

INTERTEXTUALITY IN ENGLISH POSTMODERNISTIC NOVEL OF THE LATE 20TH CENTURY AND NEOVICTORIAN LITERATURE (BASED ON THE NOVELS BY A.S. BAYET AND D. LODGE)

Baxtiyarova Nazokat Obidjon qizi

Ilmiy raxbar

Fayziyeva Malika

Abstract: *The article examines intertextuality as a structural principle of English fiction of the last third of the twentieth century, with particular attention to the neo-Victorian novel. The purpose of the study is to identify and classify the types of intertextual links in the prose of A. S. Byatt and D. Lodge and to establish their functional load. The material comprises the novels "Possession", "Small World" and "Nice Work", from which intertextual inclusions were extracted by continuous sampling; the analysis draws on the transtextual typology of G. Genette and the classification of N. A. Fateeva. Four productive types were identified: stylisation and pseudo-quotation, generic hypertextuality, allusion and attributed quotation, and metatextual parody of academic discourse. It is shown that Byatt's intertextual gesture is directed inwards, towards the reconstructed Victorian source, and operates in a serious modality, whereas Lodge's is directed outwards, towards the present, and serves satirical ends. The findings qualify the widespread assumption that neo-Victorian poetics is internally homogeneous.*

Keywords: *intertextuality, English postmodernist novel, neo-Victorian fiction, A. S. Byatt, D. Lodge, stylisation, pseudo-quotation, hypertextuality, metafiction, academic novel.*

English prose of the late twentieth century took shape in a situation where the sense that original utterance had been exhausted was no longer a private authorial complaint but a working condition of writing. The novelist of this period writes in full awareness that the writing has already been done, and converts that awareness into a constructive principle. Hence the particular standing of intertextuality: from a property that the scholar reads into the text, it becomes a device that the text itself presents to the reader – through quotation, through pastiche, through the forging of another writer's hand.

This is most clearly visible where the Victorian age becomes the object of address. The neo-Victorian novel, which took form between the 1960s and the 1990s, is built upon the deliberate reproduction of an alien literary system – its genres, its stylistic registers, its ethical conflicts – while the modern narrator retains a measure of distance. The novels of A. S. Byatt and D. Lodge offer two irreducible solutions to this task: in Byatt the reconstruction of Victorian writing predominates, in Lodge the comic displacement of a classical plot into the university milieu.

The relevance of the present work lies in the need to describe intertextuality not as a general feature of postmodernist poetics but as a system of mechanisms differing in function. The aim of the article is to identify and classify the types of intertextual link in the prose of Byatt and Lodge and to establish their functional load. The tasks are as follows: to clarify the

boundaries of the neo-Victorian intertext; to determine the repertoire of devices in each author; and to compare the results.

The theoretical foundation of the concept goes back to M. M. Bakhtin's notion of dialogism, which demonstrated that the word in the novel is initially oriented towards another's word and bears its imprint [1, p. 218]. J. Kristeva, transposing this idea into the terminology of structuralism, introduced the term itself and defined the text as a mosaic of citations that absorbs other texts [2, p. 99]. G. Genette proposed a differentiated typology of transtextual relations, distinguishing intertextuality proper, paratext, metatext, hypertextuality and architextuality; this system remains the most serviceable for the analysis of concrete material.

In the Russian scholarly tradition the most consistent classification of intertextual inclusions belongs to N. A. Fateeva, who distinguished attributed and unattributed quotation, allusion, centonic construction, and intertext at the level of titles [3, p. 122]. A synthesising account of postmodernist poetics is given by I. P. Ilyin [4]. With regard to English-language material, the foundational study remains that of L. Hutcheon, who proposed the notion of "historiographic metafiction" – a narrative that simultaneously restores the past and lays bare the conventionality of such restoration [5, p. 105].

The neo-Victorian novel was theorised as a distinct phenomenon somewhat later. D. Shiller showed that the turn to the nineteenth century in contemporary authors is compensatory rather than nostalgic [6, p. 541]; A. Heilmann and M. Llewellyn insist that only a text which self-consciously reflects upon the very act of rewriting the Victorian may be considered neo-Victorian [7, p. 4]. In Russian scholarship Byatt's intertextual dialogue with Victorian literature has been examined by O. A. Tolstykh [8]. A comparison of Byatt and Lodge, however, remains underdeveloped: the two are customarily assigned to different strands of postmodernism, and it is this lacuna that the present study addresses.

