

**LANGUAGE ELEMENTS OF FOREIGN CULTURE IN THE NARRATIVE:
A PRAGMATIC APPROACH**

Key words – Intercultural Pragmatics, perlocutionary effect of persuasion, Armenian ethnic identity, ethnicity, cultural context, cultural remodelling, ethnological speech patterns, intercultural communication, Richard Hagopian, Armenian-Americans, Armenian mindset, descent-based attributes

Introduction

The aim of my present paper is to reveal the communicative-pragmatic objectives of the language elements belonging to foreign culture used in fictional discourse. By communicative pragmatic objectives I mean the aims of the author to impart a certain portion of implicit information which meets certain literary strategies, fulfills communicative and/or artistic goals, expresses personal emotions, feelings and comes from the author's own experience as a human being. The analysis is based on the assumption that ethnological speech patterns, i.e. words, collocations, set expressions which symbolize the realities and the mindset of some foreign ethnic language culture may be intentionally included in the texture of the narrative by the writer in order to maximize the perlocutionary effect intended for the target reader. The mentioned language units can serve as rhetorical devices which convey some additional idea, give some specific meaning to the writing and, eventually, produce a persuasive perlocutionary effect. In order to carry out a cross-cultural pragmatic study of fictional discourse, the short story "Saint in the Snow" by Armenian-American writer Richard Hagopian¹ has been picked out. I will try to show how Armenian ethnological speech patterns, which are foreignisms for Americans but markers of ethnic inheritance for Armenian-Americans, can, in fact, assure the Armenian readers living in the USA to maintain their ethnic identity.

Using Literature as a Cultural Tool

Truly, I took up the idea of combining the interpretative frameworks of Intercultural Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis recently, when I focused my professional interest on the problem of Armenian cultural identity and acculturation process of Armenians who suffered during the Genocide in 1915. In order to trace the process of cultural remodelling of refugee Armenians living in the USA after the Genocide, several pieces of discourse – autobiographical novels and short stories by Armenian-American writers – have been studied from cultural perspective, and the idea that Diasporan Armenians have formed a multicultural stratum in the American

¹ **Hagopian R.**, *Saint in the Snow* // Kherdian D. (Ed.), *Forgotten Bread*, Heyday Books, California, 2007, p. 144-150.

ethnic patchwork has been confirmed¹. I must confess that the idea of exploring Armenian ethnic identity appealed to me greatly, and I decided to go further in my studies and focus on certain “side effects” that the writing, and especially the fictional discourse, may bring about. Having in mind the problem of cultural remodelling of Armenian-Americans, I will try to reveal the communicative-pragmatic goal of the Armenian-American writer to guide and direct the target readers via fictional discourse². My assumption is that, by using speech idiosyncrasies belonging to Armenian ethnic culture in the English text, the author shares some common experiences, gently reminds the target readers about their common cultural background – beliefs, traditions, mannerisms. In doing so the writer aims at restoring and reviving the ethnic heritage of Armenian-Americans who are in the process of cultural remodelling. From the pragmatic perspective, this language strategy can be interpreted as a tool for enhancing the perlocutionary effect of persuasion – to convince the Armenian Diasporan readers (especially the younger generation who do not read Armenian) that by retaining their common cultural heritage they will become stronger, will gain self-confidence and will be able to protect themselves in an alien cultural context. Thus we can state that literature serves as a cultural tool which helps us decode aspects of the acculturation process and reveal some additional speaker meaning.

Ethnic and National Identities from Intercultural Perspective

Trying to understand the notion of identity as a social category and perception of one’s self-image, we can refer to some definitions accepted in Intercultural Communication Theory, where identity is seen as “a person’s self-definition as a separate and distinct individual, including behaviours, beliefs and attitudes” by Gardiner and Kosmitzki, or as the “reflective self-conception or self-image that we each derive from our family, gender, cultural, ethnic, and individual socialization process” by Ting-Toomey³.

In order to carry out our intercultural pragmatic study, we necessarily encounter the problem of social identity represented by various groups people belong to – race, ethnicity, occupation, age, gender, birthplace and so on. In an attempt to highlight the diversity of social factors shaping a human being, L. Samovar, R. Porter and E. McDaniel use the plural form of the noun “identity” and speak about social identities, noting that “in actuality one’s identity consists of multiple identities, which act in concert”⁴. It should be stated that the problem of social identity has been a topical issue in social sciences for a long time. Different aspects of social identity, which creates the individual as a social being and as a member of several social groups, have been discussed and analysed⁵. The cultural component of social identity has not been

¹ **Paronyan Sh.**, Cultural Remodelling of Refugee Armenians after the Genocide, *Armenian Folia Anglistika* // “International Journal of English Studies” (Yerevan), 2015, n° 2, p. 151-174.

