

LITERARY AND LINGUISTIC APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF FICTIONAL PLOTS

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Abstract. The article is dedicated to outlining the literary and linguistic approaches to studying the literary plots. A plot is generally defined as a sequence of events in a story with character motivations and cause-and-effect relations. The study of plots is being carried out in various fields, including narratology, cognitive narratology, literary criticism and cognitive poetics. The shift in analyzing plots was marked by the theory of M.M. Bakhtin who proposed the idea of chronotope being the center of the events in the story. As M. Bakhtin noted, chronotope has the plot-forming function: the statement which was never fully explicated. In this regard, the aim of the article is to contrast the existing approaches and methods of literary plot analysis in the aspect of utilizing M. Bakhtin's idea in contemporary research. The article also focuses on the different viewpoints of studying the phenomenon of 'eternal plots' and the reasons for their emergence. Based on the analytical review of the contemporary theories of plot, it is concluded that the mentioned approaches to analyzing plot do not fully depict the idea of chronotope as of a plot-forming entity, which points at the necessity of further research in this field. The scientific novelty of the article lies in the statement about the necessity of studying plot as an event component in the conceptual structure of chronotope Space-and-Time-Continuum. Theoretical and practical significance of the study lies in revealing the further perspective of research in this field from the standpoint of cognitive linguistics and cognitive stylistics, along with the possibility of using research results for academic purposes.

Keywords: plot, fabula, narrative, narratology, chronotope, parallelism, eternal plot, cognitive narratology, mind style, space-and-time continuum

Basic provisions

The plot of a literary work is the primary concern of all the literature-related disciplines. Being the core of a literary work, plot unites its events into a meaningful whole, allowing for better understanding and proper conceptualization of what happened in the story. In this regard, plots can be imagined as frames that hold events together. As any unity, plots consist of certain elements, each of them being able to influence the structure of the plot. Levitan and Zilevich, for instance, claim that a single punctuation mark (or its absence) may hint at complex cause-and-effect relations which are realized in a story [1].

During certain periods of literary theory establishment, plots were studied from different viewpoints. Those include the formalist approach, motif analysis approach, narratology, cognitive narratology, and later the method of deconstruction proposed by Jacques Derrida. What unites these approaches is the understanding that plot is not – and has never been – a simple, chronological sequence of events. It is a much

larger and complex entity which “binds” the story to the reality, making it possible for the reader to reflect on what has happened. While the question of what plot is seems to have been answered profoundly, this article mainly focuses on how plots were and are being studied, how the theory of M. Bakhtin relates to other ideas, and why plots reoccur.

Introduction

In the history of literary analysis and literary criticism, studying plots and narratives occupy a specific niche. A plot may be defined in a variety of ways, perhaps the first and foremost being its distinction from fabula. I. Silantiev argues that fabula is syntagmatic while plot is paradigmatic [2], while it is generally considered that fabula is the chronological sequence of what happened within the story, while the plot relates to causal relationships between the elements of the narrative. E. Forster, for instance, believes that plots always contain the “cause and effect” structure – one element of the narrative causes the other. To explicate, Forster provides the example of a simple sequence of events: *the king died, and then the queen died*. The scholar calls this sequence fabula, that is, the chronological lineage of the events within a story. To turn this sequence into a plot, cause-and-effect relations need to be added: *the king died, and then the queen died of grief*. Explaining why the queen departed as well makes the story complete.

K. Kukkonen states that plots may be conceptualized by three main axes [3]:

- 1) Plot as a whole (conceptualized at the end of the novel, as usual);
- 2) Plot as a sequence (conceptualized while reading the novel, progressively);
- 3) Plot as an element of the author’s design.

The first understanding of plot mainly relates to the elements of plots and the way they act to form a whole. This explication also includes the idea that plots (the plural form is used deliberately here) are recurrent. Analyzing them from this perspective, it is possible to create certain lists of plots which have common elements, common structure, common conflict and outcome.

The second understanding mainly includes the dichotomy “plot and fabula”, first proposed by Russian formalist school and later utilized by the Western scholars as well. As mentioned earlier, fabula is the chronological sequence, while plot is the causal sequence. However, such a distinction might be oversimplified when applied to complex literary works and those works of fiction which may deviate from the established norm. For instance, considering Dadaist poetry, one may argue that it has no plot, while in E. Forster’s understanding, every literary work is based on plot, though it might be difficult to distinguish initially [4].

