

Kogay E.R.,

Candidate of philological sciences, Docent of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University,
Kazakhstan, Almaty, e-mail: elmira_kogay@live.ru

THE CONCEPT OF «TIME» IN SIGNATURE WORLDVIEW OF ANATOLIY KIM

The article deals with the substantial components of the basic concept of «Time». Universal, national-cultural and individual layers are identified. It holds in-detail description of the «passive layer» of the concept of «Time». As the material of description the works of the famous contemporary writer Anatoliy Kim were considered. The researcher highlights language means that represent the concept of «Time»: lexical units in the literal sense – words with temporal color, metaphorical designations, comparisons, epithets, figurative associations, symbolic assimilation. The focusing on the context of language units representing the concept of «Time» gives an opportunity to reveal the periphery of the concept, to describe the meaning shades that are not fixed in any lexicographical sources, and finally to discover the peculiarities of studied concept in linguocultural aspect.

Key words: concept, signature components of the concept, the concept of the active layer of the concept, the passive layer of the concept, language tools, a metaphor, time, Anatoliy Kim.

Когай Э.Р.,

әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университетінің доценті, ф. ғ. к.,
Қазақстан, Алматы қ., e-mail: elmira_kogay@live.ru

Анатолий Кимтің дербесавторлық болмыс бейнесіндегі «Уақыт» концепті

Мақалада «Уақыт» концептінің құрылымдық компоненттері қарастырылып, әмбебап, ұлттық-мәдени және жеке авторлық қабаттары анықталады. Автор «Уақыт» концептінің «пассивті қабатына» егжей-тегжейлі сипаттама береді. Зерттеу нысаны ретінде атақты жазушы Анатолий Кимтің еңбектері қолданылады. Зерттеу барысында «Уақыт» концептін сипаттайтын темпоралдық реңкті сөздер, метафоралық анықтаулар, теңеу, эпитет, образдық ассоциациялар мен символ мағыналы сөздер секілді лексикалық бірліктер айқындалады. Тікелей «Уақыт» концептін қолдану контекстін қарастыру арқылы концепт өрісінің перифериясын дәлдеп, сөздіктерде бекітілмеген мағыналық реңктерді, сонымен қатар лингвомәдени ерекшеліктерін белгілеу жүзеге асырылады.

Түйін сөздер: концепт, концептінің дербес-авторлық компоненті, концептінің белсенді қабаты, концептінің пассивті қабаты, тілдік құралдар, метафора, эпитет, уақыт, Анатолий Ким.

Когай Э.Р.,

к. ф. н. доцент Казахского национального университета им. аль-Фараби,
Казахстан, г. Алматы, e-mail: elmira_kogay@live.ru

Концепт «Время» в индивидуально-авторской картине мира Анатолия Кима

В статье рассматриваются содержательные компоненты базового концепта «Время». Выявляются универсальный, национально-культурный и индивидуально-авторский слои. Автор статьи подробно описывает «пассивный слой» концепта «Время». Материалом описания послужили произведения известного современного прозаика Анатолия Кима. Исследователем были выделены языковые средства, репрезентирующие концепт «Время»: лексические единицы в прямом смысле – слова с темпоральной окраской, метафорические обозначения, сравнения,

эпитеты, образные ассоциации, символические уподобления. Обращение к контексту употребления языковых единиц, репрезентирующих концепт «Время», позволило выявить периферию концепта и описать смысловые оттенки, не зафиксированные лексикографическими источниками, обнаружить лингвокогнитивные особенности исследуемого концепта.

Ключевые слова: концепт, индивидуально-авторский компонент концепта, активный слой концепта, пассивный слой концепта, языковые средства, метафора, время, Анатолий Ким.

