

## Artículo de investigación

**The figurative and colorful image of the world in modern women's prose**

Образное и красочное изображение мира в современной женской прозе  
La imagen figurativa y colorida del mundo en la prosa moderna femenina.

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**Abstract**

The article presents the results of the analysis of tropes and color vocabulary in modern women's prose. A detailed comparison of the subject and the image of the comparison in the works of V. Tokareva, D. Ruina, O. Slavnikova, I. Muravyova and many other women authors of the XXI century is given in this article. The metaphoric of women's prose and the positions of the metaphorical and non-metaphorical components of the image are investigated. In the context of the tropes (epithet, comparison, metaphor), the color preferences of women writers are presented, so the coloratives are often presented as part of these figurative means and perform a specific function.

**Key Words:** Women's literature, tropes, epithet, comparison, subject and image of comparison, metaphor, index minimum, metaphorical context, two-sidedness, representation, semantics, colorful vocabulary, color image of the world, subject group, frequency, model of the world.

**Аннотация**

В статье представлены результаты анализа вершин и цветовой лексики в современной женской прозе. Подробное сравнение предмета и изображения сравнения в работах В. Токарева, Д. Руины, О. Славниковой, И. Муравьевой и многих других женщин-авторов XXI века. Исследована метафорическая женская проза и позиции метафорических и неметафорических составляющих образа. В контексте тропов (эпитет, сравнение, метафора) представлены цветковые предпочтения женщин-писателей, поэтому колоритивы часто представлены как часть этих образных средств и выполняют определенную функцию.

**Ключевые слова:** Женская литература, тропы, эпитет, сравнение, предмет и образ сравнения, метафора, минимальный индекс, метафорический контекст, двусторонность, репрезентация, семантика, красочный словарь, цветное изображение мира, предметная группа, частота, модель мира.

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## Resumen

El artículo presenta los resultados del análisis de vocabulario de tops y colores en la prosa moderna de las mujeres. En este artículo se presenta una comparación detallada del tema y la imagen de la comparación en los trabajos de V. Tokareva, D. Ruina, O. Slavnikova, I. Muravyova y muchas otras mujeres del siglo XXI. Se investigan la metafórica de la prosa de las mujeres y las posiciones de los componentes metafóricos y no metafóricos de la imagen. En el contexto de los tropos (epíteto, comparación, metáfora), se presentan las preferencias de color de las escritoras, por lo que los colorantes se presentan a menudo como parte de estos medios figurativos y cumplen una función específica.

**Palabras clave:** Literatura de mujeres, tropos, epíteto, comparación, sujeto e imagen de comparación, metáfora, índice mínimo, contexto metafórico, bilaterales, representación, semántica, vocabulario colorido, imagen en color del mundo, grupo de sujetos, frecuencia, modelo del mundo.

## Introduction

The problem of women's creativity causes an increased interest in the modern world. Many linguists note the fact that the experience of outstanding women is not considered at all and is not appreciated in culture (Bil et al, 2018; Eslami & Ahmadi, 2019; Yanchuk, 1998). Women's literature is productive, interesting and insufficiently researched; it has a special aesthetics of the word, a special vision of the socio-psychological and moral aspects of modern life, a particular manner of writing (Wang, 2018; Zaitseva, 2007; Jabbari et al, 2019).

The study of texts of women's literature makes it possible to trace the evolution of the images and aesthetic orientations of the artists of the word, to identify the features of the narrative strategies of women authors, to answer the question of particularity of «women writing» and «women's vision of the world».

Modern women's literature is represented by numerous authors: poetesses (A.Voytsekhovskaya, I.Lisnyavskaya, N.Matveeva, L.Miller, Y.Morits, O.Sedakova, E.Shvarts), prose writers (V.Tokareva, I.Bogatyreva, D. Vinkovetskaya, L.Gorlanova, M.Ketro, I.Muravyova, D.Rubina, O.Slavnikova, T.Tolstaya, L.Ulitskaya, T.Yankovskaya), playwrights (M.Arbatova, E.Gremina, K.Dragunskaya, L Evgenieva, E.Isaeva, O.Kuchkina, O.Mikhaylova, L.Petrushevskaya, E.Popova, N.Ptushkina, L.Razumovskaya). In spite of the fact that «the same processes are passing in women's literature as in the main literature, but these processes are aimed at finding new relations in art and avant-garde methods of its fixing, appear more vividly and originally».

