa’ (Gumilyov 2002: 606). Compare the attitude, forced on the public thinking in 1990s Russia, to benefit and realization of self-interest as an undisputed boon: ‘We should instill in all the fields of social life the understanding of the fact that everything that is economically inefficient is immoral, and, vice versa, what is efficient is moral’ (the Russian economist N. Shmelyov, cited in (Kara-Murza 2001: 544)).

Symbols are also subject to change. On the one hand, the secondary designata in them undergo constant modification: there may be an enrichment of symbolic clusters and perspectives - unfolding of a series of abstract senses - or their reduction; metaphoric and metonymic transpositions from certain meanings to produce new ones; sacralization or profanation, complication or schematization (‘posterization’) of semantics. On the other hand, the semantic field of designators, associated with a certain abstract meaning, may change (it is either enlarged or diminished).

Let us adduce two examples. The desert, a universal cultural symbol of barrenness, based on metaphor, in the Judaic and Christian religions assumes the meanings of solitude, revelation, communion with God, temptation of the Satan (metaphor, sacralization of semantics) In W. B. Yeats’ *The Second Coming* the desert is a solitary wilderness, whence come real and lying prophets (metonymy, specialization of meaning). T. S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* used this symbol for the allegoric comparison of contemporary Europeans to ancient Jews, who had to live in the desert as God’s punishment and suffered a moral degradation (metaphoric allusion) (Tresidder 1998; Moody 1994).

The other example is the cup as a symbol of gods’ gift, eternal life, wisdom and happiness. In the ancient Celtic legend of the Fisher King and the Knight it becomes the Grail – the cup symbolizing revitalization and fertility (specialization of meaning, metonymy). In the Christian epoch the Grail becomes sacred, it is a symbol of chalice used by Christ at the Last Supper; later associated with the blood of Christ and the Eucharist. It comes to symbolize the truth and knowledge needed to achieve the experience of salvation. In Arthurian romances the Grail undergoes profanation, as it combines the elements of Christian meanings and pre-Christian mythology; it becomes a cup full of beneficent qualities and a symbol of spiritual development. With its help knights (Perceval, Galahad) gradually learn the true meaning of chivalry and its close connection with the teachings of the church. Another perspective of the development of this symbol is the ‘loving cup’. In the past, at weddings, banquets, or meetings, a loving cup might be shared by a number of persons for ceremonial drinking, symbolizing friendship and unity. Nowadays loving cups are given as trophies to winners of games or other competitions (Averintsev 1994a: 317-318), (Biederman 1996: 61), (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2005 Ultimate Reference Suite).

The dynamics of the development of these symbols is largely determined by intertextuality. According to (Dwyer 1981), the legend of the Holy Grail has been read against the texts of the Bible, the church fathers, the Latin classics, the scholastic doctors, the law, chronicles, hagiography, personal history, Hebrew and even Iranian texts.

However, the process of the development of concepts and symbols appears to be more complex than mere intertextual influences. Possibly, it is adequately described by the laws of information behavior, as, for example, in (Claeys 1995). According to this model, the full ‘life cycle’ of information contains the following phases: abstraction (singling out the essential features from concrete facts, generalization, schematization) – instantiation (realization of a scheme in a concrete element in a certain context) – externalization (reproduction of information in similar concrete examples) – projection of information from one cognitive domain to another (metaphor, metonymy, functional transfer) – fixation and stabilization of information – induration5 of information as a condition for its strengthening - isolation and preservation – interaction with other types of information – decay and destruction of ‘weaker’ information carriers through environment changes, insulation failures and absorption by other information entities – separation of abstract information from a concrete information carrier and its ‘vertical’ insulation 6. The development of information is connected with energy conservation and redistribution. Obviously, intertextuality corresponds to the phase of interaction with other types of information, in Claeys’ scheme. In all other phases the role of intertextuality for information development is less important.

Thus, similar to natural kinds and artifacts, ‘mentifacts’ (symbols and abstract concepts) possess a stable core, which prevents them from drastic changing. While the stability of the former is explained by their correlation with the perceptible reality, in the latter, stability is ensured by the presence of archetypal and stereotype components. And since the majority of universal symbols and abstract concepts are also universal values and anti-values7; their emotive-evaluative component is one more important factor of their stability and universality.

**Lecture 9**

## Structural and Dynamic Features of Symbol

As a specific sign symbol implies the combination of structural-semantic and dynamic (nominative) features, the latter referring to the process of symbolization.

Structurally, symbol is a multi-notional complex sign. There is a minimum of two equally important kernels in it. The direct meaning is the image of a symbol. It denotes a concrete notion, which is nevertheless generalized to provide a basis for further abstractions. The figurative meaning is the idea of a symbol. It is different from the direct meaning in quality and may be archetypal, cultural-stereotype or individual and subjective.

The dynamic (nominative) aspect in a symbol – symbolization - may be defined as semantic transposition, which implies the transfer from a sign in praesentia to a sign in absentia. In other words, the name of an object is transposed onto an absent sign denoting a qualitatively different notion. This transposition is due to the fact that the immediate designatum itself induces the secondary designatum on the basis of apparent or conventional associations between notions. In original symbols, however, the secondary designatum is implied by the immediate designatum as seen through the prism of the context, whereby some features of the immediate designatum are ascribed to the secondary designatum.

From the perspective of symbolization as a process I specify metaphor and metonymy as the fundamental mechanisms of transposition. If symbol is viewed as a static sign, metonymy and metaphor reveal themselves as the fundamental types of logical connections between meanings by their obligate or potential characteristics. Metaphor suggests similarity of meanings. Metonymy, as I broadly see it, embraces all types of logical connections except similarity. It includes, among others, synecdoche and hypo-hyperonymic transposition. Metaphor and metonymy form up peculiar associative rows of meanings, which possess certain logic, so the resultant symbols are semantically and conceptually consistent.

Metaphoric and metonymic connections in symbols will be discussed at length in the parts of this paper where the distinction is drawn between symbols and tropes and where the classification of symbols is presented. Below I will dwell on some other important types of interaction between meanings or between form and meanings in symbol, or mechanisms of symbolization for that matter.

## Irrational Symbols Based on Synaesthesia and Primitive Syncretism of Meanings, on Connections between Form and Meaning and on Accidental Coincidence of Forms of Words

Some symbols have no logical links between their designata. They may result from synaesthesia, from primitive syncretism of notions, from connections between form and meaning (sound symbolism) and from erroneous association of notions owing to accidental coincidence of forms of words (paronymous, homonymous or polysemous symbols).