Introduction

Time is one of fundamental ontological categories. As rightly been noted by S.M. Tolstaya in her monograph titled «Semantic Categories of Language and Culture», time is a category «...comparable and commensurable with categories of space, matter (thingness) and motion» (Tolstaya, 2010: 150). Researchers consider attitude toward time to be a «culture-discriminative feature». «Cultural differences manifest themselves in the following: computation of time, segmentation of time and attitude towards time» (Ter-Minassova, 2008: 190).

Physicists, philosophers, philologists and cultural experts unanimously agree that man is the subject of time perception. «This very «anthropological» aspect of time (perception and categorization of time, axiology of time, «use» of time by man) is a matter that interests researchers of language and culture above all» (Tolstaya, 2010: 150). «Philosophers consider time to be another name for life» (Maslova, 2004: 80). The concept of «Time» is described in sufficient detail in the dictionary compiled by Yu.S. Stepanov: «Constants. Dictionary of Russian Culture. Research Experience» (Stepanov, 1997: 171).

The so-called «active layer» of the concept of «Time» is presented in publications by V.G. Gak, G.D. Gachev, V.A. Maslova and others as «a principal relevant attribute familiar to any man of culture and meaningful to the latter» (Maslova, 2004: 54). Based on the following properties of the concept: a unit for processing, storing and transmission of information, changeability of its boundaries, dynamism and variability of its content volume, direct link with human consciousness, and its «layered» structure (Stepanov, 1997: 21), it is possible to describe the so-called «passive layers» (Maslova, 2004: 21), the «quantas» of meaning introduced by native speakers through their personal experience. Firsthand experiences of prosaists and poets provide the most interesting material for observation of the concept content.

As a complicated «mental complex» (according to V.A. Maslova's terminology) (Maslova, 2004), the concept of «Time» consists of panhuman (or

universal) and national-cultural components, as well as individual ones created by authors.

Individual components created by authors are presented in their writings and reflect their subjective perception of the category. Time, as an integral part of the language content, is reflected in units of different levels of language: as the category of tense at the morphological level, as words with temporal meanings at the lexical one, as temporal syntactical structures at the syntactical one.

Experiment

Let us consider lexical means of realizing panhuman and ethnic-cultural components which form the nucleus of the above concept in the works of the famous modern prose writer Anatoliy Kim.

Anatoliy Kim is a writer and dramatist, scriptwriter and translator, painter and book designer. He is a winner of the Yasnaya Polyana Prize «For Outstanding Achievements in the Russian Literature» (2005). His writings – «A Squirrel», a novel-fairy-tale (1985), «Father-Forest», a novel-parable (1989), «Onliriya», a novel (1995) – carry his reflections on time, eternity and human existence.

First of all, it is the word «time» in its direct meaning used to name the concept. For instance, «My father died during the war *time* in Korea» (Kim, 1995: 3); «By that *time* I was attending the art school...» (Kim, 1995: 7); «At that *time*, listening to sounds of the distant world, I began to understand an extraordinary delight of unhurried meditation...» (Kim, 1995: 95).

Secondly, there are words with temporal meanings: «But Keshka Loupetin could not visit the sick painter on that *day*» (Kim, 1995: 12); «Since that *day* we used to call on the cosmic artist once in a while» (Kim, 1995: 156); «It was *summer* in Moscow. A hot, dull, stifling *summer*, *summer* of Moscow» (Kim, Onliriya: <http://litresp.ru/chitat/ru/%D0%9A/kim-anatolij/onliriya/15>); «Those were the *autumn and winter* dearest to both of us...» (Kim, 1995: 93); «Our dramatic conversation took place *in spring*, *in March*, then a hot *summer* of Moscow passed, and *autumn* was in...» (Kim, 1995: 162); «...were awfully curious about what I was doing *from morning*

till night – painting in watercolors» (Kim, 1995: 71); «...as they did *in the years* when they sent children orphaned by the war to the Soviet Union» (Kim, 1995: 4); «Then there followed happy, hungry, curly *years, years, years* of war» (Kim, Onlirya: <http://litresp.ru/chitat/ru/%D0%9A/kim-anatolij/onliriya/15>); «...from time to time I called on her *in the evenings*» (Kim, 1995: 92); «He would not answer my question for *a long time*» (Kim, 1995: 156); «... you have a chance *now, while alive*, to go over the deathly bridge in your mind, look back and serenely smile at your past terrors, troubles, fears and curses» (Kim, 1995: 200).