² Naturally, the target readers are the representatives of Armenian descent born in the Diaspora.

³ See **Samovar L., Porter R., McDaniel E.**, *Communication between Cultures*, Wadsworth, Boston, 2010, p. 154.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁵ **Turner J. C.**, *Rediscovering the Social group: A Self-Categorization Theory*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1987, **Jenkins R.**, *Social Identity*, in *The Meaning of Sociology: A Reader*, 9th ed., **Charon J.M. and Vigilant L.G.** (Eds.), Pearson, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2009.

neglected in social studies, it is seen as an essential element of social identity bearing essential information about the characteristic stereotypes of a group of people – their core beliefs, values, traditions, behaviour and so on. With the development of cultural studies the problem of cultural identification came to the fore and so cultural identity – the sense of belonging to a cultural group – has been extensively analysed and described¹. Furthermore, with the development of Intercultural Communication Theory, one important element in the picture of cultural identity is being highlighted – the language, the ability to express certain cultural characteristics externally via the process of communication².

In my paper I will touch upon two forms of social identity – ethnic and national identities. In fact, there is no widely agreed definition of ethnic identity and the researchers themselves confess that the measures used to define and describe ethnic identity and make generalizations are ambiguous and difficult³. The fact that ethnic identity is usually seen as a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to sense of self as a member of an ethnic group, makes it possible to view this notion from different perspectives – anthropological, psychological, sociological, communicative-intercultural and so on.

Ethnic identity is firstly a social category and, therefore, the problems of ethnicity are largely discussed in Cultural Anthropology, where ethnic identity is defined as perception of the self, derived from a sense of shared heritage, history, traditions, values, similar behaviours, area of origin, and in some instances, language⁴. As we can see, the idea of shared common background knowledge is especially highlighted. Studying ethnic identity, J. E. Trimble and R. Dickson state that, as is held in sociological studies, ethnic identity is contextual and situational because it derives from social negotiations where one declares an ethnic identity and then demonstrates acceptable and acknowledged ethnic group markers to others⁵. In his analysis of ethnic identity, K. Chandra explains that the membership in an ethnic group is determined by certain descent-based attributes which are acquired genetically, as, for example, by skin and eye colour, hair type, physical features, etc. These attributes can also be acquired through cultural and historical inheritance, e.g. the names, languages, places of birth and origin of one's parents and ancestors⁶. Close to this interpretation of ethnic identity, Y. Cheung sees it as an affiliative construct and calls the above mentioned attributes affiliations. The following affiliations influenced by certain

¹ **Edgar A., Sedgwick P.**, Key Concepts in Cultural Theory, London, Routledge, 1999; **Hofstede H.**, Culture and Organizations: Software of the Mind., London, McGraw-Hill, 1991.

² See **Edwards J.**, Language and Identity, OUP, Oxford 2009, **Samovar L., Porter R., McDaniel E.**, Intercultural Communication: A Reader, Wadsworth, Boston, 2012, **Holliday A., Hyde M., Kullman J.**, Intercultural Communication, Routledge, New York, 2010.

³ **Trimble J. E., Dickson R.**, Ethnic Identity, Encyclopedia of Applied Developmental Science: An Encyclopedia of Research, Policies, and Programs, Thousand Oaks, Ca, Sage, 2005, vol. 1, p. 415-420, **Gleason P.**, Identifying Identity: A Semantic History // **Sollars W.** (Ed.), Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader, New York, 1996, p. 460-487.

⁴ **Harris M., Johnson O.**, Cultural Anthropology, 7th ed, Pearson Education, Boston, 2007, **Duranti A.** (Ed.), Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader, 2nd ed., Wiley-Blackwell, West Sussex, 2009.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ **Chandra K.**, What is Ethnic Identity and does it Matter? // Annual Review of Political Science, 2006, vol. 9, p. 397-424.

factors which typify the ethnic group are distinguished: racial (physiognomic and physical characteristics), natal (hometown, ancestral home of or origins of individuals, their parents and kin), and symbolic (holidays, foods, clothing, artifacts)¹. It is also customary to interpret ethnic identification from the perspective of social psychology, in the domain of self-perception, evaluating it as “the psychological attachment to an ethnic group or heritage”².