Synaesthesia is association of primary perceptions of different modalities (hearing, sight, sense of touch, sense of smell and sense of taste) on the basis of their intensity, emotional coloring and evaluation. In terms of traditional linguistics synaesthesia is transposition of a name of a characteristic to another characteristic on the basis of similar connotations - intensity, emotional coloring and evaluation (e.g. mild cheese, mild light, mild voice; loud voice, loud color; rough food, rough country, rough sound; a rotten egg, apple, rotten weather, he is a rotten driver, to feel rotten etc.). Besides, there often occurs synaesthesic transposition of physical perceptions to mental and emotional phenomena (loose hair, loose behavior; strong man, strong criticism; an open house, open contempt, an open man; to seize a hand, to seize an idea, to seize power).

In symbols synaesthesia appears as a transposition of a name of an object onto a concept on the basis of similarity or contiguity of connotations of the immediate and secondary designata. A few examples of synaesthesic symbols: ‘rose – love, happiness’; ‘day – life, joy, God’; ‘night – mystery, death, danger, evil’. Synaesthesia is seldom the only link between meanings in symbols, more often, it co-occurs with other connections.

Synaesthesia may be metaphoric, based on similarity of connotations of notions, which do not directly imply each other, e.g. in the symbols ‘the rose-garden – love; paradise’ (similarity of evaluation), ‘the rising lotos – growth of spirit’ (similarity of evaluation) from ‘Burnt Norton’ by T. S. Eliot, ‘night – death’ (similarity of emotion) from ‘Ode to the Confederate Dead’ by Allen Tate and ‘Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night’ by Dylan Thomas.

Synaesthesia may also be metonymic, based on contiguity of notions, which means that notions actually imply each other. In this case connotations (emotion, evaluation and intensiveness of some property) are also implied by the immediate designatum, and either constitute the secondary designatum itself or are attendant to it. For example, in the symbol ‘the valleys – passiveness, inertia, stagnation’ from ‘Paysage Moralise’ by W. H. Auden there is an implication of emotional states from some features of a locality, viz. steadiness, evenness, immutability. In the symbol ‘the mountains – mystery, a promise of a better life, a hope’ from the same poem emotional states are implied by some characteristics of mountains, viz. remoteness, height, obstruction of perspective, difficulty of access, beauty.

 Sound symbolism is association of a sound cluster with sensuous phenomena of modalities other than aural perception (e.g. flutter, flicker, shimmer, glimmer, glitter, gloat, glow, twinkle, twist, snatch, snap, bloody, blithering, fidget, fumble, dilly-dally, shilly-shally, etc.).

Sound symbolism was especially important at the earliest stages of language development and, alongside with sound imitation, was the basis for primary nomination. According to Edward Tylor a word in a primitive society is a totem substituting various notions. So alongside with mythical ideas, in which speech followed imagination, there were cases where speech preceded and imagination followed it (Tylor 1989: 214). In primitive societies the multivalent symbolism of a sound form was combined with its semantic development in the framework of mythological thinking, so that all the designata of one and the same word were symbols of each other. This process was called bricolage by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1994); the resulting phenomenon may be termed syncretism of meanings.

According to Mark M. Makovsky (1996), the first words in human language were the words based on the proto-Indo-European stem \*uer- (\*er-), also with preflexes - \*ker-,\*mer-,\*qer-, \*ser-, etc. Thus, I.-E. \*uer- (\*er-) ‘make sounds, speak’ is due to sound imitation, cf. Engl. word, Rus. урчать. On the other hand, I.-E. \*uer- (\*er-) ‘turn, tie up’ is probably due to sound symbolism[[3]](#footnote-1): cf. Goth. warms ‘snake’, Engl. worm, whirl, wriggle, wring, wry, wrong - ‘twisting the mouth’, Rus. вертеть, вернуть, вращать, веревка, врать. Owing to bricolage there arose other incompatible meanings of this stem: \*uer- ‘wet, water’ (the sound imitation of purling; also the metaphor ‘twisting - braiding of waters’); \*uer-men ‘time’ (metaphor with a multiple ground, cf. Rus. время; also \*ar-, \*uer- ‘fire, burn’); \*uer- ‘have, take’, and others.

In our time, one of the chief domains of sound symbolism is poetry, especially, modernistic poetry, where words are separated from, or have a weakened referential meaning. A poet uses them in the same way as an artist uses paints and a musician uses notes, i. e. to create a certain emotional state, a mood. To illustrate this idea let me cite a few lines from “ The Preludes” by Conrad Aiken:

What is the flower? It is not a sigh of color,

 Suspiration of purple, sibilation of saffron,

 Nor aureate exhalation from the tomb. (Matthiessen 1950: 867)

Symbols based on accidental coincidence of word forms are termed ‘erroneous’, because they usually emerge as a result of confusion. Such kind of symbolism is due to language polysemy, homonymy and paronymy, when two meanings are bound in a complex because of the identity or similarity of their designators. Symbols of this kind mostly belong to the domain of the subconscious, of dreams and deliriums. The famous example of paronymic symbolization is in the legend about Alexander of Macedonia, who dreamt about a satyr dancing on his shield on the night before the seizure of Tyros. An ancient Greek interpreter explained it as a transformation of the sentence ‘Sa Tyros’ (Tyros is yours) into the image of a satyr (satyros). Hypothetically, wordplay or calembour symbols may also occur in admass culture and some forms of art.

**Lecture 10-11**

## Symbols Based on Logical Connections Between Meanings – Metaphor and Metonymy

### *Symbol versus Tropes: Comparative Analysis of Semantics*

In this part of the study attention will be focused on the mainstream symbols, i.e. ‘logical’ symbols based on similarity and contiguity of meanings. We choose the principle of comparison of ‘logical’ symbols with the main tropes, metaphor and metonymy, as the optimum solution for the demonstration of structural and nominative patterns in symbols.

The following essential features of symbol determine its resemblance to the main tropes – metaphor and metonymy.

1. the transposition of the name of the immediate designatum to the implied secondary designatum and the transfer of some semantic features of the former to the latter;
2. the resultant complex in the plane of content;
3. the uniformity of the mechanisms of transfer – on the ground of similar features or by contiguity; motivation of the transferred meanings by metaphoric or metonymic associations;
4. the immediate designatum being predominantly, if not exclusively, a concrete image, subject to actual or potential visualization. This feature holds for identifying tropes (names of substances) with the patterns of transposition CONCRETE VEHICLE -> ABSTRACT TENOR and CONCRETE VEHICLE -> CONCRETE TENOR and for most symbols.