Thirdly, there are words to denote periods of man aging: «So I prepared to welcome my *widow's autumn*» (Kim, 1995: 201); «...the time we had in common – that of *youth*, friendship, cherished dreams, and unconditional love of art – was coming to its end» (Kim, 1995: 210). The examples testify to anthropocentric orientation of the concept of «Time» when a human life is viewed through a prism of time.

Fourthly, there are words to name duration of various events: «*During the war* she became a widow and raised me alone» (Kim, 1995: 213); «into my one-room doghole of the epoch of communism...» (Kim, Onlirya: <http://litresp.ru/chitat/ru/%D0%9A/kim-anatolij/onliriya/15>); «...what Gobelins – the authentic *17th century*...» (Kim, 1995: 203); «He was standing near an old, trashy, shabby table and tapping on a *pre-revolutionary* «Remington» (Kim, 1995: 206). In the fifth place, there are words to denote segments of time: «I also remember, right *at this point of time... a year ago*, about *this very time*, he was sitting in the room...» (Kim, 1995: 100); «What good will it do to talk about its utter hopelessness, about the terrible *minute* when that hopelessness opens up to you in fair daylight...» (Kim, 1995: 114); «It shone just for a *split second*...» (Kim, 1995: 122); «Soon there will come an *instant* when I stop being a squirrel and become a man» (Kim, 1995: 151); «It took me a long time – hours, weeks – to paint some pictures whereas there were some time that I did in *half a minute*» (Kim, 1995: 184).

A multitude of words to denote time are widely used not only by writers and poets but also by common native speakers and reflect such properties of time as duration, succession, asymmetry and irreversibility.

The mental concept of «Time» comprises not only a certain universal component; it includes also individual components created by writers. Now we shall turn to A.A. Kim's writings. In A. Kim's works, time is presented as a certain illusion created

through a succession of changes in his characters' condition while travelling through eternity of the Universe. That is why his characters happen to encounter their own selves, but only of twenty years ago; there are incessant transformations and reincarnations, journeys to the past and future, possibility of the existence of a man as flat as mirror amalgam, and life after death.

The author is not satisfied with the «naive» perception of time as a succession of repeated, regular events (Maslova, 2004: 78): «You will *get married*, then *become a widow*, *get old*, give up your teaching, *retire*, buy a house at the edge of some village among lakes, start gardening and go mushrooming...» (Kim, 1995: 190), and he cannot fully adopt the naive-metaphorical understanding of time as a certain liquid substance: «Since that time I keep repeating this consolation to myself – when it becomes unbearable to *float through the time of my existence*, along the *bottomless river*, the real essence of which will be manifested only when some time I *get drowned in it*» (Kim, 1995: 176); «...on hearing the murmur of the Forest that does not live in the mode of *swift-flowing time*...» (Kim, 1989: 38), «... such a clear message has nothing to do with the *current* of actual life which does not flow along ready-made, convenient stream beds of calendars but drags on as wearisome threads of seconds through ashes and rubbish of endless, unbearably long days» (Kim, 1995: 213). The writer cannot remain satisfied with the philosophical understanding of time as a unidirectional progressive movement («linear time») (Maslova, 2004: 78) and fills the concept of «Time» with a certain individual self-created content. The metaphor devised by the author becomes a means of representation. The writer resorts to the metaphor because, appealing to one's imagination, it makes clear even most incomprehensible things.