The study of women authors is relevant because women's texts introduces a new type of hero, a new reality, a unique art world, a peculiar semantic text space, specific language means. Its interpretation reveals the linguistic stylistic features of the women's narrative manner and text formation methods, as well as ways of interpretation of the world around. It determines the appearance in the text of the sustainable use of certain linguistic units (lexical, grammatical, and both in the direct and in the figurative sense). The representatives of the surrounding world, involved in the artistic canvas of the work, form the women's image of the world, determine the direction of the thinking of women authors, it contributes to the determination of mandatory and optional mechanisms for interpreting the surrounding reality.

## Methods

The methods are associated with the characteristics of the material, the goals and objectives of the study. The following methods and techniques of research were applied in this article: a descriptive method in the process of information accumulation, its primary analysis and description; elements of component analysis during the studying the content plan of lexical units in the texts of women authors; contextual analysis in the process of describing of specific features of the context.

## Discussion and Results

Currently, the attention of literary critics and linguists is still focused on the studying of literary texts, so the analysis of figurative means in the prose of modern women authors seems to be highly relevant.

The question of tropeic vocabulary has a long history of studying; these problems were revealed by such linguistic researchers as O. Arefieva, N. Arutyunova, O. Akhmanova, A. Volkov, G. Gachev, A. Gornfeld, A. Gorshkov, V. Gusev, I. Davydov, N. Desyayeva, P. Dronyaeva, E. McCormack, A. Moskvina, G. Solganik, N. Turanina, V. Kharchenko, and others.

In the fiction texts of women authors a comparison is the dominant trope, also the metaphor and the epithet are quite frequent.

The study of the phenomenon of comparison, its grammatical forms as part of simple and complex sentences, functional and stylistic features in various types of texts are reflected in the works of N.D. Arutyunova, V.V. Vinogradov, R.A. Budagova, V.P. Vompersky, A.I. Efimova L.A. Kiseleva, A.N. and M.N. Kozhina, E.N. Nekrasovoy, A.F. Dyubkina, D.E. Rosenthal, N.A. Turanina, M.I. Cheremisinoi.

The semantics of the modern comparison undergoes significant changes in terms of the definition of the subject and mode of the comparison, as well as the functional orientation of the trope. The subject and the mode of the comparison expands its subject correlation, along with the traditional subject groups and lexemes, completely unexpected naming groups appear in the composition of the comparison. The mode of comparison arises a particular interest; it is a reflection of the model of the world, the artistic view of the word. Lexemes representing the mode of comparison are combined into several thematic groups, among which the most frequent are the following (Turanina, 2009; Nakhaee & Nasrabadi, 2019; Guzmán et al, 2018).

1. Proper names, naming historical persons, political figures, scientists, national heroes: Jeanne d'Arc, A. Matrosoy, Mikhail Kutuzov, Napoleon Bonaparte, Queen of Sheba, Einstein and others: The First is only one. Like Joan of Arc, or Mikhail Kutuzov [V. Tokareva];
2. Names of fairy-tale characters: Pinocchio, Ivan the Fool, Ivan Tsarevich, Kolobok, gnome, princess, Pierrot, Scheherazade, Tsarevna the Frog, etc.: (The telephone automaton) ... gave Antonov a cheerful, like Buratino's, Sveta's voice [O. Slavnikova];
3. Names of literary, ancient and film characters: Anna Karenina, Natasha Rostova, Nina Zarechnaya, Robinson Crusoe, Raskolnikov, Venus, Gyulchatay, Orpheus, Eurydice, radio operator Kate, Gobsek and others: I, like Chekhov's Nina Zarechnaya, rave about glory [V. Tokareva];
4. Names of persons by kinship ties: father, stepson, relative, mother, child, wife: someone else's success as someone else's wife [A. Matveyeva];
5. Names of persons by sex or age: old woman, child, children, woman and others: Novels went to the trees encircling the river like curious old women [A. Matveyeva];
6. Name of persons by occupation, profession: scientist, mountaineer, chef, mathematician: He decomposed his polyphony intuitively, like a genius, and exactly like a mathematician [V. Tokareva];
7. Nominations of persons by nationality or place of residence: Englishman, European: Seva, restrained, like an Englishman [M. Arbatov];
8. A productive thematic group is the names of animals, insects in the function of the comparison mode: goose, shark, goat, calf, dog, cat, butterfly, snake: Lariska sat down on a chair, like a butterfly on an unstable flower [V. Tokarev].

