

ANCIENT POETICS AS A PRECURSOR
OF COGNITIVE STUDIES OF POETIC SYNTAX

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Abstract. *The article traces the main vectors of syntactic studies in ancient poetics in a bid to prove that the latter has laid a solid foundation for the analysis of syntactic organization of literary texts in current cognitive poetics. The research has revealed that the theoretical and methodological framework of cognitive poetics has adopted a range of terms, methods, and approaches to the analysis of syntactic constructions, which appeared in ancient rhetoric and stylistics with regard to human cognitive activity. By referring to the prominent authors of the antique period whose works introduced the key notions of poetic syntax such as figure, schema, construction, etc., the article thus claims that cognitive studies of poetic syntax date back to ancient poetics and considerably overlap with the classic antique tradition of examining syntax. The research thus attempts to show that current cognitive studies of poetic syntax resonate with the ancient interpretation of syntactic organization of poetry texts.*

Key words: *ancient poetics, cognitive poetics, poetry text, poetic syntax, figure of speech, image-schema, construction*

Introduction. During the antique epoch, people strived to understand the world in the diversity and complexity of its manifestations by expressing their thoughts and feelings through language units. The rapid development of art and science stipulated the need for effective means of communication [4, p. 53-54; 13, p. 20-21; 14, p. 28], which would allow organizing utterances and texts. Hence, grammar, and syntax in particular, as a study of composing sentences, took a central place in ancient poetics [13, p. 26-29, 31-32].

The topicality of analyzing the study of poetic syntax in ancient poetics stems from the fact that present-day cognitive poetic analysis of syntax has a close connection with the theoretical and methodological framework of ancient poetics whereby many of the terms and principles of examining syntactic units have been adopted and expanded in further cognitive studies.

Literature Overview. In their works, the representatives of cognitive linguistics (M. Johnson, G. Lakoff, M. Turner) [15; 16; 19] often turn to the achievements of ancient poetics as a field where the prototypes of many cognitive terms such as image-schema, iconicity, conceptual pattern etc. emerged. Thus, in his work “Figure”, M. Turner emphasizes that ‘schema’ (Latin translation – figure) (the central term of present-day cognitive linguistics) used to be a technical term of Greek rhetoric defined as a pairing of form and meaning or conceptual pattern [19, p. 45]. Further, the prototype of the popular term “image-schema” introduced by M. Johnson [15] also appeared in ancient rhetoric that the image-schema of the meaning can be mirrored in its form. The mechanism of matching the form's image schema to the meaning's image schema – known as "iconicity" of form was also explored by ancient rhetoricians [19, p. 49].

The objective of the article is to reveal the points of intersection and resonance between the study of poetic syntax in ancient and cognitive poetics in a bid to prove that ancient poetics has laid a solid foundation for the present-day cognitive studies of poetic syntax. The **tasks** of the research are to give a short overview of the main directions of poetic syntactic studies in ancient poetics, to highlight the notions and terms, which have been adopted by cognitive poetics, and to reveal how the achievements of both schools can be effectively integrated into the present-day research of poetic syntax.

The research material and methods. The research material is represented by texts of ancient rhetorics and modern textbooks on cognitive poetics. **The methodology** of the research encompasses general scientific methods, including induction, deduction, analysis, and synthesis.

Results and Discussion. Analysis of the early syntactic studies in ancient Greek rhetoric shows that the latter has given birth to a number of terms of cognitive linguistics and cognitive poetics. To begin, the philosophers and rhetoricians of the ancient period emphasized the role of grammatical means in objectifying thoughts through words. The materialistic philosophy of atomism gave rise to an ancient doctrine of language, which set the foundation for the subsequent formation of the grammar theory [13, p. 20-21]. Thus, in his works, Democritus projected the philosophical concept of the universe structure onto linguistic material deducing the form of the word ("name") from letters by analogy with the universe structured by atoms. Proceeding from this definition of the word, sentence, as a unit of higher order, was defined as a link of words or "names". Accordingly, the correlation between the universe and the linguistic units was presented as follows: atom → thing → universe = letter → syllable → name = name → phrase → sentence [7, p. 37].