The differences between symbols and tropes lie:

1. in their functions - representation for symbols vs. description (characterization) and aesthetic impact for tropes;
2. in the realistic and objective character of vehicle in symbolic contexts vs. imaginary character of vehicle in metaphoric contexts;
3. in a high degree of abstraction of tenor from vehicle in metonymic symbols vs. tenor’s being an immediate logical predicate of vehicle in metonymic tropes;
4. in the permanent pattern of transposition ‘concrete -> abstract’ for symbols vs. various patterns (с -> a, c -> c, a -> c, a -> a) for tropes.

The differences between symbols and tropes need some clarification, therefore we shall dwell on each of them.

Firstly, symbol and trope are different in the functions they perform, the main function of symbols being representational, and the main functions of tropes – descriptive (characterizing) and aesthetic.

The main function of all symbols, including symbols of art and literature, is that of representation. Other functions of symbol are: epistemic, inasmuch as through symbols one cognizes the essence and the ideal meaning of material things; communicative, inasmuch as a symbol communicates an implicit fact or ideal sense; magical, inasmuch as a symbol substitutes the esoteric and the tabooed. The aesthetic function, meaning expressiveness and satisfying the sense of the beautiful, is less prominent with symbols than with tropes.

For example, the symbols of three trees and a white horse with Christian semantics from ‘Journey of the Magi’ by T. S. Eliot do not themselves impart any artistic ornamentalism to the text. The same is true for the symbols ‘greenhouse – the Universe, paradise on earth’ by Theodore Roethke, ‘wall – estrangement and hostility’ from ‘Mending Wall’ by Robert Frost, ‘golden bough – happiness and immortality’ from ‘Sailing to Byzantium’ by W. B. Yeats, ‘woods – non-existence, death’ from ‘Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening’ by Robert Frost and for the majority of other symbols from Anglo-American poetry of the XX century taken ad arbitrium, unless they are combined with tropes or used in an imaginative context. One may assume from the above that the connotative component of meaning in symbols plays a less important role than its signification (sense).

The main function of original tropes is to describe or characterize the tenor through the vehicle, rather than represent it. Then, as a special type of imagery, which is ‘the language and speech’ of such secondary semiotic systems as art and literature, tropes invariably fulfil the communicative function. Finally, the aesthetic function is of primary importance in the case of original tropes, since their aim is to make an aesthetic impact on the reader through artistic comparison of different objects and phenomena, properties or actions. The connotative component of meaning is strongly pronounced in tropes.

The descriptive and aesthetic functions are all-important in expressive (‘ornamental’) and significative (‘conceptual’, ‘meaningful’) tropes. These functions are quite obvious for expressive tropes, e.g. ‘you…would like to sleep on a mattress of easy profits’ ( Louis McNeice, from (Roberts 1964: 46)), ‘snail, snail, glister me for­ward’ (Theodore Roethke, from (Roberts 1970: 211)), ‘O small dust of the earth that walks so arrogantly’ (Marianne Moore, from (Matthiessen 1950: 774)), ‘the circuit calm of one vast coil’ (Hart Crane, from (Jimbinov 1983: 264), ‘her smi­le...is all that our haggard folly thinks untrue’ (John Masefield, from (Arinstein 1984: 190)), etc.

In the case of significative tropes the vehicle is prominent in the text as a unit of philosophical or allegorical discourse, wherefore significative tropes are often confused with symbols. Yet, the vehicle in them fulfils a descriptive (characterizing), rather than representational function. For example, in Ted Hughes’ ‘The Thought-Fox’, where throughout the poem the actions of a fox figuratively describe the movement of creative thought, we identify an extended simile or, perhaps, an allegory, but hardly a symbol.

With regard to their main function – representational – symbols bear more similarity to linguistic, etymological metaphors and metonymies and set phrases, which are fixed in the linguistic system, rather than to original tropes. In linguistic tropes and set phrases, as well as in symbols, the sign together with the etymon (‘the inner form’) represents the figurative meaning.

Secondly, the direct meaning of a symbol is realistic in the context of a piece of poetry, it actually exists, and it is not simply like something else, but it actually means something else. In other words, there are no semantic markers of an imaginary or assumed character of the immediate designatum of a symbol. In this respect compare the fictional ‘woods’ in the metaphor ‘He stepped into the dark woods of death’ and the realistic woods as the symbol of death in ‘Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening’ by Robert Frost.

The direct context, which corresponds to the source domain in terms of cognitive linguistics (as in (Lakoff 1992)), is realistic and as important for the cognition of a symbol as the indirect context (the target domain). So immediate designata make up the material world in a symbolic work and secondary designata represent its ideal meaning.

For example, the blackbird in Wallace Stevens’ ‘Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird’ has the markers of the realistic character of its immediate designatum in the direct context: ‘the only moving thing was the eye of the blackbird’, ‘the blackbird flew out of sight’. Parallel to this there is a polyvalent indirect context (target domain), where this image is unrealistic, metaphorical, for example ‘I was of three minds, like a tree in which there are three blackbirds’. The poetic lines are quoted from (Jimbinov 1983: 268).

The two contexts, one of which emphasizes the reality of the blackbird and the other actualizes its abstract sense, make it possible to treat this image as a symbol. The blackbird – a bird of a conspicuous color - symbolizes here the revealed, the outward, nature mysteriously related to the covert, the human, consciousness.

The immediate designatum of a symbol is realistic even in a fantastic poetic picture. For example, in the description of a trip to the unrealized past from ‘Burnt Norton’ (‘Four Quartets’) by T. S. Eliot the images of the rose-garden, the pool ‘filled with water out of sunlight’ and the lotos have no markers of fiction or illusion. This imagery is realistic in a fantastic context, in the dimension of ‘another world’. It is precisely as realistic and referential images that they become symbols: the rose-garden - of love and happiness, the pool – of vivifying divine power, the lotos – of purity and spiritual growth. Since they are not metaphors, but symbols, their immediate designata are not mere vehicles of some abstract meaning, but have an equally important status for the general grasp of sense as their secondary designata.

In poetic metaphors the immediate designatum of an image is unrealistic, and so is the direct context itself. It serves as a vehicle to carry the actual sense (the figurative meaning, the tenor). This feature is evident, first of all, in ‘ornamental’ metaphors, where the vehicle characterizes the tenor or specifies some of its features, like ‘the burning of his wreathed bays’ (Ted Hughes), ‘the vast walls of night stand erect to the stars’ (Robinson Jeffers) or ‘the craggy presence of a peasant king’ (Brynlyn Griffiths).

However, it is also true for significative (conceptual, meaningful) images of philosophical and allegorical poetry, which appear as specific units of thinking and are apt to be confused with symbols. As with symbols, the tenor of such a metaphor is an abstract notion, and the vehicle is realistic, tangible. Moreover, it may be the only image in a poetic picture. Even so, we are well aware of the fact that that image is unrealistic, imaginary, and it is proper to call it a metaphor, rather than a symbol.