The analysis of ethnic identity within the frameworks of Intercultural Communication Theory comes to prove that “the sense of ethnicity transcends national borders and is grounded in common cultural beliefs and practices”³. L. Samovar, R. Porter and E. McDaniel also refer to social studies carried out in the USA and state that the ethnicity of many US Americans is connected with the place of origin of their ancestors, who came to the US from other countries, such as Germany, Italy, Mexico, China⁴. Hence, in order to stress their multiethnic identity and the process of cultural remodelling, the subsequent generations of the original immigrants often refer to themselves by naming two ethnic identities such as “Italian-American,” “Mexican-American,” “Chinese-American”⁵. It is also noted that during the early years of the United States, immigrants often grouped together in a particular region forming ethnic communities or enclaves, some of which, such as Chinatown in San Francisco and Little Italy in New York, still exist⁶. One cannot but agree that in the areas of ethnic communities “the people’s sense of ethnic identity tends to remain strong, because traditional cultural practices, beliefs and often language are followed and perpetuated”⁷. As we know, one of the strongest communities of Armenian Diaspora is located in Los Angeles area, and up to these days, many Armenians moving to the US tend to settle down in this area in hope to retain their ethnic identity. Anyhow, it is quite natural that, after all, some of ethnic identity is being lost from generation to generation: with time younger people move to areas where they get in contact with other ethnic groups, and often marry into ethnic groups different from their own. This fact, as formulated by L. Samovar, R. Porter and E. McDaniel, “can dilute their feelings of ethnic identity” and some of them refer to themselves as “just Americans”⁸.

Coming to national identity, it refers to nationality and is more often identified with one’s sense of belonging to a state, i.e. to a country considered as an organized political community controlled by one government. According to L. Samovar, R. Porter and E. McDaniel, it is believed that the majority of people associate their

¹ **Cheung Y.W.**, Approaches to Ethnicity: Clearing Roadblocks in the Study of Ethnicity and Substance Abuse // “International Journal of Addictions”, 1993, n° 28, p. 1209-1226.

² **Cheung Y.W.**, op. cit., p. 1216, cf also: **Phinney J.**, Ethnic Identity and Acculturation // **K. Chun P.B.**, Organista, **Marin G.** (Eds.), Acculturation: Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research, American Psychological Association, Washington D.C., 2003, p. 63-81.

³ **Samovar L., Porter R., McDaniel E.**, Communication between Cultures, Wadsworth, Boston, 2010, p. 157.

⁴ Here we can add Armenia, as is our case.

⁵ Or “Armenian-American” as is our case.

⁶ We can also mention the so-called “Los Armenios”, the ethnic enclave of Armenians in Los Angeles, Glendale, as is our case.

⁷ **Samovar L., Porter R., McDaniel E.** op. cit., p. 157.

⁸ Ibid.

national identity with the nation where they were born. Moreover, national identity (traditions, language, culture) usually becomes more pronounced when persons are away from their home country. Anyhow, it is also true that national identity can be acquired by immigration and naturalization. Thus people, who have taken citizenship in a country different from their birthplace, may eventually begin to adopt some or all aspects of a new national identity, depending on the strength of their attachment to their new homeland. Alternatively, people inhabiting permanently in/among another/some other nation may retain a strong attachment to their homeland¹.

Thus we may conclude that ethnic identity and national identity are both types of social identity which base on aspects of culture – tip-of-the-iceberg and bottom-of-the-iceberg values as stated by B. Peterson². In certain cases the two notions coincide – when a person belonging to a certain nationality and ethnic group develops his/her social identity in the homeland. In case a person changes his/her place of living and appears in an alien social environment, the structure of national identity starts to reshape, remodel and adjust according to the needs. Meanwhile, at least the basic elements of ethnic identity mostly remain unchangeable and stable during the process of cultural adaptation. Naturally, in this case ethnic identity and national identity may vary to a certain extent. To make this point clear, let me state some aspects of national identity which present tip-of-the-iceberg³ culture values and can get reshaped in the process of cultural adaptation. These aspects concern behaviours and senses such as language, food, music, gestures, clothing, eye contact, sports, greetings, level of emotional display, leisure activities and so on. Cultural variables belonging to the bottom-of-the-iceberg⁴ values describe mainly ethnic identity: descent-based core values, beliefs which undergo transition reluctantly and very slowly. This group of cultural concepts reveals opinions, viewpoints, attitudes, philosophies, values, convictions of a group of people, e.g.: tolerance for change, role of family, what motivates people in daily life, beliefs about human nature, attitudes about men's and women's roles, past, present or future focus, assumptions about various relationships, role of adults and children within the family, importance of face in communication styles, preference for thinking style (linear and systemic), etc.

Richard Hagopyan's "Saint in the Snow"

As I have already stated, for the purpose of intercultural pragmatic analysis I have chosen the short story "Saint in the Snow" by the Armenian-American writer Richard Hagopyan. R. Hagopian, born in Revere, Massachusetts in 1914, is the author of two novels and a collection of short stories⁵. His heroes are emigrant Armenians. In his writings he pictures the bitterness of people who have appeared in an alien life

¹ Ibid., p. 159, cf. also **Fong M., Chuang R.**, *Communicating Ethnic and Cultural Identity*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, 2004.