Eventually, the third understanding of plot is closely connected to how the story is told, i.e. to the narrative. It is obvious that the same event may be viewed from different angles, thus the plot of a literary work will – and must – depend on which angle the author chooses. Unreliable narrators and complex narrative techniques relate to how the author wishes to convey the simple notion of “what happened”. In this regard, even the most primitive of fabulae and the simplest of plots may be turned into an enigma. Considering William Faulkner’s narrative, for instance, E. Degenfelder argues that most of his works are the so-called baroque literature,

meaning they may be based on simple plot structures, but it is the imperfections of narrative that make them unique [5].

Expanding on Kukkonen's outline, we suggest that contemporarily, literary plots are analyzed through the following main approaches:

- 1) The analysis of what plot is: its distinction from fabula, its main elements, aspects, and structural elements.
- 2) The analysis of how plots of different literary works may overlap, repeat, and reoccur. This also includes various studies on the initial source of plots and working with the already-compiled plot and motif lists. From the linguistic perspective, intertextual elements are considered, as it is through them that we gain insights into the recurrence of plots.
- 3) The analysis of how plot and narrative are interrelated and how they influence each other. This area covers main narratological approaches along with such a developing field as cognitive stylistics.

Methods and materials

In the current article, the methods of *theoretical analysis* and *comparative analysis* are utilized. The works of various narratologists, cognitive narratologists and scholars in the field of literary criticism are studied, compared and contrasted.

Results and discussion

1. The general understanding of plot, its distinction from fabula.

It is necessary to mention that, although it is agreed otherwise, the notions of "plot" and "sjuzhet" are not technically the same. In the Western literary and narratological tradition, the term of plot may also include the chronological sequence (known as fabula). In this regard, it is not quite right to distinguish between fabula and plot: the proper distinction, as initially proposed by the formalist school, would be "sjuzhet" and "fabula". B. Tomashevsky gives the following definition of fabula: "the events which happened in the story and which have certain connections to each other" [6, p. 137]. On the contrary, sjuzhet is defined as the "events which happened in the story and which connect to each other, but in that sequence which the author chose to use, and within those relations that the author wished to show" [6, p. 137]. What we gain from this understanding is the following: sjuzhet is entirely work-bound, it exists within the frame of the literary work and is usually imagined through the prism of how the author chose to narrate it. On the other hand, fabula may exist "outside" the story, showing the events in a more neutral way and only outlining the simplest relations between them. This formalist approach is used nowadays as well.

Turning to the etymology of the word sjuzhet, Levitan and Zilevich explain that it comes from the French "sujet" which, if we look at it closely, is nothing but "subject" or "theme". Speaking about the predicative, dynamic character of plots, Levitan and Zilevich deny the apparent static character of the word "subject or theme", claiming that the literature itself, being a dynamic entity, cannot have any static object: all of its themes develop, turning into processes [1, p. 12].

The etymology of "plot" is, however, entirely different. First, it was an Old English word meaning "an area of ground, usually small". From 1580s, it has been

used in quite a different sense, meaning “a secret plan, usually evil”. This definition may root in the fact that areas of lands tend to have maps or plans, hence the dichotomy. Eventually, in 1640s, the word entered the realm of theatre and literature, gaining its contemporary meaning as the set of events in the story [7]. What we see is that the word “plot” initially has a certain frame in it – it is obvious that a plan has stages, elements, a structure. When it comes to the French *sujet*, no such presumptions can be made. This word is primarily imagined and conceptualized as a whole, contrary to the English “plot” which is an entity consisting of obligatory elements. Logically, “*sujet*” also consists of certain elements, though they may be facultative.

This brief contrast allows us to understand the apparent distinction between Western and CIS traditions of studying plots. This distinction is not as sharp now as it was in the first half of the XX century, the time when the Russian formalist school, represented by such scholars as B. Tomashevsky, V. Schklovsky, Yu. Tyunanov etc. Apart from distinguishing plots and *fabulae*, these scholars (mainly V. Schklovsky) proposed the term “estrangement” (*остранение*), which, as Kalinin claims, may relate to *differance* by Derrida [8]. In general, the formalist approach to plot was vastly influenced by the epoch of modernism, the most symbolic representations of it being found in Russian literature. Considering that, it was pretty close to the idea of deconstruction which emerged later.

Turning to a more classic understanding of plot, Aristotle’s *mythos* is quite a global explication of what plot is and how it influences the characters of the story. Generally explaining, *mythos* is a set of events and conflicts that shape the character and turn him or her into what they need to become. The description of *mythos* allowed Aristotle to divide the literature of his time into three main categories: drama, lyric, and epic. A close understanding is provided by various scholars from post-formalist field, for instance, L. Timofeyev who claimed that plots usually depict the conflicts of the story, especially if the story is of epic or tragic genre.