Comparison is the most common means of visual art in contemporary women's prose: O. Slavnikova (69,3%), V. Tokareva (68%), T. Tolstaya (59%), I. Muravyova (54%), N. Gorlanova (54%), D. Rubina (53%), L. Petrushevskaya (52%), M. Arbatova (52%), G. Shcherbakova (52%), G. Ulitskaya (52%), E. Chizhova (51%), A. Matveyeva (49%), and many other authors (40%). Women-writers logically build distribution lines of the imaginative component and implement the system of visualization of the depicted realities of existence (Turner, 1983). The diversity, uniqueness and high potential for the functioning of the components of a comparative operation create the conditions to the sublimation of their meaningful contents, which, as a result, creates a single field for the birth of new, perhaps occasional, associations (Tresidder, 1999).

In modern science there are various approaches to the study of metaphors (cognitive, pragmatic, semiotic, figuratively emotive, etc.), the characteristics of which are presented in the works of O. Aleshina, N. Arutyunova, M. Black, K. Buhler, A. Vezhbtskaya, V. Gaka, O. Glazunova, V. Grigoriev, S. Gusev, Yu. Karaulov, H. Clark, J. Lakoff and M. Johnson, A. Losev, V. Moskvina, M. Nikitin, V. Petrov, J. Piaget, A. Richards, L. Rynkova, J. Searle, Y. Solodub, G. Sklyarevskaya, V. Telia, N. Turanina, I. Trier, V. Kharchenko, and others. In our opinion, the most acceptable approaches are the structural and semantic approach, based on the studying of metaphors within denotative analysis, involving in the process of metaphorization. Many researchers share the opinion that metaphorical shifts in language are subject to a regular process - the transition from one semantic sphere to another: SUBJECT> SUBJECT; SUBJECT> PEOPLE; SUBJECT> PHYSICAL WORLD; SUBJECT> MENTAL WORLD; SUBJECT> ABSTRACTION; ANIMAL> PERSON; PERSON > PERSON; PHYSICAL WORLD> MENTAL WORLD.

All semantic relations in the metaphoric construction can be reduced to two components: one of them is basic (metaphorical), the second one is dependent (metaphorical, indicative minimum, indicative word) (Whorf, 1975). Based on the relationship of metaphorizing and metaphoricizing, the semantic core of metaphor is formed. Each of the components of the metaphoric context helps to create a two-dimensional image, that's why statement of the problem of sources of metaphor is important for analyzing the main and dependent elements of the metaphor, since it is the second component that determines the connection of the whole image with reality, with the realities of the surrounding world (Rosch, 1978).

The metaphoric component of the image in the women's literature is represented by more than 30 thematic groups of words, among which the most frequent and striking in their semantics are the following:

1. Somatisms - heart, viscuses, brain, belly, rib, finger, tongue, forehead, womb, gum, eye, pharynx, nipple, face: the brain of human love (Rubina); in the heart of the family (Tokareva); the iron heart of water (Gorlanova); from the heart of the city (Mikhailova).
2. Names of water elements, water spaces, state of water, liquids - sea, lake, small lake, abyss, wave, river, rain, waterfall, ocean, stream, solution, spout, whirlpool, ebb and float, boiling water, acid: into the abyss time (Tokareva); in the sea of sex (Tokareva); yogurt lake (T. Tolstaya); behind the whole lake of darkness (Slavnikova).
3. Floristic vocabulary - flowers, root, leaf, inflorescence, herbarium, peel, garden, sprout, bouquet, spice, forest, orchard: the flowers of pleasure (Tokareva); the roots of insult (Slavnikova); the last leaf of hope (Ulitskaya).
4. Names of living beings, parts of their body, a common set of individuals - mosquito, brood, animal, cat, flock, underfur, wing, jaw, muzzle, underbelly: The girl was as a white mosquito (T. Tolstaya), among the brood of photos (Ulitskaya); among a flock of ideal forms (Vasilkova);
5. Nominations of household items - a scroll, bundle, basket, piggy bank, pencil-box, pillow, luggage, tub, string bag, cauldron, trap, net, bag: roll of fate (T. Tolstaya); the city was shining with bundles of lanterns (T. Tolstaya); from the trap of illusion (Bereznyakova).
6. Names of the landscape, terrain, territories, and species - field, desert, landslide, territory, platform, path, ruins, bottom, cave, labyrinth, island, subsoil, potholes, soil, oasis: along the paths of love (Tokareva); in the field of love (Vinkovetskaya); on the chess field of perestroika (Tokareva).
7. Names of mechanisms, tools, its parts - block, arrow, scraper, sledgehammer, prosthesis, edge, hoop, bell, vice, chain: sledge hammer of hands (Rubina); block of panic (Tokareva); arrow of fate (Tokareva); body prosthesis (Petrushevskaya); edge of words (Schwartz).
8. Nominations of abstract concepts, phenomena, visual impressions - pressure, zigzag, shaft, soul, pillar, fireworks, dance, chamber, rehearsal, interlining, hell, worlds, hugs: interlining with sincerity and silence (Kuchkina); zigzag of this day