Notably, it was during the antique period that philosophers and rhetoricians went far beyond exploring the structural potential of syntactic units. In fact, as cognitive scientist M. Turner notes, "classical rhetoricians had anticipated some of the most influential discoveries about the nature of form-meaning pairs" [19, p. 45-46] claiming that "linguistic patterns prototypically have conceptual anchors" [ibid., 47]. Ancient philosophers and rhetoricians viewed syntactic units as form-meaning pairs in which the structure is grounded in a corresponding conceptual pattern. This perspective anticipated present-day cognitive syntactic studies with a focus on constructions as pairings of form and content whereby the content is mapped onto the form of the cognitive (citations of construction grammars).

To achieve accuracy and clarity of verbal expression, ancient writers and poets put special emphasis on the role of word order and cohesion, which was achieved chiefly by using conjunctions. Based on the relations set between the parts of the sentence, conjunctions fell into linking, dividing, replenishing, causative, and concluding [9, p. 145]. Conversely, the absence of conjunctions and interrupted speech were viewed as factors contributing to obscurity and ambiguity of sentences [6, p. 205]. In this regard, solecism, i.e. the absence of agreement between the

preceding and the following words, was considered an obstacle that might prevent orators from achieving purity of speech [11, p. 203].

Syntax as a study of ordering words and their agreement within sentences and texts formed a separate area of grammar. During the ancient period, syntactic studies were realized with regard to the semantic compatibility of parts of speech and grammatical categories [13, p. 28-29, 32]. The first attempts to describe the syntactic dimension of literary language were made by studying phrases and compatibility of language units with a focus on word order, period, and rhythm as well as figures of speech [3, p. 223-224].

The rapid development of rhetoric, the science of oratory, soon resulted in a clear distinction between poetry and prose. The latter was defined as metric, rhythmic speech avoiding dullness through linguistic enrichment [10, p. 201]. Correspondingly, it was necessary to differentiate between means of prose and means of poetic speech. In this regard, meter, or poetic rhythmic structure, was recognized a specific feature of poetry [2, p. 193]. The primary focus of ancient orators was on effective means of artistic expression. Among the methods, which could help turn a usual statement into a more powerful one, *figures of speech* took the main place. The term "figure" (Lat. *figura* – outline, appearance), borrowed by the ancient rhetoric from the art of dance, was first used by Anaximenes from Lampsak [3, p. 223]. Figures, as other syntactic means, were based on syntagmatic relations, and their specific feature was to break stable syntactic models. In this regard, violation of word order played a special role in forming figures [5, p. 206-207]. The most accurate definition of that period was the definition of the figure as "conscious thought deviation from an ordinary and simple form of expression" for the sake of a greater poetic effect and eloquence; "revitalization of the speech form through art" [8, p. 276]. The use of figures of speech was aimed at achieving conciseness and clarity of statements and was chiefly justified by the orator's desire to make the speech beautiful, the reason why figures are referred to a separate section of the ancient rhetoric "ornatus" ("decoration").

Gradually, the hierarchy of the figures of speech was expanded and detailed. Thus, the writers of the 4th century mentioned only three figures: antithesis, assonance of columns, and pariosis, which are based on opposition, similarity, and equality respectively [1, p. 183; 2, p. 195]. In the 1st century, a complete classification of figures of speech appeared. The most detailed was the division of figures into the following groups: 1) the figures formed by adding parts of the sentence (e.g., anaphora, asyndeton, and polysyndeton) [8, p. 284; 11, p. 281, 284]; 2) figures constructed by reducing the elements of the sentence (e.g., zeugma, reduction) [8, p. 28; 11, p. 286]; 3) figures based on assonance (e.g., equality of columns) [ibid., p. 288]; 4) figures based on the opposition of parts of the sentence (e.g., antithesis). Thus, the analyzed features of poetic syntax give grounds to determine the approach offered by ancient poetics as stylistic, with figures of speech recognized as the main syntactic units.