Due to philosophical complexity and abstractedness of the concept of «Time», the author addresses properties of time and laws of its flow. He is fully aware that time, being an essential characteristic of objective reality, and a form of matter existence, is subject to certain laws. In the scientific view of the world, time is defined as something one-dimensional, asymmetric, irreversible, and infinite to characterize changes occurring in the world moving from the past towards the future whereas in the author's vision of the world (The Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1983: 7), time has a different set of properties. Further we shall consider them in more detail.

According to A.A. Kim, tangibility, «thingness» of time is one of its essential properties: «Just lis-

ten to what otherworldly voices are telling me from *invisible folds and hidden corners of infinite time*» (Kim, 1995: 17). Or another example, to show the author's interpretation of time as something immeasurably larger and longer than the surrounding physical world: «They do not have any names, these woods and plains, they will flash before my eyes and disappear for ever under the mysterious *cloak of time* of different colors: it can be velvety black like emptiness of an autumn night, or pearly azure, with faded blue outlines of distant woods on an August day. And the world of Earth enveloped in this *transparent cloak* remains anonymous, mute and sacred to me» (Kim, 1989: 131); «But he remains within the space along which he is *spread as a thin layer of time*» (Kim, 1989: 122); «and from now on, we, a gemates, shall go along *air paths of time* and leave others to scramble along solid earthly ways» (Kim, 1995: 190); «...(I) asked Mitya to *travel a little bit along backstreets of some ancient time*» (Kim, 1995: 191); «*Growing through time*, the forest rests on dead firmament with tips of its roots» (Kim, 1995: 268). The writer treats time as if it were a concrete tangible object.

The concept of time is brought to the level of utmost sensibility and tangibility in the image of a cosmic clock to express the author's concept of time: «O, *the eternal whirling of life*, the booming pendulum of the *cosmic clock* ticking in no hurry to be... not to be! To be... not to be! here... there! here... there!» (Kim, 1995: 239).

In the writer's understanding, as well as in that of modern science representatives, the category of time is closely connected with the category of space. In philosophy, time and space are attributes of the general form of matter existence (The Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1983). The writer «pictures» an endless flow of duration presented as a succession of events: «*Time* is believed to exist just because of an *event* taking place, and then it disappears» (Kim, 1995: 187). Here the writer's understanding of time does not differ from the generally accepted notion of it. A. Kim easily deals with all characteristics of time familiar to all educated people but it would be utterly wrong to understand Kim's time only in the sense of the new European physical time as infinite unidirectional duration between the past and the future and across the present. Kim's time cannot be presented either as a direct line, or as circles, or as a spiral. The scale of his «substantiality» extends from «vacuum» to «fog» and «depth» of centuries, it can be compressed and expanded, relative and conditional, seconds are felt like eternity there, and years pass like an instant: «the past is an

uncomprehended instant» (Kim, 1995: 13); «infinity is a terrible minute» (Kim, 1995: 92).

The temporal structure of A. Kim's cosmos is infinitely diverse. In the writer's worldview, time is multidimensional and multidirectional, time is imperceptibly flowing from the past towards the future, and the latter turns into the past: «Everything real is in the present that you exist in but it instantly turns into the past – and it is no longer yours» (Kim, 1995: 15). The characters of «The Squirrel», his fairy-tale-novel, exist simultaneously in different bodies – for example, in a man's and an animal's ones, in parallel spaces and times: «If you knew, Liliiana, that in the vistas of innumerable days, this call note of geese – ducks – sparrows *has always sounded and has not, and is ever sounding there. Time* is believed to exist just because there is an *event* that takes place, and then it disappears. There are various events occurring in space – well, for example, someone's life is passing – that is just *space undergoing metamorphoses, that is what they call «time»*, Liliiana. *Life is this very metamorphosis of space, and not a pathetic loss of time*, as we believe. We do not lose anything. Space always remains where it is but it changes its appearance by means of our lives. And also – through movement of clouds, wind, birds, animals, springs and rocks falling into the sea.