For example, in the proem to Theodore Roethke’s ‘Open House’ we find the conceptually fraught notion of an ‘open house’ (for the full text see (Ellmann 1973: 753)). Let us ascertain whether it is a symbol or a metaphor in that particular case. The contexts: ‘my secrets cry aloud’, ‘my heart keeps open house, my doors are widely swung’, ‘an epic of my eyes - my love, with no disguise’ describe the tenors – ‘secrets’, ‘heart’, ‘eyes’, ‘love’, and more generally, the referent - the poetic hero. The implicit personified vehicles who cry aloud, keep an open house with widely swung doors and relate an epic are clearly imaginary, while the hero, his body and his emotions are realistic. Since the ‘open house’ is one of the unrealistic images, though the central one in the proem, it follows that it is a metaphor rather than a symbol. It should be pointed out, however, that as the poem develops, this image already occurs in the capacity of symbol.

One more example. In the above-mentioned poem ‘The Thought-Fox’ by Ted Hughes, the fox and a number of subsidiary images (‘this midnight moment's forest, something else is alive, a fox's nose touches twig, leaf’, etc.) form a poetic picture. Their figurative meanings with abstract designata – creative thought, approach of inspiration - are not explicit, but implied. Yet, inspiration here is realistic, and the image of the fox is unrealistic, imaginary: note the lexical marker ‘I imagined’ and the lexico-semantic marker, the binary metaphor ‘(it enters) the dark hole of the head’. Inasmuch as the image of the fox is unrealistic, we recognize it as an extended metaphor, rather than a symbol. For the full text of this poem see (Arinstein 1984: 550).

Thirdly, in metonymic symbols designata do not usually imply each other directly, i.e. they are not immediate logical predicates of each other. On the other hand, in metonymies as tropes designata are immediate logical predicates of each other.

Before comparing metonymic symbols with metonymies, let me dwell on two general subtypes within metonymy and related tropes.[[4]](#endnote-3) The first subtype includes metonymies with the connections ‘part-whole’, ‘whole-part’, ‘characteristic-object characterized’, ‘container-object contained’, ‘instrument-doer’, etc. which have a substance or a concrete notion for their tenor. For example:

* ‘the arrogance of blood and bone’ (Ted Hughes) -> ‘human beings’,
* ‘the untarnishable features of Charlemagne bestride the progress of the little horse’ (Freda Downie) -> ‘Charlemagne himself’, ‘the little horse itself’,
* ‘old age should burn and rave at close of day’ (Dylan Thomas) -> ‘old people’.

Examples from (Hughes 1977: 33; Poetry Review 1969: 256; Arinstein 1984: 426).

The second subtype embraces metonymies with connections ‘object-its characteristic’, ‘cause-effect’, ‘effect-cause’, ‘attendant circumstance-phenomenon’ which have an abstract notion for their tenor. For example:

* ‘power is built on fear and empty bellies’ (Michael Roberts)->‘hunger’,
* ‘and over smaller things, too, the splinter he got chopping wood, … the sore on his mouth repelling the mistletoe kiss’ -> ‘ill fortune’,
* ‘all his efforts to concoct the old heroic bang from their money and praise, from the parent's pointing finger and the child's amaze… have left him wrecked’ (Ted Hughes) -> ‘recognition and fame’.

Examples from (Skelton 1964: 53, Poetry Review 1969: 226, Hughes 1977: 13).

The latter subtype of metonymies, those with a characterizing or abstract tenor, may be mistakenly identified as symbols. But unlike in symbols, the tenor in them is an immediate logical predicate of the vehicle, the source domain and the target domain practically coincide. The contexts actualize the meanings of the same order and do not point to the plane of abstraction or generalization, i. e., to a meaning, which is qualitatively different from the vehicle. Besides, the tenor (for example, ‘recognition and fame’) does not generate still more abstract and generalized symbolic meanings, it does not create new levels of meaning, as it is often the case with metonymic symbols.

For that matter compare the metonymic symbol ‘hand’ in the poem ‘The Hand that Signed the Paper Felled a City...’ by Dylan Thomas. (Arinstein 1984: 422-424) In general terms, the notion ‘hand’, as well as the corresponding etymons in various languages, has stable archetypal associations with God, the demiurge. (Makovsky 1996: 292) The hand is the main image of the poem under consideration, the part of body, representing an anonymous ruler (synecdoche). This image is particularized - ‘five fingers’, ‘a goose's quill’, ‘the mighty hand leads to a sloping shoulder’, ‘the finger joints are cramped with chalk’, ‘a scribbled name’. As the poem progresses, the image of hand becomes more complicated: the hand does not only fell cities, kill, sign treaties, but breeds fever, famine, locusts and even ‘rules pity’. The figurative meaning of the synecdoche ‘the hand — a ruler’ becomes more and more generalized and mythologized. In the context of the last stanza the initial synecdoche may be already treated as a metonymic symbol: the hand - a ruler (synecdoche: ‘part-whole’) – the rulers (synecdoche: ‘one of the group – the group’) - power (metonymy: ‘people – the related abstract notion’) -> supreme (demonic) evil power (metonymy: abstract notion - supernatural concept).

As we may see, the final meaning of ‘hand’ - supreme evil power - is not initially implied by the vehicle, but deduced from a number of its metonymic predicates through a number of contexts. This leads us to the conclusion that the ‘hand’ in the poem is a metonymic symbol, rather than mere synecdoche. Note that the direct meaning of the ‘hand’, though included in the figurative meanings, is not dissolved in them and has an equal status of importance.

Fourthly, the general rule for symbols is that direct meanings in them are concrete (denotative) and indirect symbolic meanings are abstract (significative), while the two main tropes – metaphor and metonymy - are characterized by variability of concepts and diversity of transposition patterns as to the criterion of concreteness / abstractness. In other words, symbols generally have the only conceptual structure ‘concrete -> abstract’, whereas tropes have various structures (с -> a, c -> c, a -> c, a -> a).

Let me dwell on some specifics of transpositions in symbols and tropes.

The general pattern of transposition in symbols, c -> a (from a concrete immediate to an abstract secondary designatum), is quite evident and finds ample proof in any kind of symbolism. However, one should also bear in mind its two modifications, viz.:

a) The transpositions c -> c and a -> c, with a concrete secondary designatum.

The pattern c -> c is typical of archetypal symbols – associative fusions of two concrete, substantial notions. The secondary designatum in such symbols is either fictional (mythological), or real, but connected with the immediate designatum by fictional (mythological) relations or similar to it in fictional (mythological) characteristics.