² **Peterson B.**, *Cultural Intelligence: A Guide to Working with People from Other Cultures*, Intercultural Press, Boston, London, 2004.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ **Goshgarian G.**, *Essay: Richard Hagopian // Kherdian D. (Ed.)*, *Forgotten Bread*, Heyday Books, California, 2007, p. 140-144.

situation and have to undergo the process of cultural transition. He describes their poor living conditions and humiliation in a foreign country, in a cultural context which is different from their own mindset and expectations. “Saint in the Snow” is a touching story in which one of the heroes, a refugee Armenian, recalls some events from his past when he lived in his native village in Western Armenia. He tells a story about an Armenian widow who lived in miserable conditions and was not even able to organize “a good Christian burial” for her husband who died. The priest of the village refused to bury him saying that his time was limited, but the real reason for the priest’s refusal was that the widow was penniless. Seeing the widow in grief, the neighbours, who were also poor, decided to help her and hired three young men to take the corpse to the hills and bury him there. Unfortunately, the young men got drunk on the way to the hills and failed to carry out their job successfully. Halfway up the hill, they lost the corpse of the poor man in the snow and came back with the sad news. The widow got in panic, and one of the neighbours, Girkor Govgas, trying to save the situation, told the widow that her husband was a saint – St. Sukias and had ascended. However, in spring, when the snow melted, it appeared that the corpse of the poor old man had stretched out right in front of the priest’s house. The villagers believed that St. Sukias descended to give the priest – the old scoundrel – a good lesson. Thus the greedy priest was punished for his greed as he had to pay for the lot in the cemetery and for the singer from his own pocket.

The Cultural Value of Ethnological Speech Patterns in “Saint in the Snow”

The linguistic analysis of the story “Saint in the Snow” reveals that R. Hagopian made an abundant use of language elements representing the Armenian mindset and ethnic language culture in the narrative structure of the above-mentioned story, written in English. This fact can be interpreted from different standpoints.

Firstly, the author’s literary strategy can be explained by referring to the idea of cultural intelligence. In decision theory and general systems theory, a mindset is a set of assumptions, methods or notations held by one or more people or groups of people that is so established that creates a powerful incentive within these people or groups to continue to adopt or accept prior behaviors, choices, or tools¹. Admittedly, the set of assumptions included in the mindset of a person contains mainly bottom-of-the-iceberg cultural values which characterize one’s ethnic identity. Hence the representation of the Armenian mindset, that is elements of Armenian culture, may be motivated by the wish of the writer to preserve, to protect the ethnic identity of his Armenian-American readers and to stress the importance of adhering to Armenian cultural values.

Secondly, the author’s strategy can be explained by referring to the social factor. E. J. Trimble and R. Dickson acknowledge the fact that in order to promote the union between self and other, individuals often use ethnological speech patterns and gestures to promote authenticity of their claim. They also claim that emphasis of mannerisms and speech idiosyncrasies, which they call “ritual emphasis”, frequently occur when ethnic group members meet or gather in geographic areas that differ from their homelands or communities of common origin. Thus they conclude that the distinctive

¹ <http://sourcesofinsight.com/what-is-mindset/> (Accessed: 04.02.2018)

ritual is a prime example of situational ethnicity and situated ethnic identity¹. And once again we can conclude that ethnological speech patterns are aimed to enhance the ethnic consciousness of the Armenian-American readers.

Lexical Evidence of Armenian Identity in “Saint in the Snow”

Lexical evidence of Armenian language and cultural background in the story “Saint in the Snow” is structurally and semantically diverse. Our analysis has enabled us to reveal the following language elements in the English text which can be claimed to be inherent to Armenian mentality:

- Foreign words representing specifically Armenian proper names: *Garabed Agha* (Գարապետ Աղա), *Girkor Govgas* (Գրիգոր Գովկաս), *Durtad* (Տրդատ), *Atanas* (Աթանաս), *Sukias Nalbantian* (Սուքիաս Նալբանդյան), *St. Sukias* (Սուրբ Սուքիաս);
- Foreign words denoting Armenian cultural realia: *kugh* (village, գյուղ in Armenian), *pilaf* (rice porridge, փլավ in Armenian);
- Interjections expressing emotions: *whew* (վնյ), *akh* (ախ), *oho* (օհօ);
- Phrases, set expressions, utterances, expressing ideas, way of thinking typical of Armenian mentality: *to be handful* (մի բռն լինել), *to break one’s heart* (սիրտը կտորել), *to bring tears of pity to one’s eyes* (աչքերը լցնել խղճահարությունից), *to go unburied* (անթաղել մնալ), *to scratch one’s head* (գլուխը քորել), *to be of one mind* (մի մտքի լինել), *to pray the blessing of God* (աստծո նորմությունը խնդրել), *a Christian burial* (երպես քրիստոնյա թաղվել), *to squeeze money out of stones* (քարից հաց/ փող քամել).

