POETICS OF POSTMODERNISM IN J. FOWLES NOVELS («COLLECTOR», «WOMAN OF THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT» AND «MAGUS»)

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Nowadays a significant number of critical works have been written about postmodernism. In this study, we sought to objectively approach the phenomenon under study, relying on the conclusions of such major researchers of postmodernism as J. Habermas, V. Welsh, I. Hassan, L. Hutchen, F. Jamison and others.

The term “postmodernism” is characterized by certain cultural trends. This is the artistic direction of modern art, the artistic and aesthetic system, and the theoretical reflection on this trend, which grew into a critical school when the methods of postmodernism began to be applied to the analysis of works of art from different eras. The theory of postmodernism has absorbed the most important discoveries of post-structuralism and is based on the development of its representatives, and is also closely related to the practice of deconstruction.

The relevance of the work is undeniable and is explained by interest in the modern literary process, in literature related to the era of postmodernism. In Europe, the emergence of postmodernism is the result of regular processes occurring in the literature. The philosophy of existentialism served as the ideological basis of this trend.

The scientific novelty of the research is that for the first time an attempt is made to study the novels of John Fowles in the context of postmodernism and different points of view on contemporary literature.

The object of research is the prose of postmodernism. The subject of the research is the works of J. Fowles. The analysis includes three novels: “Collector”, “Woman of the French lieutenant” and “Magus” — the most famous and popular works of the author.

The aim of the paper is to consider the functioning of postmodernism in J. Fowles prose.

In this research, we examined the functioning of postmodernism techniques on the example of the works of John Fowles. Before turning directly to the subject of analysis, it was important for us to identify the place of J. Fowles in the modern literary process. Artistic work of the author is quite popular, but the attitude towards it is ambiguous. The analysis of critical literature led us to the following conclusions. We can agree that the writer is indeed, to some extent, characterized by a too simplistic, everyday image of the ideas of postmodernism and existentialism (Western literary criticism). But in the modern world, the image of ideas cannot be simplified. It is important to convey ideas to the ordinary reader, to make them accessible to a wide circle, and not just the chosen elite of society (domestic literary criticism).

One of the objectives of our study was to show and prove the regularity of the latter opinion in regards to the study of the writer’s works. Thus, Fowles was able to transmit in his works the basic ideas, themes and techniques of post-modernism understanding of the world. The era of postmodernism is our present, the world that surrounds us. Understanding the world as chaos is the central idea of postmodernism.
Another important idea is the idea of freedom. But the understanding of freedom in terms of postmodernism and freedom in terms of humanity differs significantly. If in postmodernism internal freedom is important, which does not go beyond the framework of the internal world, then humanity understands freedom as permissiveness, the ability to do whatever one wants. Thus, freedom turns into aggression. To be free for oneself without interfering with one's freedom to others is wonderful, the freedom that restricts the freedom of other people is terrible, frightening.

The practice of postmodern creativity has shown that artists gravitate towards a contrasting combination of elements of various aesthetic systems of the past with the present, to the use of traditionally incompatible materials, colours, sounds in order to create a new artistic integrity. All this is due to the intentions of modern culture towards integration, towards the creation of unity with the preservation of its multiplicity. The dialogue with previous art cultures is emphasized. This approach testifies to a different understanding of “novelty” – the principle characteristic of modernist art, while repetition and innovation are characteristics of the art of postmodernism.

The type of modern multidimensional novel, which is the “Collector” and other novels by J. Fowles, is impossible without literary allusions. The textual and ideological continuity allows J. Fowles once again to rethink and give a modern vision of the enduring topicality of the problems posed in the play by W. Shakespeare's “The Tempest”. The author of the “Collector” gives his original concept of true art. The literary allusions of the “Collector” by J. Fowles are numerous and interesting; they constitute yet another special layer of the work.

Fowles' novel space is built on two different levels, becoming accessible both to the discerning reader and to those who are interested in problems that are directly related to the study of the nature of “prose”. Fowles' works demonstrate how creativity can simultaneously carry elements that are not directly or indirectly consistent with the process of creating prose. The unique position of the images of the author and the reader is shown in two areas – aesthetic and ethical (the narrative fabric of the work and the ethical relationship of images) – determines their central role in understanding the philosophical concept of the writer.

For contemporary Western art in general, it has become an essential feature to consciously refer to someone else’s word and someone else’s style, to constantly incorporate borrowings and reminiscences from a wide range of texts of previous eras into the new text, to play and transform classical motifs. The theme of literature, in particular, is literature itself; the theme of the literary text is the text itself in comparison with a number of its subtexts and “proto-texts”. Suffice it to recall, for example, the work of Vladimir Nabokov or the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges, who had a very strong influence on the poetics of postmodern prose, to understand who Fowles follows, constructing his book as an intellectual “novel in a novel”, and to which tradition it adjoins.

The philosophical foundations of Fowles' novels, as well as the entire writer's work, are, as Fowles himself acknowledged, a “peculiar stew on the essence of human existence” [1], the main ingredients of which are the philosophy of existentialism and the analytical psychology of K. G. Jung. That is why for all the works of the English novelist the problems of freedom of choice, the search for “authenticity”, the election of “genuine behavior”, which have undergone an original author’s interpretation and rethinking, are so significant.

Paying much attention to the relationships of people in different historical eras, Fowles reflects in his novels under what circumstances a split personality, inconsistency of behavior and character are born in a Westerner.
The relevance of the study of the functioning of verbals, in particular the infinitive, in the English language is due to a number of factors. Firstly, in a language system a verb occupies a special place that is not peculiar to any other part of speech: all statements are formed on the basis of a verb that represents the described situation. Secondly, the infinitive, like other verbals, expresses actions without specifying a person and number and therefore cannot serve as predicate in a sentence. Thirdly, one of the controversial problems of linguistics is the question of whether verbals belong to parts of speech, i.e. establishing whether they are part of a system of a verb or nominal parts of speech, or they form special parts of speech.

The verbals go beyond the usual verb categories with a number of features: they express actions without indicating a person and number, and according to the syntactic functions performed, they are close to the nominal parts of speech and cannot serve as predicates in a sentence. The peculiarity of the verbals is manifested in the fact that historically they go back to nouns, but in the process of development gravitate to the verb, acquiring verb categories, while preserving their individual characteristics.

According to the researchers, the infinitive is not the center of the verb system, but its margin [1]. Therefore, it is quite natural that the question of the infinitive particularly interested grammarians. Quirk & Greenbaum (1982) resolutely separated the infinitive from the verb, believing that the infinitive does not belong to the number of predicative or attributive forms of the verb, but is a name with a verb stem and therefore the infinitive was declared a special part of speech and was considered as a word not involved in conjugation. Leech and Svartvik (1983) emphasized that the infinitive in modern English is a “verbal nominative”, i.e. basic, original form of the verb.

Research and analysis of the infinitive in various functions, as well as its use as a part of infinitive constructions, and the lack of a unified opinion of researchers in their use ensure the relevance of the topic of this article.

The aim of this research is to study the structural-semantic and syntactic features of the infinitive, as well as the use of infinitive constructions in English based on the material of fiction.

The aim of the study identified a range of tasks that were necessary to solve in the process. The tasks of the research included: the study of the grammatical categories of