For example, according to Hans Biedermann (1989: 309), the egg symbolizes: a) the primordial embryo, out of which the world evolved (metonymy: ‘concrete notion -> concrete notion, fictional’); b) risen Christ, i.e. the nestling who breaks through an egg-shell (metaphor: ‘concrete notion – fictional ground - > concrete notion’); c) in alchemy - silver and gold, i.e. the white and the yolk (metaphor: ‘concrete notion – fictional ground - > concrete notion’). It should be noted, that the symbol of the egg developed in the direction of abstractness, too: fertility, spring, life energy (the yolk), purity and piety (the white, the whiteness of an egg-shell).

Other archetypal symbols with substance designata are ‘gold – the sun’, ‘well – the entrance to the other world’, ‘shadow – a person’s double, a materialized soul’, etc.

Symbolic representation of concrete individuals and geographical places also conforms to the patterns c -> c and a -> c, because the secondary designata in such symbols can be regarded as concrete notions. Such symbols often occur in poetry, for instance, in the poem ‘Spain’ by W. H. Auden (Skelton 1964: 133) we encounter the symbolic representation of Spain. Here individual images (e.g. the fortress like a motionless eagle eyeing the valley; the chapel built in the forest) symbolize, first, generalized notions, viz. vigilance and deep religiousness, and through these notions the ultimate concrete designatum – Spain.

b) The transposition a -> a (abstract vehicle -> abstract tenor) — the transfer of a name of an abstract designatum to an abstract secondary designatum.

Symbols of this kind are abstract and belong to metaphysical poetry. Their immediate designata tend to have no image, but may potentially relate to a variety of images, being generalized notions common for all of them. The secondary designata of such symbols are always abstract.

Symbols a -> a are characteristic of poetry, for instance, by E. E. Cummings and Wallace Stevens. Cummings’ symbolism is peculiar, in that he discovered the symbolic potential of adverbial, pronominal and modal words. For example, the word ‘now’ is so often reiterated in Cummings’ poetry as a central unit of sense, that it becomes an abstract symbol in its own right. It means the transcendental, the timeless, the eternal in contrast to destructive time and paltry human fuss. This symbol occurs, for example, in Cummings’ ‘the busy the people…’ ‘SONG’, ‘what time is it?’. (Cummings 1963)

We can also identify a lot of abstract symbols in W. Stevens’ poetry. It is acknowledged by critics, for example, (Shaviro 1988), that the notions ‘cry’, ‘nothingness’, ‘desire’, ‘adventure’, ‘invention’, ‘discovery’ are Stevens’ abstract symbols and simultaneously the terms of his philosophic discourse.

Despite the existing deviations from the rule, I emphatically assert that the basic transposition pattern in symbols is c -> a, i.e. ‘concrete designatum -> abstract designatum’, rather than c -> с and a -> a. It is so because: 1) the patterns a -> a and c -> с are comparatively rare; 2) the concrete secondary designatum in symbols with the pattern c -> c tends to be perceived as more abstract than its immediate designatum; 3) the abstract immediate designatum in symbols with the pattern a -> a tends to be perceived as more concrete than its secondary designatum.

In the main tropes (metaphor and metonymy) and the figures of co-occurrence based on them (simile, quasi-identity (A is B), periphrasis, personification) the patterns of semantic transfer vary.

For metaphors and metaphoric figures the predominant patterns are c -> a (‘we’ve been drinking stagnant water for some twenty years or more’ (Louis MacNeice) -> ‘were passive, sluggish’) and c -> c (‘we are… ribless polyps’ (Edgar Foxall): ribless polyps -> ‘we’). However, the patterns a -> a (‘stupor of life’ (Ted Hughes): stupor -> life) and a -> c (‘the flower is a sigh of color’ (Conrad Aiken): a sigh of color -> flower) are also found in plenty. Examples from (Skelton 1964: 30, 66; Hughes 1977: 43; Matthiessen 1950: 867).

For metonymies and metonymic figures the predominant patterns are also c-> c (the arrogance of blood and bone (Ted Hughes): blood and bone -> living beings) and c-> a (power is built on fear and empty bellies (Michael Roberts): empty bellies -> hunger), a slightly less frequent pattern is a -> c (she is all youth, all beauty, all delight (John Masefield): youth, beauty, delight - > she). Examples from (Hughes 1977: 33; Skelton 1964: 53; Arinstein 1984: 190).

So, in principle, tropes are characterized by variability of concepts as to the criterion of concreteness and abstractness and diversity of transposition patterns (с -> a, c -> c, a -> c, a -> a).

These features of tropes are due to their main function – to describe and characterize one concept by means of another without regard to their concreteness / abstractness. The symbol, which serves to represent a concept, an abstract notion, must invariably have a concrete substance for its immediate designatum (c -> a).

**Lecture 12-15**

## Detailed Typology of Metaphoric Symbols

## Detailed Typology of Metonymic Symbols

***Types of metaphoric and metonymic symbols***

The typology presented here is based on the microsemantic structure of symbols and the types of logical connections between their meanings.

I have begun to compile a table of symbols of the XX. century Anglo-American poetry, based on associations between their direct and transferred meanings. To check the data for validity I made use of a variety of dictionaries of symbols (see in References). So far I can only present the preliminary results of my research, which I am planning to complete in the future.

The main types of symbols are metaphoric and metonymic. Many symbols are complex metaphoro-metonymic or metonymo-metaphoric. Complex symbols will not be regarded here as a whole, but analyzed into semantic chains to illustrate the subtypes of metaphoric and metonymic connections.

The main subtypes of **metaphoric symbols** are as follows.

1. Stereotype metaphoric symbols with the transposition of the name of an object (action, process, property) onto a concept on the basis of similarity of their essential characteristics. Among stereotype symbols I specify the following.

a) Functional transfers. For example, in W. B. Yeats’ ‘Sailing to Byzantium’ we come across the stereotype symbol of a bird as a singer, poet, orator; and bird’s singing as the art of singing, poetry, or oratory. The poet is beseeching the sages on the icons of St. Sofia’s Cathedral to take him to the paradisiac ‘holy city of Byzantium’, where he would never more take his bodily form from nature, ‘but such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make of hammered gold and gold enameling’. As a gold bird he would sing to the drowsy Emperor, lords and ladies of Byzantium ‘of what is past, or passing, or to come’. (Ellmann 1973: 134)

The transposition in this case is based on the analogy of a bird’s action to human activity and may be defined as a functional transfer, where the immediate designatum is the bird’s singing, the ground is emitting harmonious sounds (of birds) = emitting harmonious sounds (of humans) and the secondary designatum is song, poetry, oratory.