II. M. Bakhtin’s ideas, plot and chronotope.

Speaking about the ancient plots and their role in character shaping, it is now necessary to turn to the main author on whose works we base our research. It is in 1970s when the revolutionary ideas of M.M. Bakhtin started to get recognized. In his works, M. Bakhtin proposed a set of terms, most of which are used widely nowadays. One of these terms is chronotope, which the scholar defined quite simply: space and time, where and when the story takes place [9]. Analyzing novels, M. Bakhtin claims that chronotope is the center of the story, its main core where everything starts and ends. In this regard, it is worth noting that the main function of chronotope is predication, that is, it binds an otherwise ephemeral story to space (a certain place) and time (a certain period), i.e. to reality.

M. Bakhtin, however, argues that the connection between space, time and the story is quite complex, and plot depends on that connection as thoroughly as chronotope depends on plot. For instance, he analyzes several ancient Greek novels and comes to peculiar conclusions. His initial object of analysis, the so-called novel of adventure (*avanturnyi roman*), presents unique relations between space, time, characters, and the story. One of the most widespread plots of such novels is when

a young man and a young woman overcome struggles to find love. M. Bakhtin, examining this plot, explains that the struggles, the time that passes and the events which take place – none of these takes a toll on the characters. They remain as young and pure as they were in the beginning. In other words, the time of the adventure novel is purely under the control of the story: it expands and shrinks when necessary. Again, no matter how long, the years have no influence on the characters. The same is true about space – vast lands are walked within hours, vast seas are crossed within days. This flexibility of time and space allowed M. Bakhtin to underline the unbreakable connection between chronotope and plot. Chronotope is not just any time and space – it is the time and space specific to the story, bearing its characteristics and shaping its plot while also being shaped by it. This function of chronotope, the fact that it is able to “shape and form plots”, is mentioned loosely at the end of M. Bakhtin’s work. In particular, he lists some of the plot-forming chronotopes, the most important of them being *road, castle, parlor, a town*, etc. In M. Bakhtin’s understanding, when characters find themselves on the *road*, they will act correspondently to the rules proposed by time (the ancient, medieval, Renaissance era) and space (the vastness and endlessness of the road itself). The same is true about historical and gothic castles, about the parlors of Regency era and realistic province towns of Russian classic literature. The scholar suggests that every chronotope, big or small, dictates its own rules and shapes its own story.

The theory of M. Bakhtin gained specific interest thanks to the term of chronotope – in both Western and CIS literary analysis traditions. Up to the day, he is one of the most quoted and discussed scholars in the field. The Western, especially English and American scholars pay close attention to how Bakhtin analyzed ancient, medieval and Renaissance novels, specifically the novel written by Rabelais. For instance, Lily Alexander connects the notion of chronotope to the well-known term of narrative architectonics, while Camilla Ingemark decides to conduct a folkloric analysis of the chronotope of enchantment. Other notable works are dedicated to the novels of Dostoyevsky (J. Andrew), Hugo (J. Best), T. Hardy (S. Tresize) etc. In the Russian segment, the notion of chronotope is viewed generally (E. Pavlov, O. Melnik) and in relation to specific works (S. Burdina, T. Maksimova, S. Ayrapetyan etc.) These works, though profound, lack the above-mentioned idea about the plot-forming power of chronotope; even if it is presented loosely, it is rarely explicated or thoroughly expanded.

In relation to M. Bakhtin’s theory, it is necessary to note the works of N. Boldyrev, B. Zhumagulova and D. Kurmanbayeva who first applied the term “space and time continuum” as the conceptual structure of chronotope [10]. What allowed these scholars to use that term is the addition of the element of event in the scope of the chronotope. Event is what happens in space and time, the main action taken and the core of the story. As all the elements of the space-and-time continuum are imagined as concepts, in this and further works they will be capitalized: SPACE, TIME, and EVENT. The scholars used this theory in appliance to the genres of the novel, while our main concern is the plot.

That was, generally speaking, how plots have been addressed in terms of their structure, elements, and possible relations to other aspects of the story. Now it is

necessary to turn to another main problem which needs to be discussed: plot parallelism.