Let us analyse the communicative-pragmatic value of the mentioned ethnological speech patterns inserted by the author in the texture of the narrative. The Armenian proper names, the names of the heroes of the story, strange as they may sound in the English text, greatly contribute to the creation of the mental image of Armenian cultural identity. The names *Garabed Agha*, *Girkor Govgas*, *Durtad*, *Atanas*, *Sukias Nalbantian* are markers of ethnic inheritance which create associations with Armenian language and culture and add to the Armenian reader’s sense of group or collective identity as a representative of the Armenian community.

As we know, foreign words, that is words which do not belong to the vocabulary of the language of the actual writing, in our case, to the English vocabulary, are usually used by authors for certain stylistic purposes. Foreignisms or barbarisms usually denote certain concepts which reflect an objective reality not familiar to English-speaking communities². There are no names for them in English, so when inserted in the texture, they have to be explained somehow in order to be understood by English readers who are outsiders in that particular cultural grouping. Interestingly enough, in most cases R. Hagopian does not give any explanations to these words. For

¹ Trimble J. E, Dickson R., op. cit.

² Arnold I.V., The English Word, M., 1975.

example, he explains the meaning of the word *gukh*, which is used in this text eleven times and is undoubtedly unfamiliar to American readers, after its second use:

*“How much it reminds one of our own **kugh** in Januar” (p. 144).*

*Well, once upon a time there lived a poor man and his wife in our **kugh** – that is **our** word for village (p. 145).*

I would also like to highlight the pronoun *our* in the utterance above. This possessive pronoun refers to the characters of the story – the storyteller and his listeners as well as to the reader. In fact, an unprepared reader, an “outsider”, as we call it, will not understand who *our* refers to, what language, what nationality is meant by *our word* since Armenia or Armenians are not even once mentioned in the whole text. It is also noteworthy that the author refers to Western Armenia by naming it *old country*, in contrast to America, which he calls somewhat scornfully – *this country*.

*You will not appreciate this story as much as one who was raised in the **old country**. In **this country** even the poorest soul prepares for his death by taking out a few dollars’ insurance. But in the **old country** people have a hard enough time to take care of themselves (p. 145).*

The victims of the Armenian Genocide who spread all over the world called their fatherland *Western Armenia* or *country* (*էրկիր* or *էրզիր* in Western Armenian dialect). By saying *Էրթաւ էրզիր* (*I’ll go to the country*), they expressed their wish to go back to their homeland – Western Armenia, a lost land for them, a land of dreams. So the English word *country* in this text implicitly refers to the realia of the ethnic geographical location of Western Armenians, which they were deprived of so cruelly. By using it several times, the author signifies the natal affiliation of the Armenian readers, he stresses the common heritage of refugee Armenians (*one who was raised in the old country*) and their need to keep descent-based values.

As we can see, the author uses not only foreignisms, that is Armenian words, to denote cultural realia, but also English words which have ethnocultural influence on the Armenian reader. Let us bring another example of this kind, the word *cheese*:

*“My own mother used to send me over to their house with **pilaf** or **cheese** when we could spare it.” (p. 145).*

Cheese is a common English word naming a dairy product which has no specific connotative element in its meaning. This is true for Anglo-American culture. Admittedly, *cheese* (*սլանիր* in Armenian) signifies a descent-based attribute to the Armenian readers. The thing is that *cheese*, or *bread and cheese* (the Armenian hamburger we might say – bread stuffed with salty cheese) has symbolic affiliation in Armenian culture as it represents a traditional plain Armenian food eaten by common people and loved by most Armenians. The word combination *bread and cheese* appears in many Armenian proverbs, sayings, colloquial expressions which refer to traditional moral values, e.g., *հաց ու սլանիր, կեր ու բանիր* (*eat bread and cheese and work hard*), or *շատ հաց ու սլանիր պիտի ուտես, որ...* (*you should eat a lot of bread and cheese in order to...*). Hence we can state that the word *cheese* bears some ritual emphasis in the above context.

Truly, *pilaf* (*փլավ*, a dish made of rice) is another favourite Armenian dish and can also be interpreted as a symbolic attribute bearing ritual emphasis in Armenian culture. Furthermore, I would also like to draw attention to the word combination *my own mother* used in the utterance. In fact, it sounds awkward in English since in

Anglo-American culture it is customary to use the definite article – *the mother*, or to begin it with a capital letter – *Mother*, when referring to one’s mother. The word combination *my own mother* is most probably the translation of the Armenian word-form *ւայրիկս* (the word ending *-s* indicating belonging). Armenian is known to be a synthetic language and the relationship between words is expressed mainly with the help of endings and affixation instead of form words. Hence, in this case we can also state an instance of ethnocultural influence on the Armenian reader.