Another example of a functional transfer in a stereotype symbol is found in Robert Frost’s ‘Mending Wall’ (Jimbinov 1983: 216-218), where the wall symbolizes prejudice and hostility caused by the primitive instinct of self-preservation. The scheme of transposition in it may be presented as follows: ‘wall - dividing (physically) = estranging (morally) – prejudice, hostility’.

Also note the stereotype symbol of sunlight as spiritual revelation from T. S. Eliot’s ‘Burnt Norton’ (Arinstein 1984: 256-258) with the transposition ‘sunlight – God illuminating the earth, letting one see = letting one realize, understand – spiritual revelation’.

b) Chronotopic (space-time) transfers. A stereotype symbol with such a type of transfer is found in Louis MacNeice’s ‘Train to Dublin’ and ‘Trains in the Distance’ (Prikhodko 1973: 171), where the train symbolizes time. The transposition in this case is based on the analogy of the onward movement in space with the forward course of time: train - progresses in space = goes forward - time.

Other stereotype chronotopic symbols identified by me are ‘road – course of life’ in Robert Frost’s ‘The Road Not Taken’, ‘faring (journey) – course of life’ in E. A. Robinson’s ‘The Wilderness’, valleys – steadiness, immutability, immobility, stagnation in W. H. Auden’s ‘Paysage Moralise’.

c) Synaesthesic transfers, based on associating perceptions of a particular modality (hearing, vision, etc.) with abstract notions, in some way connected with these sensations. In linguistic terms, synaesthesic metaphor is based on similarity of connotations (emotion, evaluation and intensity) in the two meanings within a symbol. Note should be taken of the fact, that synaesthesia is seldom the only link between meanings in symbols, more often it co-occurs with other connections.

Metaphoric synaesthesia is the basis for such stereotype symbols as, for example, ‘the rose-garden – love, paradise’ from T. S. Eliot’s ‘Burnt Norton’ (similarity of evaluation) and ‘night – death’ from Allen Tate’s ‘Ode to the Confederate Dead’ and Dylan Thomas’s ‘Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night’ (similarity of emotion). The grounds for transposition in these symbols are ‘beauty and fragrance, bliss = good’; ‘fear of darkness = fear of the unknown’. It should be noted, that in the symbol ‘night – death’ synaesthesia is subordinate to metaphoric symbolism based on similarity of properties: ‘darkness, inability to see = darkness, the unknown’.

2. Archetypal metaphoric symbols, based on syncretism of primary ideas, i.e. on identification of widely different notions with each other by similarity of some of their characteristics. These symbols may be based on similarity of assumed (fictional) characteristics of notions, or on similarity of notions, one of which pertains to ancient myths, i.e. is fictional itself. Therefore archetypal metaphoric symbols may also be termed mytho-metaphoric symbols. To treat archetypal symbols I have largely drawn upon the data from the dictionaries of symbols (Bauer 1987; Biedermann 1996; Cirlot 1971; Cooper 1978; Garai 1973; Lurker 1983; Vries 1976).

It should be stressed that in literature archetypal symbols often serve to convey abstract ideas, so that the primary content of an archetypal symbol, passing through certain stages of abstraction – intermediate designata - is correlated with an abstract notion. A necessary context is provided by the author in such cases to help the reader bring out the abstract sense of an archetypal symbol.

a) Functional transfers. For example, in Howard Nemerov’s ‘Brainstorm’ we come across an archetypal symbol of crows as mediators between heaven and earth or between this world and the other world.[[5]](#endnote-4) The text of the poem may be found in (Roberts 1970: 347).

The transposition in this symbol is based the analogy of the crows’ actual actions and their assumed function as rational beings: croaking = talking; flying in heaven, landing on earth = communicating with the other world and man. Note should be taken of other symbolic meanings of the multivalent symbol of crows in the poem - storm, death, destruction, ruin.

b) Transfers by similarity of form and appearance. For example gold (golden bough, gold bird) as the archetypal symbol of the sun, God, the beautiful and the immortal is one of the symbols of the above-mentioned ‘Sailing to Byzantium’ by W. B. Yeats. The transposition here is twofold, but in both cases it is based on the analogy of properties of a substance and phenomena: 1) bright, luminous = bright as the sun, pertaining to God; 2) hard, durable = ageless, immortal.

To this group I also refer the archetypal symbols of a sunflower in T. S. Eliot’s ‘Burnt Norton’ and marigolds in W. C. Williams’ ‘A Negro Woman’ meaning the sun, and further - life and joy. The texts of these poems may be found, for instance, in (Arinstein 1984: 262) and (Roberts 1970: 287). Apart from being alike in appearance, sunflowers and marigolds are related to the sun as capable of turning their faces with the course of the sun. These symbols are associated with the myths of ancient Greece in which the corresponding flowers fall in love with the sun-god Apollo (see archetypal metonymic symbols).

c) Transfers by similarity of properties. For example the archetypal symbol of the woods as death is found in Robert Frost’s ‘Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening’ and ‘Come In’.[[6]](#endnote-5) The texts of the poems can be found in (Jimbinov 1983: 236, 238). The transposition in this symbol is based on the analogy of the properties of woods and death: the woods are a strange world, inhabited by dangerous creatures; the dark abode of nature, of spirits; the path to the realm of the dead; thus, they are mysterious, dangerous, connected with the other world and death.

d) Chronotopic (space-time) transfers. The archetypal symbols ‘river – linear time, a course of human life’, ‘the sea – cyclic time, recurrence of birth and death, infinity’ are found in ‘The Dry Salvages’ by T. S. Eliot; the sea with the same meaning is also found in Michael Hamburger’s ‘Tides’. The texts of these poems may be found in (Arinstein 1984: 270, 516).

The transposition here is based on the analogy of the forward flow of the river with linear time and the rhythmic repetition of the motion of sea waves, tides and ebbs, with cyclic time. By extension, we can deduce two related meanings of these symbols: the river means a course of an individual life [[7]](#endnote-6) and the sea is an eternal cycle of life, production and destruction of living creatures. As we reflect on the poems further, we may also divine the symbolic meaning of the river as the world path, the cosmic order, the rational law, and the sea as primordial chaos, the mysterious abode of deity, the irrational and subconscious.

e) Transfers of spatial characteristics up/down to abstract concepts. The symbol ‘lotos – spiritual growth’ from T. S. Eliot’s ‘Burnt Norton’ (Arinstein 1984: 258) serves as a good example of this type (‘And the pool was filled with water out of sunlight, and the lotos rose, quietly, quietly…’). The transposition here is based on the comparison of a rising lotos to man’s rising spirit: the lotos is growing, raising its flower = man is holding his head up towards heaven – his spirit grows.

f) Transfers of colors and numbers to abstract concepts. For example, in T. S. Eliot’s ‘Journey of the Magi’ we come across ‘an old white horse’ as a symbol of chastity, the Holy Spirit; and three trees as a multivalent symbol with Christian semantics. The text of the poem can be found in (Jimbinov 1983: 298).

