

**LANGUAGE PECULIARITIES OF SPACE DESCRIPTION IN «THE WAY UP TO HEAVEN» BY R. DAHL**

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**Abstract.** *The article deals with the problem of literary space description on the base of R. Dahl's story "The way up to heaven". The author interprets the space of the story taking into account the space's being either close or open, flexible or non-flexible, extending or narrowing, concrete or abstract, finally, its being either static or dynamic. The paper also dwells upon the language means used to express the abovementioned characteristics of the space within the framework of the fictional discourse.*

**Keywords:** *text; concept; space concept; spatial characteristics; interpretation of narration.*

The concept of a space category is essential for the philological analysis of a literary text, since space serves as constructive principle for organizing a literary work. It provides a complete perception of the literary text, creating a plot unity of the work. The first who referred to the literary space was Yuri Lotman. According to him literary space represents an author's model of the world, expressed in the language of spatial representation [1, p. 218]. The text has spatial organization characterized by certain space features like extension, continuity, etc.

In the 20th century the concept of space in literature was studied only in combination with other key concepts, such as, for example, time or narration (Aristotle, O. Spengler, I. Kant). However, recently the approach has changed as space is treated as one of the dominant linguistic categories (N. Berdyaev, V.G. Gak, V.N. Toporov). Space, with the organization of settings and surroundings of events, characters and objects in literary narrative, along with other domains such as time or character, develops a fictional universe. A literary text is a specific spatial organization; thus, its analysis may include an analysis of such properties of space as symmetry and connectivity. In a narrower sense, space applied to a literary text is the spatial organization of its events, inextricably linked with the temporary organization of the work, and affecting the system of spatial images of the text [2, p. 1218]. In the semantic sphere of the space, significant objects, phenomena, and

relations are distinguished. The spatial boundaries are indicated by introducing stylistic means of various levels of the language, forming a complex of various means of expressing spatial localization.

Space is one of the most important components of a literary text. Analyzing the text it is important to study its fictional universe as a single whole, as a kind of complete and independent system. The characters act within the space limits that are prescribed by the sender of the text – by the author himself. Language means, such as verbs of motion, adverbs of place, complicated sentences are the instruments for indicating different spatial characteristics.

The first distinguishing trait of R. Dahl space is its being open and close. Even in the title of the novel we come across the preposition «up» and the noun «heaven» that pinpoint the idea of latitude and extensionality. Moreover, the protagonist is undergoing a long way of a person gradually losing his physical freedom while first being at home, then getting into the street (the most “open” space) and finally finding himself encaged in the lift. Thus, we witness the juxtaposition of “open”-“close” characteristics of space.

The latter can also be traced within the frames of one sentence: «The way she was standing there, with her head in the air and the body so tense, it seemed as though she were listening for the repetition of some sound that she had heard a moment before from a place far away inside the house» [3,

p. 7]. The instruments indicating the spatial characteristics in this sentence are the adverbs of place. There again deep/high up, one of the main characters was flying over the Atlantic, and from the other side there is a closed house left for a very long time: «...trying instead, or so it seemed, to hear and to analyse these sounds that were coming faintly from this place deep within the house. Soon she was high up over the Atlantic, reclining comfortably in her airplane chair, listening to the hum of the motors, heading for Paris at last» [3, p. 7]. We can see the open/close space structures thanks to the idea introduced by the author. Mrs. Foster is eager to fly to visit her daughter, she is eager to move from one place to another. Moreover, we can feel her attitude towards her husband; she wants to leave him as soon as possible. However, Mr. Foster is never in a hurry, he doesn't want live the house, he willingly unnerves his wife. According to the spectrum of adverbs and adjectives used to describe Mr. Foster all the action is concentrated inside the house, and his wife is far away, not even in the country. She is packing, riding in the taxi, waiting in the airport, flying in the airplane. She is always at different places. Thus, this open and close space structures combined help to understand the idea introduced by the author.