I would also like to illustrate the use of some other foreign words, such as Armenian interjections which emphasize the emotional aspect of the utterance. The interjection *whew* (*վնչ*) is used to express the speaker’s negative attitude in “*Whew, what a snowstorm*” (p. 144). The interjection *akh* (*ախ*) is used to express the speaker’s indignation in “*Akh, that is the young men for you!*” exclaimed my father (p. 147). The interjection *oho* (*օհօ*) is used to express surprise in *For when the snow melted, there was the old man’s body, stretched out right in front of the priest’s house. “Oho,”* exclaimed my father, “*in front of the priest’s house, ha?*” (p. 149).

Interestingly enough, the last declarative utterance, which in English usually performs the illocutionary act of statement, is formed according to Armenian communicative-structural pattern and contains a tag, the Armenian question-word *ha* (*հա*) at the end of the utterance, followed by a question mark. Hence this speech act functions as a tag question, the aim of which is to verify the truth of the proposition: the old man’s body was stretched out in front of the priest’s house – is it true or false? This communicative-structural pattern of questioning is acceptable in Armenian language where the requirement to elicit information is expressed via intonation, by raising the voice at certain informative units of the declarative utterance. The tag *ha* is added to the question in Armenian colloquial speech, to mitigate the act of questioning and establish a friendly atmosphere. In fact, in Armenian culture the tag question often performs the strategy of saving negative face as in *Excuse me for my intrusion into your private space*, or expressing doubt: *I wonder if you know...* or *If you would like to tell me...* Unlike Armenian, in English the question is usually formed by inverting the word order, and the tag usually contains two elements – an auxiliary verb and a pronoun. In the above mentioned example the tag question formed via Armenian communicative-structural pattern is used to minimize the illocutionary force of question and maximize the perlocutionary effect of surprise: the fact stated before is quite unexpected.

Furthermore, reading the story “Saint in the Snow” via cultural spectacles, we have also revealed certain phrases and set expressions used by R. Hagopian which have Armenian cultural value. Let us analyse some of them.

Who was he trying to fool – a child? Was there a plague in the kugh that year? No. Mind you, there was only a handful in our community. He had other burials! (p. 145-146).

The word *handful* which means a small number of people or things, is a typically Armenian way of thinking about themselves (*ւի՛ր քո՛ւն հայ է՛նք – we are a handful of Armenians*). Being comparatively small in quantity as a nationality and endangered by different circumstances and factors throughout many centuries, the Armenian mindset has acquired a high sense of self-defensiveness and concern for the future. The Armenians always try to preserve, to protect their genetic type. *Handful* (a metaphor in

the mentioned context) is used to create an ironic effect, as the author mocks at the greedy priest who, having very few people in his parish, refused to bury the poor woman's husband because she had no money. At the same time, as a metaphor, *handful* refers to the scarce number of Armenians living in the village and reminds the readers about being members of a special community. Let us analyse another example:

*And what could the elders do? They, too, were poor – shoemakers and farmers. They **scratched their heads** and felt ashamed before the old woman, for they had brought no food, no money and no advice... (p. 146).*

Truly, scratching, that is rubbing different parts of the body is a human hand movement which is usually done when one feels itchy. Anyhow, I think you will agree with me that scratching one's head (*գլուխը քորել* in Armenian) can be seen as a typical Armenian non-verbal act which expresses one's hesitation or shame: when an Armenian (usually a male Armenian) has doubts over something and feels uneasy or awkward, he may scratch his head. Armenians belong to a collectivistic culture and feel obliged to help in-group members in need, and if they cannot do so for some reason or other, they feel ill at ease and get frustrated since it is viewed negatively. In this case they may scratch their heads, which, of course is not obligatory and cannot be viewed as an instance of ritual emphasis.

Let us look at another example which also illustrates the collectivistic nature of Armenian culture:

*Girkor cursed them. “Drunken fools, you have disgraced us all. **Now what will all the people say?**” (p. 148).*

*“This disgrace will follow us until we die,” they said. “**What will the people of the kugh, the priest think?**” (p. 148).*

In collectivistic cultures people give great importance to the opinion of others, they are sensitive to their self, their public self image, they try to act, to behave within the norms accepted in that particular community. *What will people say, what will others think* (*Ինչ կասեն մարդիկ* in Armenian) is the primary and constant concern of the members of the collectivistic Armenian culture. At the same time, others, that is the members of the community, are also curious about each other: they want to know what their neighbours are doing, what they are eating, what they have bought, where they are going, and so on. Thus we can confirm that public opinion is highly evaluated among Armenians, and that is why, when the young people came back and told Girkor Govgas that they had lost the corpse on their way to the hills, the latter immediately felt danger to his own reputation, instead of feeling pity for the poor Sukias who was denied a good Christian burial, as the author writes.