Transpositions: a) white horse – brightness and purity of color = clarity of mind, imperturbability, purity of deed - chastity, the Holy Spirit; b) three trees - threefold sacrifice practiced in the ancient times; a portent of the three crosses on the Golgotha -> Holy Father, Holy Spirit, Christ.

Here we also observe the phenomenon of ancient symbolism of animals as chthonic or heavenly creatures. The horse is an ancient chthonic symbol, primarily associated with evil powers because of its strength and violence (‘wild army’ (Biedermann 1996: 153)); after domestication it becomes associated with powers of good.

3. Individual metaphoric symbols, based on similarity of characteristics which are not essential either for the immediate designatum, or for the secondary designatum, or for both of them. Transposition in such symbols often goes through a series of intermediate links, or intermediate designata, which provide a gradual passage from the direct to the transferred meaning.

a) Functional transfers. For example, in the ‘The Course of a Particular’ and ‘Not Ideas About the Thing but the Thing Itself’ by Wallace Stevens we encounter his individual symbol of cry as the sign of a driving force present in the outer world and in the mind. The poems concerned may be found in (Roberts 1970: 139, 137).

‘Cry’ is but one of many conceptual symbols of Stevens’ philosophical poetry, reflecting his individual outlook. The transposition in this symbol is based on the analogy of a cry of a strange creature with some ideal driving force revealing itself in the outer world and in the mind. The symbol has a more complex structure, possessing more intermediate designata than hitherto was the case: cry – a call of some strange creature – arouses, perturbs the mind = makes the mind respond, give an inside ‘cry’ - a force revealing itself in the outer world and in the mind.

b) Transfers by similarity of properties. In the above-mentioned ‘Sailing to Byzantium’ the holy city of Byzantium is W.B. Yeats’s individual symbol of paradise, one of the principal conceptual symbols in his mythology. The transposition here is based on the analogy of properties of the real Byzantine Empire and its capital Byzantium with the assumed properties of the paradise: Byzantium – flourishing of art, poetry and philosophy = the realm of beauty, intellect, lofty spirit – paradise.

Other individual symbols of this kind are found in Theodore Roethke’s ‘The Lost Son’ (Roberts 1970: 211-215), for example, the hothouse, which, according to Roethke himself, is ‘a symbol for the whole of life, a womb and heaven-on-earth’, ‘a universe, several worlds, which even as a child one worried about, and struggled to keep alive’ (Roethke 1965: 8-9). The ground in this symbol is ‘holding a great variety of creatures, providing good conditions for their growth’. Another important symbol in the poem, the open house, stands for human soul; the ground here is, on the one hand, ‘hearty, hospitable’ and on the other hand – ‘desolate, lonely’.

c) Transfers of spatial characteristics up/down to abstract concepts. In Robert Frost’s ‘Birches’ swinging birches appears as his individual symbol of harmony of spirit and body (the text of the poem is in (Jimbinov 1983: 232-234)). The transposition in this case is based on the analogy of the properties of a physical action with those of a mental action. Through the link of the mental action the name of the physical action itself is transposed to an abstract notion: swinging the birches – unity of rise and fall, going up and down = changing orientation from material to spiritual life and vice versa – harmony of spirit and body.

d) Chronotopic (space-time) transfers. In Thom Gunn’s ‘The Nature of Action’ (Roberts 1970: 392-393) we come across the individual symbols of a room as rest, stagnation and a corridor as movement, progress. The transposition in this case is based on the analogy of a room as a confined space, which restricts movement, with rest in time, and of a corridor as a narrow passage, leading from one place to another, with movement. Schematically: room - immutability, restriction of movement = immobility - stagnation of a man, corridor - motion, instability = movement - progress of a man.

**Lecture 15**

The main subtypes of **metonymic symbols**

The main subtypes of **metonymic symbols** are as follows.

1. Stereotype metonymic symbols with the transposition of the name of an object (action, process, property) to a concept on the basis of their immediate and generally acknowledged contiguity. The name of an object is transposed to either a characteristic apparently implied by it or to a notion connected with it by an essential relation. The immediate and secondary designata are close logical predicates of each other. Among stereotype metonymic symbols I specify the following.

a) Transfers ‘object – its characteristic / property’ and ‘object – its function’. For example, in W. C. Williams’ ‘The Thousand Things’ (Roberts 1970: 289) a green vine and a dry vine are the symbols of life and death, while the fire is a symbol of purification. Transpositions: dry vine leaves -> death (object - characteristic); a green vine -> life (object - characteristic); fire -> purification, clearing the way for new life (object – its function, cf. the ritual funeral pyre).

b) Transfer ‘object as a cause – notion as an effect’. For example in T. S. Eliot’s ‘The Fire Sermon’ (‘The Waste Land’, from (Roberts 1970: 97)) occurs the stereotype symbol of a rat as decay, ruin and death. The transposition here is based on the fact that the rat lives in dilapidated places, damages foodstuffs, feeds on carrion, etc., bringing about decay, ruin, and death (cause - effect). In this symbol metonymy is combined with synaesthesia (rat – repugnance, fear).

One more example: in the stereotype symbol of yew as death[[8]](#endnote-7) from T. S. Eliot’s ‘Burnt Norton’ there are at least four types of metonymic connections. Yew – a) the tree with poisonous berries, b) the tree of death whose branches were used as wreaths for the sacrificial bulls, c) material used for long-bows, deadly weapons, d) an evergreen often planted in churchyards. The secondary designatum of this symbol is ‘death’ no matter what type of connection one has in mind, viz.: а) cause-effect, b) object-function, c) object-function d) contiguity in space.