III. Eternal plots.

Remembering Kukkonen's three axes, this theory fits the first understanding: plots as global, repetitive structures which can be met in various works of fiction simultaneously. We have defined plot as a causal sequence of events, and we have underlined its close connection to chronotope of the story – the place it happens and the time it occurs.

What interests us, though, is how and why plots become recurrent. The recurrence or repetition of plots was noticed and described by various scholars, for instance, by Jorge Luis Borges who argued that there are “four stories which we tell and retell” [11]. Those four stories are:

- 1) A besieged city: Iliad.
- 2) A god's sacrifice: most of the Biblical plots, including the sacrifice of Jesus.
- 3) A quest: argonauts led by Jason.
- 4) Returning home: Odyssey.

Christopher Booker extends this list, arguing that there are seven eternal plots. His main addition are such plots as comedy, tragedy, and “from rags to riches” [12]. While such limited lists are perfect for describing the recurrence of mythological and folkloric plots, literary parallelism requires a more complex approach. It is also necessary to mention the thirty-three dramatic situations as described by Georges Polti in 1895. Those situations involve an event (for instance, vengeance, love crime, recovery or loss) and the main participants (for example, the criminal and the pursuer, two lovers, the deceived spouse etc.) [13].

It is specifically interesting how Polti addresses the description of plots involving revenge:

Crime pursued by Vengeance (a criminal and an avenger who pursues justice).

Vengeance taken by kin upon kin (for instance, Hamlet: the son takes revenge for his father's death by murdering his uncle).

What this list lacks, though, is the predication. The plots are described, but their main elements are the actants only, no predication involved. This makes the list overly static. Another issue is that not every plot is likely to fit into the narratives proposed by Polti: for instance, the novel by Salman Rushdie, *Shalimar the Clown*, might be considered a combination of several “dramatic situations” – vengeance, love crime, deceived spouse.

Another limitation of Polti's list is the confusion between the notions of *plot* and *motif* which often occurs when compiling such lists.

Why are plots recurrent? This issue was, in various forms, addressed by such scholars as A. Zezulevich, N. Frye, Ch. Booker. For instance, A. Zezulevich overviews the functioning of art-related eternal plots in literature and draws the following preliminary conclusions:

- 1) Eternal plots are frames – blocks of stereotypically presented information.

2) Art-related eternal plots have four main types: ontological, gnoseological, axiological and epistemological modi. The author considers ancient narratives and their representation in modern and contemporary Russian literature, summarizing that these modi underline the main reasons why plots repeat themselves. Ontological modus, for instance, relates to the existence and the meaning of life, while the gnoseological modus explains the never-ending quest for knowledge [14].

Viewing plots as frames allows for a more thorough consideration of their elements – characters, narratives, viewpoints, cause and effect relations. At the same time, such a view is also limited to the static character of frames themselves. Plot itself, etymologically, is a frame or a plan. What makes a plan dynamic is adding the stages of its creation and implementation. A plan simply drawn on paper is highly static, and so is frame. While the dynamic version of a plan is the process of its implementation, the dynamic version of a frame is its scenario (or script).

Both Frye and Booker agree that eternal plots root in mythology. A. Zvezulevich adds folklore as another main source of recurrent narratives. Following Yu. Lotman, the scholar argues that myths which we research nowadays are but shadows of what was initially inscribed: time and human activity change myths and folktales, yet they preserve their cognitive-modeling characteristics [14].

Let us attempt to explicate the reason why plots reoccur. Logically, if plots are imagined as occurring within the scope of space-and-time continuums, changing one element of that structure will eventually lead to the changes in plot. For instance, considering the well-known example of *Odyssey* and *Ulysses* by Joyce, one might argue that these works have little in common except for several allusions. At the same time, it becomes evident that the ancient adventure plot, when put into completely different space and vastly distinct time, changes itself almost entirely though still preserving the initial structure. Thinking of *Odyssey* in terms of SPACE, TIME and EVENT, we can imagine the following structure:

1. SPACE – MYTHOLOGICAL LANDS.
2. TIME – POST-WAR.
3. EVENT – QUEST.

In Borges's classic four-story essay, *Odyssey* is mentioned as having the plot of "returning home". Contrasting this to Joyce's *Ulysses*, we may see that TIME and SPACE are entirely different. First, Joyce's novel takes place in Ireland of the first half of the XX century, which does not allow for any fantastic events to take place. We may notice some semblance of time, as Joyce's novel is also taking place right after the WWI. At the same time, the event does not change – Leopold Bloom's journey encompasses a sole day which he spends in various parts of the city, on the beach, and on the road, eventually returning home.