*The old men **were of one mind**. It was a job for strong young men (p. 146).*

The expression *to be of one mind* (*մի մտքի լինել* in Armenian) also illustrates collectivistic values and stresses its importance for Armenian heritage. Among positive and negative characteristic features describing Armenians as an ethnic group, there are some qualities that can be said to be descent-based¹ and, therefore, eligible for membership. Now, one of these features is considered to be diligence. Armenians are good farmers and their love for growing fruits and vegetables comes from the biblical legend according to which the grapevine was planted in Ararat Valley after the

¹ These qualities undoubtedly belong to the set of bottom-of-the iceberg values stated above.

great flood. Hence, farming can be seen as a descent-based inheritance which is an important part in Armenian ethnic identity. It is believed among Armenians that they are industrious and hard-working since they have been located on infertile soil where stones, rocky hills and mountains prevail over valleys. Therefore, they have to work hard for their living, which is reflected in the idiomatic structure of the language: *to squeeze bread* (that is food) *out of stones* (*քարից հաց քաւելլ* in Armenian).

“Better to ask questions like those, then you will know why the old scoundrel tried to squeeze money out of stones” (p. 145).

In this example we can note deformation of the Armenian fixed idiom: *to squeeze money out of stones* instead of *to squeeze bread out of stones*. This idiom has acquired ironical meaning in this context and is used to describe the greedy priest who wanted to become rich by fleecing his poor parishioners.

No doubt, one of the most important attributes for the identification of Armenian cultural heritage is Christianity. Being the first nation to have adopted Christianity as state religion in the early 4th century, Christian moral and Christian values are of high importance for Armenian mindset and mark acknowledgement of in-group members. Hence, many words and expressions referring to Christianity and faith, claiming common ancestry and religion are found in the text: *to cross*, *to ascend*, *innocent dove*. Let us analyse some of them.

“But the priest of our kugh was a miserly, cruel man, and when the old woman came to him weeping and told him her story and said she wanted her husband to have a good Christian burial, the priest asked, “Are you able to pay for such a good Christian burial?...” (p. 145).

To have a good Christian burial (*որպէս քրիստոնէյա թաղվել*) in Armenian culture means to carry out a special burial ceremony when the clergyman reads special prayers and asks God to forgive the sins of the deceased and receive him/her in heaven among his angels. This ceremony is an important part in Armenian Apostolic Church since it supports the belief of life after death, the belief that the doomsday is near, that everybody will be judged by God, and God will have no mercy on sinners. Hence, the bitter cry of the poor woman, who cannot “send” her husband’s soul to heaven by praying for him, is quite understandable for Armenian readers who feel compassion and experience faith-based association of shared negative emotions. To receive blessings and to cross – these are highly evaluated symbolic elements for Christian Armenians.

“When they told the widow of their plan she took comfort and prayed the blessings of God on their heads...” (p. 147).

As we can see, the first thing the widow did after she learned that her husband would be buried by the three young villagers, was to pray *the blessings of God* (*աստծո նորոգութիւնը խնդրել*), i.e. to pray God to be merciful and forgive the young men for their sins. Furthermore, the villagers felt comfort after acknowledging the fact that the poor woman’s husband had become a saint and his soul had reached heaven:

Then he made the sign of cross again and said, “Woman, your husband has ascended. Bless his soul. ...Your husband ascended to heaven like an innocent dove (p. 149).

“God bless St. Sukias.” (p. 149).

Crossing and making the sign of cross (*խաչ հանել* in Armenian) bears an important ritual value for Armenians since it characterises Armenians not only as Christians but also distinguishes Armenian Apostolic Church followers who cross from left to right unlike the Orthodox Christians who cross from right to left: *He crossed himself. The elders followed suit* (p. 148).

Analysing the story “Saint in the Snow” and observing the narrative style of fictional discourse from a pragmatic perspective, we can assume that this story is intended for insiders, that is readers with Armenian cultural background. Admittedly, the Armenian words, names, interjections, idioms and expressions used by R. Hagopian reflect the Armenian reality, illustrate Armenian cultural context and, at the same time, create a familiar, agreeable atmosphere for an Armenian-American reader, who is most probably a second or third generation repatriate and may not know Armenian well enough. The Armenian words have a specific communicative pragmatic effect, they can make the Armenian reader nostalgic for the places where his/her ancestors grew up, enhance shared ethnic values and imply the need to preserve their Armenian identity via language and culture.