I shall teach you how not to feel sad about life passing away. Mind that at that very place where you are grieving at the moment, there have been and will be occurring countless *changes in space*, shifts of the earth crust, flights of butterflies and bugs, growth of lofty trees... You are just a particle of the *ever changing infinite space* that happened to be called Liliiana, and your life is as much needed by the world as a grasshopper's jump from one place to another, or as astration in the Universe» (Kim, 1995: 187-188). The narrative pattern of the novel is in tune with this very understanding of time. It is arranged in such a way that life stories of the four friends, painters, are told on behalf of different characters of the novel.

Time is known to be the key measure of human life. In reality, durations of a human life and that of an insect that lives just one day are incommensurable and incomparable, but in A. Kim's interpretation, in the light of eternity, their lives are equally invaluable. In the author's representation, lives of bees or ants are as rich in events and even in «emotions» as those of human beings. In A. Kim's novels, there is, for instance, a detailed description of a worker-bee's life and its «thoughts» before death: «It occurred to the bee for the first time that its own family wanted it just to work, and, unable to work, it

was no longer of any value. And it was left alone to die, and there was nothing else for it except death – it turned out that the worker-bee was a lonely creature, an utterly dumb thing, despite the solemn humming of the remote nest... It took off, with difficulty, from the swaying flower and flew, not knowing where, suddenly delighted with its unexpected freedom, and never expected to fall into a spider web at the end of its way» (Kim, 1995: 75). The equalization of human life with that of an insect implies the idea of connection between time and ever-lasting cycles of existence, and equal dependence of all living beings on the relentless Chronos.

The writer's perception of changeability of states of nature, of man, world, cosmos, of any event and even the flight of time from the viewpoint of eternity is another distinctive feature of Kim's time. Time is presented as a combination of an instant and eternity, life and death. In other words, time is not only time, i.e. duration proper, there is always something supertemporal, infinite in it: «Suddenly I wanted to go *beyond any time* but to always be a man» (Kim, 1995: 187).

In «Onliriya», there is a chapter called «Without Time» in which the author contraposes the notion of «time» to those of «timelessness» and «supertemporality»: «*Time* that angels have lit alongside with stars, burns down and turns into ashes of cold blankness. It means that prior to the *heavenly time* burning beneath our eyes there existed another state of the world – that of *timelessness* and our genealogical tree goes back to that yawning depth of another dimension» (Kim A.A. Onliriya: <http://litresp.ru/chitat/ru/%D0%9A/kim-anatolij/onliriya/15>); «What people call *death* is a complete *separation of living beings from time* – the action that always has a sickening look. Since the day when this happened for the first time, any living being on earth, be it an animal, a worm, a man, began to *tear itself* – through a collapse of its individual existence – *from general existence and fall into a bottomless hole of supertemporality*» (Kim, Onliriya: <http://litresp.ru/chitat/ru/%D0%9A/kim-anatolij/onliriya/15>).

«In culture, time is endowed with certain semantics, sacralized and included into a value system with such key coordinates as life and death. Time is a category characteristic of the world of the living; in the other world there is no time – it is still and invariable» (Tolstaya S.M., 2010: 155). In the world built by A. Kim, time associated with eternity is characteristic both of the mortal life and the infinite afterworld. The «Dictionary of the Russian Language» contains the following explanation of «eternity» as a lexeme: «a stream of time having

neither beginning nor end» (The Dictionary of the Russian Language, 1981: 159). «The Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary» clarifies that «eternity is the inherent property of nature as a whole whereas any concrete form of matter is limited and transient in terms of time (The Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1983: 94).