Notably, each figure of speech was characterized by certain syntactic and semantic relations. From the classical rhetorical perspective, some philosophers of classic antiquity already during that formative period viewed figures as anchored in conceptual patterns [19, p. 47]. In this regard, knowing a language could be equaled to knowing its *schemata* [ibid., p. 44]. Thus, for example, Aristotle analyzed *asyndeton* and *polysyndeton* as two different form-meaning pairs standing in oppositional relation. While asyndeton was examined based on partitioning (of concepts) paired with the formal means omitting connectives, polysyndeton was viewed as chunking (of concepts) expressed through the formal means using connectives [ibid., p. 48]. In this regard, the emphasis was put on learning a range of schemes as effective tools of making one's speech eloquent and powerful. Grammar, in its turn, was considered to consist of form-meaning pairs while the main goal was conveying the meaning in the corresponding form. In cognitive poetics, figures of antithesis, asyndeton, and polysyndeton are analyzed at the conceptual and formal levels [ibid., p. 51]. Ancient philosophers and rhetoricians viewed syntactic units as form-meaning pairs in which the structure is grounded in a corresponding conceptual pattern. This perspective anticipated present-day cognitive syntactic studies with a

focus on constructions as pairings of form and content whereby the connection between the form and the content was realized as motivated which laid a foundation for the present-day studies of iconicity of form.

Further, the prototype of the popular term “image-schema” introduced by M. Johnson [15] also appeared in ancient rhetoric alongside with the idea that people experience syntactic forms image-schematically [19, p. 49]. The opinion that the image-schema of the meaning can be mirrored in its form and image-schemas can structure expressions may have image-schematic structure was expressed by Longinus and Demetrius [idid., p. 50].

Referring to present-day cognitive linguistics, we may find the embodiment of these ideas in cognitive studies of poetic syntax where meaning is analyzed as structured by corresponding image-schemas and the meaning of syntactic constructions has embodied nature emerging based on common human bodily and sensory experience. As people understand the surrounding world as structured by discrete objects [15, p. 122], syntactic constructions are understood in terms of the image-schema OBJECT whose conceptual features are *existence in space, ability to interact with objects*. The structure of the syntactic construction can be understood through the image-schema PART-WHOLE whose conceptual features are *configuration (mutual location of parts), integrity, unity* [17, p. 135]. Thus, for example, a sentence is understood as WHOLE whose elements (words, word-combinations or clauses) are PARTS having certain CONFIGURATION. The configuration of WHOLE is not arbitrary being based on the image-schema LINEAR ORDER whose conceptual features are *horizontal протяжність у горизонтальній площині, succession* [16, p. 126; 17, p. 135]. Hence, because spatial image-schemas are grounded in human pre-conceptual experience people can understand the syntactic meaning of constructions of a poetic text in general, schematic features. For example, in the abstract from D. Rampspeck’s poem “The Marriage We Carried in Our Pockets” *And often we imagined that // the years were a locked door against which // we kept knocking to be admitted* (Rampspeck PO). Thus, the analyzed sentence can be interpreted in terms of the PART-WHOLE image-schema whereby

the subordinate clauses are PARTS having specific CONFIGURATION caused by its syntactic organization: object clause (*that the years were a locked door*) and attributive clause (*against which // we kept knocking to be admitted*).