(Dobrova); the pressure of the dwindling life (Chizhova).

The frequency of metaphors with the names of elements in metaphorical contexts is as follows: V. Tokareva (26 names), M. Kucherskaya (18 names), L. Petrushevskaya (15 names), T. Tolstaya (15 names), L. Ulitskaya, M. Stepnova and others (10 or less names) in the studied texts.

The non-metaphorical component of the image relates it to reality and is distinguished by no less thematic variety. The nominations of feelings and states are the most represented in women's prose (as opposed to the metaphorical component, where this group is small) - feeling, love, sex, hate, resentment, panic, aches, weeping, pleasure, etc.; names of artifacts - a book, chair, sofa, velvet; names of relatives - family, mother-in-law; groups of abstract concepts - life, fate, memory; the name of the time periods - time, year, autumn and other particular names.

Thus, the lexico-thematic representation of the metaphorical image of the world in contemporary women's prose is a complex system of transference directions. Taking into consideration the specifics of metaphorical processes in women's prose writers, we can talk about the specificity of comparing various conceptual and thematic areas of the writer's world and about a special metaphorical model of the author's conceptual sphere, which manifests itself in the worldview and linguistic neosynchronism.

The color image of the world of women writers is formed on the basis of the national image, which is refracted and modified in accordance with the author's worldview. It is necessary to say that the color perception is a largely subjective process and often its results are not the same, the national color image of the world is formed on the basis of the individual color image of the world, but there can be fundamental differences (Hurvich, 1981). The colorful vocabulary is often woven into the context of the trope. Perceiving and reproducing a color image, the writer relies not only on the absolute color, but also on the expressive sensation from the perception of a particular color, noting associative signs at the subconscious level that accompany the word in the language. These signs lie at the intersection of the conceptual and sensual spheres of knowledge, they have a tonality, they give additional meaning to color terms, contribute to the expressive increment of the semantics of the word (Kay & McDaniel, 1978; MacLaury, 1992;

Kheirabadi & Mirzaei, 2019; Eisevandi et al, 2015).

The color designations in women's prose are represented by the main groups of white, black, red, blue, green, yellow and their shades. The colorful vocabulary is used by women authors as part of the tropes, the analyzed texts allow us to distinguish the functional purpose of these color terms. For example, in the artistic discourse of the studied writers, the colorolexem «white» is an epithet: a silvery-white veil flew in the air [Ulitskaya]; the snow-white fire of the storm [Muravyova]; crystal-white flowers of bird cherry, birch-white sundress of my sister [Middle]. Epithets often have special shades: snow, silver, crystal and others.

In the artistic discourse of women authors, representatives of red color (and its shades) can be used both literally and figuratively: burgundy old closet [Sycheva]; the bloody mess of dawn [Muravyova]; the scarlet blood of fire in the fireplace brought heavy memories [Ulitskaya]; reddish darkness of the soul [Stepnova]; red waterfall of silk [Tolstaya].

The colorful «green» in the language of modern women's prose is used as an epithet, and can also be used in the context of metaphor and function in the structure of comparison: the sea reflected in her silky-green eyes [Povolotskaya]; velvety-green leaves [Kucherskaya]; the emerald green places of my homeland [Buksha]; green music of the wind [Sycheva]; the rustling sea of green leaves [Ulitskaya].

## Conclusions

Women's literature reflects a passionate and painful search of the ideal, because this is the main meaning of the work of each true artist of the word. Any ways of discovering the typology of women's creativity will contribute to a deeper insight into the nature of women's creativity, which is the task of modern science of literature. The study of the specifics of women's prose will contribute to its further approval and development in the literary process. The studied women's texts, prosaic and dramatic, reflect the common features of modern literature, on the one hand, give an idea of the women's figurative model of the world, on the other hand.

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