«Supertemporality» is presented by A. Kim in two meanings. In «Onliriya», «supertemporality» implies death whereas in «The Squirrel» «supertemporality» means eternity to comprise mortal life and existence after death defined by the author as «endless dusk of eternal existence» (Kim, 1995: 267). Love and work are the only ways to cope with enslaving infinity of time that mercilessly devours minutes, days, years of human life and nears the moment of passing into another reality – death: «The poor thing was destined to exist without *true earthly love to take one sky-high* and without *creative work to convert the instant of one's life into a state of flight in eternity...*» (Kim, 1995: 144). After his early tragic death, Mitya Akoutin, a talented artist, became free of time and was able to finally fulfil his mission: «So, now I have the opportunity *to travel through time, to go to the past and come back to the period that you or another person that I know would believe to be the present*. But time, in its incessant flow, immediately becomes the past – and after an instantaneous glimpse of reality I, Lilianna, returned to the state of *unearthly freedom* that you can feel only in your *dreams*» (Kim, 1995: 180).

In addition to metaphors, the concept of «Time» is represented through comparison: «... a dolphin was jumping and shooting airward for *an instant to remind a well-rounded eternity*» (Kim, 1995: 127). The comparison – «well-rounded eternity» – is of particular interest here. The author perceives eternity as a feelable process trying to form a circle, and this is not accidental – neither eternity nor the circle have beginnings or ends which serves as a ground for comparison. The end of one thing is the beginning of another, perpetual motion in circle, perpetual metamorphosis and reincarnation.

Various types of unraveling the plot are another way to represent the concept of «Time» in literary text (for more detail about the means, see: Maslova, 2004: 81). Since temporality is related to succession of actions and events, the principle of plot unraveling becomes a tool to reflect the author's ideas of time.

The fact that «The Squirrel», a fairy-tale-novel, has neither a consistently developed plot, nor a chronological presentation of events, attracts attention as well. According to A.V. Popova, presentation of events from different points of

view is another important compositional feature of A. Kim's writings (Popova, 2011). She calls this method of building pieces of fiction «the principle of clipping composition» – when «inner, emotional-semantic, associational links between characters, episodes and details become more significant than external cause-and-effect relationships between them» (Popova, 2011: 7). The so-called «principle of clipping composition» is one of the ways to reflect the concept of «Time» in the individual picture of the world created by A. Kim and to express the idea of multidirectional and multidimensional time. Due to the changing angle of vision, the narrative acquires a certain stereoscopic nature.

Results and discussion

Upon analyzing representation of the concept of «Time» in writings by A.A. Kim, we could share the following conclusions: the concept under study is presented through versatile language means, such as lexical units in their direct meanings, metaphorical naming units, comparisons, epithets, a set of figures of speech, figurative associations, and symbolic framings. There is another specific way of time representation used by this author: unraveling plots according to the principle of clipping composition, changes in picturing angles to make time multidimensional and multidirectional. Eventful plots are another way to embody the concept of «Time».

With regard to understanding of time, writings by A.A. Kim is characterized by a certain ambivalence manifesting itself through intertwinement of

historical and mythological times. Time, when converged, becomes instantaneous. In such a way, the conventional conception of events succession is broken. Using time shifts, sudden transfers of scenes from one location to another, word-painters destroy time fences between events. A stereoscopic picture of the volatile world is created through the use of artistic conditionality, symbolics, parable principle, enhanced metaphoricalness, deviation from conventional logic in unraveling of plots; all these enable to cover quite a long period of time, from the Creation up to nowadays, in a relatively small piece of fiction.

Conclusion

Through the use of the above stylistic devices, the concept of «Time» is «saturated with» both universal and individual, author-created, contents. The following semantic elements attract attention: time – length of matter existence, time – length of human life, time – procedurality, time – event, time – periodicity, time – a discrete phenomenon represented by the past, present and future, time – turning of the past into the present, time – turning of the present into the past, time – a link between the present, past and future, time – something tangible, time – flowing liquid substance, time – a river, time – life, time – eternal earthly life, time – death, time – beyond time, time – supertemporality, time – a short instant, time – instantaneousness, time – infinity, time – endless cycling of existence, time – a circle, time – eternity, time – space, time – nothingness.

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