The device of matching the form's image schema to the meaning's image schema is a precursor of one more notion of modern cognitive linguistics – "iconicity" of form. In present-day cognitive linguistics underline iconicity of form with regard to syntactic constructions. Cognitive poetics, in its turn, mainly focuses on the iconicity of literary texts and their syntactic organization revealed in the syntactic composition of the textual space (e.g., location and distribution and length of poetic lines), different types of sentences (simple, compound, complex) and types of connection between clauses (coordination (syndetic/asyndetic) and subordination) as well as word order, expressive means and syntactic stylistic devices (punctuation, spaces etc.) [12, p. 2006]. For example, the poem "Spiral Woman" by Allison Funk has an iconic organization of the syntactic space whereby the text itself reminds of a spiral and the complex sentences convey conceptual complexity:

*Insomniac, she tosses, turns every which way
until wound
in her sheets, she can't stop spinning inside*

*where voices entangle, one son's with another's,
her father's bass,
mother's countervailing treble. Ne te dépêche pas!*
(FVJ Funk)

Conclusions and prospects for further research. The theory of the figures of speech, which emerged in ancient poetics, revealed the structural as well as logical and semantic resources of syntactic units. The systematization of figures, proposed by the rhetorical tradition, laid a solid foundation for the current classification of rhetorical figures in literary studies and syntactic expressive means and stylistic devices in stylistics. The appearance of such terms as schema and image-schema in modern cognitive linguistics can also be traced to the works of ancient philosophers and rhetoricians. Further research on the topic may relate to the specifics of the analysis of syntactic units within formal poetics with regard to the method of

deautomation and such poetic devices as "estrangement" and "the device of complicated form" and their connection to cognitive poetics.

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АНТИЧНА ПОЕТИКА ЯК ПРОВІСНИК КОГНІТИВНИХ СТУДІЙ ПОЕТИЧНОГО СИНТАКИСУ

А.В. Мосійчук, І.Є. Грачова

У статті розглянуто основні вектори синтаксичних досліджень в античній поезії з метою довести, що остання заклала міцне підґрунтя для аналізу синтаксичної організації літературних текстів у сучасній когнітивній

поетиці. Дослідження виявило, що теоретико-методологічний апарат когнітивної поетики запозичив цілу низку термінів, методів і підходів до аналізу синтаксичних конструкцій, що з'явилися у зв'язку з дослідженням пізнавальної діяльності людини в античній риторичній і стилістичній. Посилаючись на видатних авторів античного періоду, у чиїх творах з'явилися ключові поняття поетичного синтаксису, такі як фігура, схема, конструкція тощо, у статті стверджується, що когнітивні дослідження поетичного синтаксису беруть початок у античній поетиці і перегукуються із класичною античною традицією вивчення синтаксису. Таким чином, у дослідженні здійснена спроба довести, що сучасні когнітивні дослідження поетичного синтаксису резонують з давнім тлумаченням синтаксичної організації поетичних текстів.

Ключові слова: антична поетика, когнітивна поетика, поетичний текст, поетичний синтаксис, фігура мовлення, образ-схема, конструкція

АНТИЧНАЯ ПОЭТИКА КАК ПРЕДТЕЧА КОГНИТИВНЫХ СТУДИЙ ПОЭТИЧЕСКОГО СИНТАКСИСА

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В статье рассмотрены основные векторы синтаксических исследований в античной поэтике с целью доказать, что последняя заложила прочную основу для анализа синтаксической организации литературных текстов в современной когнитивной поэтике. Исследование выявило, что теоретико-методологический аппарат когнитивной поэтики заимствовал целый ряд терминов, методов и подходов к анализу синтаксических конструкций, которые появились в связи с исследованием языка и познавательной деятельности человека в античной риторике и стилистике. Ссылаясь на выдающихся авторов античного периода, в чьих произведениях появились ключевые понятия поэтического синтаксиса, такие как фигура, схема, конструкция итак далее, в статье утверждается, что когнитивные исследования поэтического синтаксиса берут начало в античной поэтике и перекликаются с классической античной традицией изучения синтаксиса. Таким образом, в исследовании осуществлена попытка доказать, что современные когнитивные исследования поэтического синтаксиса резонируют с давним толкованием синтаксической организации поэтических текстов.

Ключевые слова: античная поэтика, когнитивная поэтика, поэтический текст, поэтический синтаксис, фигура речи, образ-схема, конструкция