

ON THE PROBLEM OF INTERTEXTUALITY IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

Hamroeva Dildora Dagarovna

Lecturer of Russian Language and Literature

Department of Uzbek and Russian Philology

Asia International University

Bukhara, Uzbekistan

Abstract: The article examines the problem of intertextuality as one of the central categories of modern linguistics and philology. The main approaches to the understanding of intertext in the works of M. M. Bakhtin, J. Kristeva, Yu. M. Lotman, Yu. S. Stepanov and other researchers are analyzed. It is noted that intertextuality is interpreted as a system of intertextual connections based on dialogism, citation, allusions, and borrowings. It is emphasized that no text arises in isolation; it always interacts with other texts, which ensures its semantic multidimensionality and inclusion in the cultural space. It is concluded that intertextuality is not only a phenomenon of the literary process but also a universal characteristic of speech-creative activity, reflecting the dynamics of meaning formation in the humanities.

Keywords: intertextuality, intertext, intertextual connections, dialogism, “alien word,” text, linguistics, philology, culture.

Introduction

In modern philology, the problem of intertextual connections is known under the term intertextuality. The concept of “intertext” became popular and widely spread in the late 1960s. The terms intertextuality and intertext are now, undoubtedly, at the center of attention of literary scholars, linguists, ethnolinguists, cultural theorists, etc. Such terms often lose the necessary unambiguity. Yu. M. Lotman saw in this not so much the absence of terminologically precise designation of a scientific concept, but rather a signal of the relevance of the problem, an indication of the area in which new scientific ideas are born [5, p. 198]

The problem of intertextual connections, which has a long history and rich traditions, has in recent decades become the object of close attention from specialists in various fields of the humanities: philosophers, linguists, literary critics, cultural theorists. According to most scholars, one of the most difficult layers of any text to access is its intertextual connections. Recently, an increasing number of works have been devoted to “dialogism” and “polyphony” in the text, the “alien word” in the text, the “dialogization” of texts, or intertextuality itself.

Despite the diversity of concepts of intertextuality, this term, according to Yu. P. Solodub, possesses a fairly transparent internal form that contributes to the understanding of the word itself: from Latin *inter* – “between,” *intertextum* – “woven inside” [5, p. 51]. Intertextuality is most often interpreted as “a connection between two literary texts belonging to different authors

and, in temporal relation, defined as earlier and later” [5, p. 51].

At present, the phenomenon of intertextuality is actively studied by both domestic and foreign linguists (I. V. Arnold, Yu. S. Stepanov, V. E. Chernyavskaya, U. Broich, R. Lachmann, M. Pfister, W. Weib, and others). It is known that the starting point for building the modern theory of intertextual connections were the ideas of M. M. Bakhtin about the “alien word” and “dialogism,” under the influence of which the French semiotician Julia Kristeva introduced the concept of intertext in 1967 [2].

M. M. Bakhtin argued that “every concrete utterance finds the subject to which it is directed always already spoken about, evaluated. This subject is permeated with viewpoints, alien evaluations, thoughts, and emphases. The utterance enters this dialogically tense environment of alien words, interweaves with their complex interrelations, merges with some, repels others, intersects with still others” [1, pp. 89–90].

In Bakhtin’s concept, the text is regarded as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, as a “peculiar monad reflecting within itself all texts within a given semantic sphere” [1, p. 299].

According to Bakhtin, texts that share at least some semantic convergence inevitably enter into dialogic relations, becoming links in a chain of speech, since they “come into contact with one another on the territory of a common theme, a common idea.” And since “the theme has already been voiced and disputed, texts are filled with the sounds and echoes of other texts: various kinds of quotations, literary allusions, literary and non-literary borrowings, built as mosaics of alien texts” [1, p. 433].

These ideas of M. M. Bakhtin on the dialogic nature of any utterance were further developed in the works of J. Kristeva, who, relying on Bakhtin’s model that replaced the static division of texts with one in which “a literary structure does not exist in itself, but is produced in relation to another” [2, p. 97], concluded that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations, any text is the absorption and transformation of another text” [2, p. 99].

For Julia Kristeva, intertextuality is the product of the dialogue of a text with preceding literary works and its orientation towards the works of contemporary literature within the process of creative activity. The discovery of intertext took place long before the term itself appeared. Kristeva’s term is later in relation to various traditional concepts of textual references. Already in antiquity we encounter the interplay of texts, expressed in the fact that one text refers to another. Yu. S. Stepanov writes about this, emphasizing that the true origins lie in historical poetics of the second half of the 19th century, especially in its core — the “poetics of plots” [6, p. 8].

The task of the modern discipline of intertext, according to the author, is to shift the focus. In historical poetics, the focus was placed “on tracing the boundaries of tradition (that is, the inherited past, not one’s own authorial creation, but borrowed) in the process of personal

creativity; in intertextuality, the focus is on erasing the boundaries between ‘tradition’ and ‘personal’ creativity” [6].

Considering language as a primary essence, which acquires material embodiment when objectified in a text, Yu. M. Lotman once again emphasizes that “language precedes the text, the text is generated by language” [3, p. 198]. At the beginning of every word there was always some alien word. No text can arise out of nothing; it is inevitably connected with already existing texts. Pointing to the secondary nature of any text, scholars tend to believe that the meaning of a text, going beyond the boundaries of its own textual space, is enriched by a complex of connections with other texts. Everything that has already been said and written constitutes the basis, foundation, necessary precondition and condition of existence for newly created texts, and therefore, according to E. V. Mikhailova, becomes a “system-forming factor in the creation of a speech-producing work” [4, p. 6].

Thus, modern theory of intertextuality represents a theory of relations between texts. It can therefore be concluded that in modern linguistic science, intertextuality is understood as the interrelation of texts, as the place where textual planes intersect. The problem of intertextuality is closely connected with the long-studied literary problem of sources, influences, and imitations, but is not reducible to it. In studying intertextual connections, one should approach the text not from the perspective of the author’s intention, but from the perspective of what has entered the text, what readers will see in it, and what associations these inclusions may evoke.

Дильдора_Дагаровна, [23.09.2025 13:04]

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