The material consists of A. S. Byatt's novel "Possession" (1990) [9] and D. Lodge's novels "Small World" (1984) [10] and "Nice Work" (1988) [11]; Russian translations were also consulted [12]. The selection is motivated by the fact that all three texts explicitly thematise the relation of the present to the literary heritage and place a philologist among their characters.

By continuous sampling, fragments containing marked and unmarked references to other texts were extracted from the sources named. The unit of analysis was taken to be the intertextual inclusion – the minimal fragment recognisable to the reader as belonging to a different textual system. The study employs the comparative method, contextual analysis and elements of stylistic analysis; the typology of inclusions was built on the classifications of Genette and Fateeva, adjusted to the specific character of the material.

The sample yielded four productive types of intertextual link.

1. Stylisation and pseudo-quotation. This is most evident in Byatt. The novelist creates a corpus of non-existent texts – the poems of Randolph Henry Ash, the verse and fairy tales of Christabel LaMotte, journals and letters – which imitate with stylistic precision R. Browning, A. Tennyson, C. Rossetti and E. Dickinson. The pseudo-quotation here is functionally stronger than the genuine one: it does not refer the reader to a source but substitutes for it, compelling the fictional text to be received as a historical document.

2. Generic hypertextuality. In Lodge a classical plot is transferred wholesale into a new environment. "Nice Work" reproduces the fabular scheme of E. Gaskell's "North and South": the collision of an educated heroine with the world of industrial production, the mutual overcoming of prejudice, the eventual rapprochement. "Small World" relies on the structure of the romance of the Grail quest, with the place of the wandering knight occupied by a participant in international conferences.

3. Allusion and attributed quotation. This type is common to both authors but differs in its addressee: in Byatt references to Victorian poetry and to mythology predominate (the Breton legend of the drowned city of Ys, Norse material), whereas in Lodge the references are to T. S. Eliot, to Ariosto and to the Arthurian cycle, and are frequently placed in the speech of a philologist-character who comments on them on the spot.

4. Metatextuality and parody of academic discourse. Both authors introduce the apparatus of literary scholarship into the narrative: Byatt through archival research, textological disputes and competing interpretations; Lodge through the parodic depiction of theoretical schools, conference papers and academic careers. In this case the intertext becomes an object of representation and not merely a means of constructing the text.

The comparison shows that types 1 and 3 predominate in Byatt, with a serious modality of reference, while types 2 and 4 predominate in Lodge, with a comic one.

The data obtained make it possible to qualify the widespread view that neo-Victorian poetics is unified. What the two authors share is not a set of devices but the very orientation towards demonstrative secondariness: both the forging of a Victorian poem and the refitting of an industrial novel presuppose a reader capable of recognising the model.

The difference concerns the direction of the intertextual gesture. In Byatt the reference is directed inwards: the reconstructed Victorian text possesses independent value, and the contemporary scholars Roland Michell and Maud Bailey appear weaker than the past they themselves assemble. This supports Shiller's thesis concerning the compensatory function of the turn to the nineteenth century [6, p. 541]: the past returns as a realm of authentic feeling that the present has lost.

In Lodge the reference is directed outwards, at the present. The Victorian pretext serves as an instrument of satire: the mismatch between a noble fabular scheme and the petty circumstances of university life produces a comic effect and exposes the conventionality of both systems. This is closer to what Hutcheon described as parody with double coding, in which deference to the model is inseparable from irony [5, p. 26].

It is essential that in neither case is intertextuality reducible to ornament. It performs a plot-forming role: in "Possession" the search for sources is the fabula, while in "Small World" the scheme of the quest romance organises the characters' movements. This confirms Fateeva's proposition that in the postmodernist text intertextual links migrate from the level of device to the level of composition [3, p. 122].

A limitation of the study is the size of the sample: three novels do not permit conclusions about the whole corpus of neo-Victorian prose, and the quantitative proportions of the types identified require verification on extended material.

The analysis has shown that intertextuality in the English novel of the late twentieth century is realised as a system of functionally distinct mechanisms rather than as a homogeneous device. In the prose of A. S. Byatt, stylisation and pseudo-quotation predominate, producing the illusion of a genuine Victorian text and realising a serious modality in the treatment of the past. In the prose of D. Lodge, generic hypertextuality and the parody of academic discourse are the leading types, converting the classical pretext into a means of satirising the present.

Prospects for further study lie in extending the material to the novels of J. Fowles, C. Palliser and S. Waters, and in a comparative description of intertextual strategies in English-language and Uzbek prose at the turn of the twenty-first century.

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