In Joyce's case, obviously, the semblance was deliberate due to the necessity of making allusions. Hence this example quite simply demonstrates how the three elements of space-and-time continuum may be changed at the author's wish.

In certain cases, however, such semblances between plots are beyond the author's design, and this is when noting such differences and explaining them becomes important. The idea of space-and-time continuum expands the theory of

plot formation and progression, bringing it outside a certain literary work, outside the wishes and designs of a certain author.

IV. Plot and narrative.

Now let us turn to the last axis of plot analysis – its connection to narrative. While the field of narratology is quite an extended area per se, the emergence and development of cognitive narratology has expanded it even further. As I. Silantyev briefly explains, a narrative is how, from whose viewpoint the story is told [2]. In this case, the difference between the character, the author, and the narrator becomes evident. The narrative side of the novel was also considered by M. Bakhtin, leading to the emergence of such terms as dialogue, carnival, and heteroglossia – the terms which are widely used in contemporary narratological studies. While our research does not particularly focus on the narratological studies, it is worth noting that certain narrative techniques (and their variation) also influence the recurrence of plots and the way they are presented.

Apart from such well-known terms as first-person narration, third-person narration, and unreliable narrator, one notion is specifically interesting when applied to the study of plot. This notion is *Mind Style*, studied and developed by a Lancashire scholar Elena Semino. Now, we have noted that the third axis of plot analysis relates to how different authorial design techniques influence the progression of plots, and how the author may use, change, and alter plots at his will. What *Mind Style* does, in this case, is to expand the narrative beyond the plotline developed in a single story, focusing on how a character was formed and where his or her development will lead.

Mind Style, simply put, is how characters of different stories think and how it influences their behavior [15]. It is best explained through such characters who have apparent mental disorders, whose mind deviates from the established norm. For instance, a thorough example of how mind style, plot, and the authorial design are connected is the short story by V. Garshin “The red flower”. The plot is quite simple: a man having a mental disorder fixates all his thoughts on a single poppy flower growing in the yard of the asylum. Depending on the stage of the story and as the mental illness progresses, the color red and its various linguistic representations are used more and more frequently, until the character eventually collapses. Another example of how color is used to describe the mental distortion is the novella “The yellow wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, where a young woman observes yellow wallpapers with pictures on them and later becomes obsessed with those images. It is worth noting that *Mind Style* is not the same as the common stylistic devices and their use in the story. It is more complex, it relates to the sphere of cognition, and it aims at explaining why characters behave in a certain way. The theory also unveils the most complex narrative techniques – those utilized by Faulkner, Joyce, Woolf, a contemporary writer Jon Fosse, etc.

Conclusion

Literary plots have been studied from various viewpoint – from Aristotle’s mythos to the formalist approach, from the study of chronotope to *Mind Style*. What unites these approaches is the recognition that plots are complex entities having

certain elements, structure, ways of implementation. Plots are bound to the reality through the chronotope – the place where they happen and the time period when they occur. The theories mentioned above let us draw the following preliminary conclusions about the nature of plots:

1. Plots consist of certain elements realized in space and time. In this regard, plots can be imagined as frames (A. Zezulevich) or scenarios. Plots reflect the motives, causes, effects, conflicts, their resolutions and results (the classical approaches of Aristotle and the views of the scholars of 1960s and 1970s).

2. Plots may be recurrent, and their eternal character allows for creating various lists (four cycles by Borges, thirty-six dramatic situations by Polti, the monomyth of Campbell and even those folkloric motif indexes proposed by A. Aarne and Thompson). The reason why plots reoccur are explained differently: mythology and folklore being their source, art being the main power which revives them, etc.

3. Plots are heavily influenced by chronotope, which allowed M. Bakhtin and some of his successors to argue that plots are formed by chronotopes. However, the mechanism of plot formation in the scope of space-and-time continuum has not been addressed properly in this specific understanding.

4. Plots are also closely connected to and influenced by narrative techniques, i.e. by the ways the author chooses to tell the story. In certain cases, the way characters think impacts their behavior and thus the plot. This phenomenon, called Mind Style, is one of the freshest notions of cognitive narratology and cognitive stylistics.

What we propose is the cognitive approach to the study of plots, the approach tightly linked to the notion and essence of chronotope (space-and-time continuum). It is evident that there is significant shortage of works which would thoroughly address the plot-forming function of chronotope and the reason why plots reoccur from the viewpoint of space-and-time-continuum. Thus, it becomes necessary to continue the studies in the mentioned area from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics.