2. Archetypal metonymic symbols, based on syncretism of primary ideas, on identifying different notions with each other by their assumed properties. Sometimes the secondary designatum of these symbols is fictional (e.g. mountain – abode of gods), less frequently the immediate designatum is fictional (e.g. the golden bough – happiness, immortality; unicorn – purity, strength). Archetypal metonymic symbols can also be called mytho-metonymic. The logical links between notions in these symbols follow the plot of a related myth.

a) Transfer ‘object – its function’. In W. B. Yeats’s ‘Sailing to Byzantium’ the golden bough is the symbol of immortality and happiness. It should be noted, that the myth about the golden bough is attendant to the myth about the Tree of Life: broken off the Tree of Life it gives immortality to its owner, cf. Aeneas travelling with it to the realm of the dead. The transposition here is: golden bough - > immortality (mytho-metonymy: object – its function). Alongside with metonymy we identify here synaesthesia based on positive evaluation: gold – beautiful –> good.

b) Synecdoche (part – whole). In Dylan Thomas’ ‘The Hand That Signed the Paper Felled a City...’ we find the archetypal symbol of the hand, meaning God, the supreme power. Transposition: the hand – a ruler (synecdoche: part-whole) – rulers (synecdoche: one of the group – the group) - power in the abstract sense (metonymy: people-their abstract characteristic) -> supreme (evil) power (metonymy: abstract characteristic- supernatural concept).

c) Simultaneity (involvement in a common situation). The archetypal symbols of sunflower and marigolds as love in T. S. Eliot’s ‘Burnt Norton’ and W. C. Williams’ ‘A Negro Woman’ may serve as examples of this type. The transpositions here are ‘flowers turning their faces with the sun -> love for the sun-god -> love’ (mytho-metonymy, involvement in a common situation).

3. Individual metonymic symbols, based on an uncommon type of contiguity of notions. More often than not, in this case there are intermediate designata between the immediate designatum and the secondary one, which provide a gradual passage from the direct to the transferred meaning.

a) Hypo-hyperonymic symbols, for example, mowing as the symbol of work in Robert Frost’s ‘Mowing’. (Matthiessen 1950: 541) Highlighted in the title, the main symbol is sustained throughout the poem. The transposition in it is directed from the hyponym to the implied hyperonym: mowing -> any kind of labor (hyperonymy: species - genus). However, as we proceed in our reflection on the poem, we may also narrow the hyperonym, modifying it in a new way: any kind of labor -> labor of the mind, e.g. poetry (hyponymy: genus-species).

b) Synecdochal (part-whole), for example the fortress in the valley and the chapel in the forest in W. H. Auden’s ‘Spain’. (Skelton 1964: 133) The direct meanings of these symbols become generalized and serve to characterize ‘the whole’ – Spain: fortress -> strength, vigilance, militancy (object - characteristic) -> Spain (synecdoche: part-whole), chapel in the forest -> inherent religiousness (metonymy object-characteristic) -> Spain (synecdoche: part-whole).

c) Simultaneity (involvement in a common situation), as in Carl Sandburg’s ‘Population Drifts’ (Matthiessen 1950: 300), where we find the symbol of new-mown hay smell as full-blooded life, ‘passion for life’. Transposition: new-mown hay smell - mowing – farmer’s work -> strength, vigor - full-blooded life in the country (attendant circumstances – action -> concept as characteristic of this action).

##### Table 1. Types of metaphoric symbols

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| METAPHORIC LINKS | Stereotype | Archetypal (mytho-metaphoric, mytho – metonymic) | Individual |
| by similarity of function | bird – singer, poet, orator; wall – prejudice, hostility, causing division, estrangement; sunlight – revelation of the spirit | crow – mediator between this world and the other world | cry – an disturbing driving force present in the outer world and the mind |
| by similarity of form and appearance |  | gold – the sun; sunflower, marigold – the sun |  |
| by similarity of properties | night - death (darkness, inability to see, the unknown) | woods – death (something strange, unknown, mysterious, dangerous); gold – immortality of humans (durable, ageless) | the holy city of Byzantium – paradise; hothouse – the Universe, the womb, paradise on earth; house – human soul |
| by affinity of space – time characteristics – chronotopic symbols | train – time; road – course of life;faring (journey) – course of life | river – linear time, a course of human life; sea – cyclic time, the eternity | room – rest, stagnation;corridor – movement, progress |
| by affinity of spatial characteristics ‘up and down’ with certain abstract concepts |  | lotos – spiritual growth | swinging birches – harmony of spirit and body |
| by similarity of connotations (emotion, evaluation, intensity) – synaesthesic metaphoric symbols | rose-garden – love, paradise; night – death; light – life |  |  |
| by affinity of colors with certain notions – a subtype of synaesthesic metaphoric symbols |  | white horse - chastity, the Holy Spirit |  |
| by affinity of numbers with certain notions (primary mythological syncretism) |  | three (trees) - threefold sacrifice practiced in the ancient times – three crosses on the Golgotha -> Holy Father, Holy Spirit, Christ |  |

Table 2. Types of metonymic symbols

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| METONYMIC LINKS |  |  |  |
| by the contiguity ‘object – its characteristic/property’ | a dry vine – death; a green vine – life |  |  |
| by the contiguity ‘object – its function’ | fire – purification | golden bough – immortality and happiness (mytho-metonymy) |  |
| by synecdochal (part-whole) contiguity |  | hand – God, the demiurge | a fortress in the valley – Spain, a chapel in the forest – Spain |
| by hypo-hyperonymic (species – genus) contiguity |  |  | mowing – work as such |
| by contiguity ‘object as a cause – notion as an effect’ | rat – ruin, decay, death; yew – death |  |  |
| by simultaneity or involvement in a common situation (mythological syncretism, based on false understanding of cause and effect) |  | sunflower, marigold -> love for the sun-god (Apollo) – the sun, love | new-mown hay smell – full-blooded life in the country |
| by contiguity of connotations of objects with abstract concepts | valleys – passiveness, inertia, stagnation;mountains – mystery, a promise of a better life, a hope |  |  |

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1. Later I came to the discovery of ‘illogical’ types of links between concepts in symbols, i. e. some conventional and accidental neuropsychic relations (see the part of this work concerning irrational symbols). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Stochasticity factor rises with the increase of the number of random, unpredictable elements and relationships (H) in a text or in the case of absence of some elements and relationships in the recipient’s thesaurus (H) relative to the elements and relationships being determined (D): G =  (Morokhovsky 1991:34). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. However, we cannot exclude metaphors here based on similarity of manner (‘twist something like twisting the mouth when speaking’ and ‘tie things together like words’). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
4. Metonymic periphrasis, metonymic simile, metonymic quasi-identity and metonymic personification. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
5. These mythological associations are common for all birds, cf. a thrush in T. S. Eliot’s ‘Burnt Norton’, a blackbird in Wallace Stevens’ ‘Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird’, etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
6. Compare this symbol with the previously discussed stereotype symbol night-death. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
7. According to (Tokarev 1988: 375) the river is an ancient symbol of life, where the source is the world of souls, the middle part is the course of earthly life and the lower reaches are the world of the dead [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
8. This symbol is sensed as archetypal, but the data in (Garai 1973)are that it pertains mostly to the English culture.

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### Tables:

	1. Table 1. Types of metaphoric symbols
	2. Table 2. Types of metonymic symbols [↑](#endnote-ref-7)