Conclusion

Thus we can conclude that R. Hagopian used different types of language elements of Armenian culture in the English narrative: words representing specifically Armenian proper names, foreign words denoting Armenian cultural realia, foreign words such as interjections expressing emotions, phrases, set expressions, typical of Armenian way of thinking, utterances expressing ideas typical of Armenian mentality. Despite their structural-semantic differences, all these ethnological speech patterns pursue one common communicative-pragmatic objective and have special cultural-symbolic significance. Admittedly, R. Hagopian wrote his stories especially for Armenian-American readers – Diasporan Armenians of the second and third generations who gradually tend to lose ties with Armenian national and ethnic identities in the process of cultural remodelling. Truly, Armenians always treat cultural adaptation, adjustment negatively, and describe the process of redefining ethnicity with words that have a negative connotative meaning – *նվաճիլ, ձուլվել* (*to assimilate, to blend*). It is quite natural that, being a small nation, Armenians try to protect their ethnic values, and writers assist the younger generation to resist the process of assimilation (by promoting shared values) and highlight descent-based common factors – natal and symbolic, which typify the Armenian ethnic group. Hence we can state that the ethnological speech patterns revealed in the texture of the story in the course of our linguistic analysis are intended to function as rhetorical devices promoting the idea of common in-group cultural values and core bottom-of-the iceberg descent-based beliefs. In doing so the mentioned patterns produce a persuasive perlocutionary effect. Accordingly, they convince the forthcoming generations of Diasporan Armenians to preserve their Armenian cultural identity. It is evident that the main communicative-pragmatic objective of language elements typical of Armenian culture is revival of Armenian cultural attributes, especially those which reflect ethnic Armenian core values and beliefs. Expressed via language, these attributes create an atmosphere of Armenian linguistic and situational context, make a valuable addition to the thematic structure and enhance the aesthetic-evaluative effect of fictional discourse.

Շուշանիկ Պարոնյան – Օտար մշակույթի պատկանող լեզվական միավորները գրական ստեղծագործության մեջ գործարանական մոտեցում

Հոդվածը միտված է վեր հանելու գեղարվեստական ստեղծագործության մեջ օտար լեզվամշակույթի պատկանող լեզվական միավորների կիրառման հաղորդակցական-գործարանական նպատակները: Վերլուծության հիմքում ընկած է այն կանխավարկածը, որ էթնիկ հանրությանը բնորոշ խոսքային կադապարները, այն է՝ բառեր, բառակապակցություններ, դարձվածներ, որոնք անվանում են այդ էթնիկ մշակույթի իրողություններ կամ արտահայտում են օտար լեզվին բնորոշ մտածողության տարրեր, գրողը կարող է միտումնավոր ընդգրկել գեղարվեստական տեքստի հյուսվածքում՝ թիրախ ընթերցողների վրա պերլուկուտիվ գործարանական ազդեցությունը ուժեղացնելու նպատակով: Գեղարվեստական դիսկուրսի միջմշակութային գործարանական վերլուծություն կատարելու նպատակով ընտրվել է ամերիկահայ գրող Ռիչարդ Հակոբյանի «Մուրբը ձյան մեջ» պատմվածքը: Քննությամբ պարզվում է, որ անգլերեն գեղարվեստական շարադրանքում տեղ գտած հայերեն բառերը, հայկական իրականությանը բնորոշ արտահայտությունները, ազգային մտածողություն արտացոլող բառակապակցությունները և դարձվածները էթնիկ ժառանգության ցուցիչներ են, որոնք ուղղված են սփյուռքում բնակվող և հայերեն կարդալ չիմացող հայ երիտասարդներին: Հեղինակի նպատակն է համոզել օտար երկրում բնակվող և օտար մշակույթի ազդեցությամբ իրենց էթնիկ-ազգային նկարագիրը ձևափոխող ամերիկահայերին՝ պահպանելու իրենց ինքնությունը:

Шушаник Паронян – Языковые элементы иностранной культуры в художественном произведении: прагматический подход

Цель данной статьи – выявить коммуникативно-прагматические задачи употребления в художественном произведении языковых элементов, принадлежащих иностранной культуре. За основу исследования берется предположение, что речевые модели, характерные для этнической общности, т.е. слова, словосочетания, идиомы, которые называют реалии данной этнокультуры или выражают элементы иностранного языкового мышления, могут быть намеренно использованы автором художественного текста в целях усиления перлокутивного прагматического воздействия на целевого читателя. Для проведения межкультурного прагматического анализа художественного дискурса был выбран рассказ американского писателя армянского происхождения Ричарда Акопяна “Святой в снегу”. В результате анализа было выявлено, что армянские слова, выражения, характеризующие армянские реалии, словосочетания и идиомы, отражающие армянское языковое мышление, являются маркерами этнического наследия, которые направлены на армянскую молодежь, проживающую в диаспоре и не умеющую читать по-армянски. Цель автора – убедить армян, которые живут в Америке и под влиянием чужой культуры изменили свой этнонациональный облик, сохранить свою идентичность.