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ӘДЕБИ ШЫҒАРМА СЮЖЕТІН ЗЕРТТЕУГЕ ӘДЕБИЕТТАНЫМДЫҚ ЖӘНЕ ТІЛТАНЫМДЫҚ КӨЗҚАРАСТАР

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Аңдатпа. Мақала көркем әдебиеттегі сюжеттерді зерттеудің қазіргі әдеби-лингвистикалық тәсілдерін талдауға арналған. Сюжет кейіпкерлердің мотивациялары мен себеп-салдар байланыстарын қамтитын оқиғалар тізбегі ретінде анықталады. Сюжеттік зерттеулер нарратология, когнитивтік нарратология, әдеби сын, когнитивтік поэтика сияқты әртүрлі салаларда жүргізілді және жүргізілуде. М.М. Бахтиннің хронотопты шығарманың оқиға орталығы ретінде қарастыру туралы идеясы сюжетологиялық зерттеулердегі ерекше өзгерісті көрсетті. М.Бахтин хронотоптың сюжет құрушы қызметін көрсетті, бірақ бұл ойға тиісті көңіл бөлінбеді. Осыған орай, мақаланың мақсаты қазіргі заманғы зерттеулерде М.Бахтин идеяларын қолдану аспектісінде әдеби сюжеттерді талдаудың қолданылып жүрген тәсілдер мен әдістерін салыстыру болып табылады. Мақалада «мәңгілік сюжеттер» феномені және олардың пайда болу себептері туралы әртүрлі көзқарастар талқыланады. Қазіргі сюжеттік теорияларға аналитикалық шолу негізінде сюжетті талдаудың аталған тәсілдері хронотоптың сюжетті құраушы тұлға ретіндегі идеясын толық көрсетпейді деген қорытынды жасалады, бұл осы салада әрі қарай зерттеу қажеттілігін көрсетеді. Мақаланың ғылыми жаңалығы сюжетті «Кеңістік-уақыт-континуумы» хронотопының концептуалды құрылымында оқиғалық құрамдас бөлік ретінде зерттеу қажеттілігі туралы қорытындыда жатыр. Зерттеудің теориялық және практикалық маңыздылығы келесіде: берілген мәселені когнитивтік лингвистика,

когнитивтік стилистика тұрғыларынан әрі қарай зерттеу және алынған зерттеу нәтижелерін академиялық мақсатта пайдалану мүмкіндігі.

Тірек сөздер: сюжет, фабула, нарратив, нарратология, хронотоп, параллелизм, мәңгі сюжет, когнитивті нарратология, ой стилі (mind style), кеңістік-уақыт-континуумы

ЛИТЕРАТУРНЫЕ И ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ПОДХОДЫ К АНАЛИЗУ ЛИТЕРАТУРНЫХ СЮЖЕТОВ

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена анализу современных литературных и лингвистических подходов к изучению сюжетов художественной литературы. Сюжет определяется как последовательность событий, включающая мотивы поведения персонажей и причинно-следственные связи. Исследования сюжета проводились и проводятся в различных сферах, включая нарратологию, когнитивную нарратологию, литературную критику и когнитивную поэтику. Теория М.М. Бахтина о хронотопе как о событийном центре произведения ознаменовала своеобразный сдвиг в сюжетологических исследованиях. М. Бахтин указывал на сюжетообразующую функцию хронотопа, однако эта идея не получила должного внимания. В этой связи, цель статьи – сопоставить существующие подходы и методы анализа литературного сюжета в аспекте применения идеи М. Бахтина в современных исследованиях. В статье также рассматриваются различные точки зрения на феномен ‘вечных сюжетов’ и причины их возникновения. На основании аналитического обзора современных теорий сюжета делается вывод, что упомянутые подходы к анализу сюжета не в полной мере отражают представление о хронотопе как сюжетообразующей сущности, что указывает на необходимость дальнейших исследований в этой области. Научная новизна статьи заключается в выводе о необходимости исследования сюжета как событийного компонента в концептуальной структуре хронотопа Пространственно-Временной-Континуум. Теоретическая и практическая значимость исследования заключается в раскрытии дальнейшей перспективы исследования в этой области с позиции когнитивной лингвистики, когнитивной стилистики и использовании результатов исследования в академических целях.

Ключевые слова: сюжет, фабула, нарратив, нарратология, хронотоп, параллелизм, вечный сюжет, когнитивная нарратология, стиль сознания (mind style), пространственно-временной-континуум

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