Secondly, through the whole story we can trace the antithesis of static and dynamic types of space. If we look at the means of describing of Mrs. Foster, we will notice many verbs of motion: «At least half an hour before it was time to leave the house for the station, Mrs. Foster would step out of the elevator all ready to go, with hat and coat and gloves, and then, being quite unable to sit down, she would flutter and fidget about from room to room until her husband, who must have been well aware of her state, finally emerged from his privacy and suggested in a cool dry voice that perhaps they had better be going now, had they not?» [3, p. 1]. Through all the verbs we can feel the constant moving. Mrs. Foster is not standing, she is always doing something, sentences describing her are in most cases extended and complicated. Moreover, the use of Continuous forms shows us the vividness, very dynamic change of events: «Mrs. Foster herself, in an old-fashioned fur

coat and with a black hat on the top of her head, was flying from room to room and pretending to supervise these operations. Actually, she was thinking of nothing at all except that she was going to miss her plane if her husband didn't come out of his study soon and get ready» [3, p. 2]. Here is another proof of the idea expressed: «She began hunting madly in her purse» [3, p. 7]. On the contrary, the actions of Mr. Foster are described only by the verbs having the meaning of immobility in their semantic structure; he is so slow, he is never in a hurry: «As he spoke, a door opened and Mr. Foster came into the hall. He stood for a moment, looking intently at his wife, and she looked back at him – at this diminutive but still quite dapper old man with the huge bearded face that bore such an astonishing resemblance to those old photographs of Andrew Carnegie» [3, p. 2-3].

The characters were living in isolated conditions, and there was no activity in their life, but when the plot started to develop, the life of protagonists gains the dynamics: «It was a gloomy place, and few people came to visit them. But on this particular morning in January, the house had come alive and there was a great deal of bustling about. One maid was distributing bundles of dust sheets to every room, while another was draping them over the furniture» [3, p. 1]. We also can conclude that the space depicted by R. Dahl in the abovementioned story can be characterized in terms of being flexible, prone either to extension or narrowing.

The space can also be concrete and abstract. In this particular story the concrete is predominant, because the space does not just attach the depicted world to another, but actively influences the essence of the plot: «This was an important journey for Mrs. Foster. She was going all alone to Paris to visit her daughter, her only child, who was married to a Frenchman» [3, p. 2]. The whole situation is weaved around the trip to France, and without it the plot wouldn't exist. Moreover, we find the exact location of the house: «Mr. Eugene Foster, who was nearly seventy years old, lived with his wife in a large six story house in New York City, on East Sixty-second Street, and they had four servants» [3, p. 1].

We can analyse text from the point of view of flexibility and non-flexibility. Mr. Foster was living her life being a good wife. She lived her ordinary life in the house, serving her husband. All of the sudden, we can see the change of the action, she persuaded her husband to let her visit her daughter. However, the space around her husband is gradually becoming narrower and narrower.

Through the whole narration author skillfully combined the features of different types of space. Their interrelation makes the space large and extensional, spacious. We can come to conclusion that the space in R. Dahl story

“The Way Up to Heaven” is not homogeneous. The writer's choice of linguistic means and the diversity of their linguistic arrangement contribute to the description of artistic time and space from the different viewpoints – in the aspect of being open/close, dynamic/static, abstract/concrete. Moreover, the space is flexible, it changes its characteristic while the story develops. The research of the space category in the literary text is the basic way to identify the space architectonics of the text.

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### ЯЗЫКОВЫЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ОПИСАНИЯ ПРОСТРАНСТВА В РАССКАЗЕ Р. ДАЛА «ДОРОГА В РАЙ»

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**Аннотация.** В статье рассматривается проблема описания пространства в художественном дискурсе на примере рассказа Р. Дала «Дорога в рай». Автор интерпретирует пространство с различных позиций, принимая во внимание, что пространство может проявлять себя в указанном тексте многообразно, будучи либо закрытым, либо открытым, гибким или негибким, расширяющимся или сужающимся, конкретным или абстрактным, наконец, оно может проявлять свойство статичности или динамичности. В статье также рассматриваются языковые средства, используемые для экспликации вышеуказанных свойств пространства.

**Ключевые слова:** текст; концепция; пространственная концепция; пространственные характеристики; интерпретация повествования.