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WE-DISCOURSE IN MODERN FICTION: THE CONSTRUCTION OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

The following set of features for the concept of 'discourse' is considered to be relevant: discourse as *communication, dialogue; an interaction between communicators; a process; a structure; discourse as a system; a distinct way of representing and perceiving the world; a special language and world* that preserves, conveys, and transforms information using its discursive units, categories, and rules; discourse as *an expression and manifestation of national identity*.

From the perspective of pragmalinguistic theory, pronouns are critical segments of discourse which play a special role and perform specific functions in speech acts. A pronoun is an integral part of discourse that significantly determines the nature of speech acts, conveys information about the pragmatic situation, and shapes the communicative one.

Pronouns are not merely viewed as a "part of speech" with a substitutive function but as significant cognitive, pragmatic, and discursive units. Pronouns are classified as discourse markers as they have a transformational potential and the ability to frame various communicative interpretations. They are also referred to as shifters, capable of shifting communication to different dimensions.

Personal pronouns are of particular interest. It is difficult to imagine the language without the use of personal pronouns: through personal pronouns individuals define themselves ('I') and their place in society, as a part of that society ('we').

Personal pronouns hold a uniquely exceptional position in language, as they lack a fixed referent. All other deictic words, in one way or another, relate to personal pronouns. The use of personal pronouns creates a shared image of reality for different speakers. The pronoun *we* (the meaning of which inherently implies the unity of the speaker with others) carries a multitude of nuances.

The pronoun *we* basically forms *we-discourse*. The primary marker of *we-discourse* is the pronoun *we* itself. However, *we-discourse* is not formed solely through the direct use of the pronoun *we*. It is also constructed through *we-semes* such as «ours», «not ours», «with us», and «not with us».

Furthermore, it is shaped by pronominal configurations, such as *we – I* and *we – they*.

We-discourse embodies the semantics of collectivity and significantly influences the success or failure of communication. By employing *we-inclusions*, *we-semes*, and pronominal configurations, the speakers identify themselves with the addressees, include them in a closed circle of ‘us,’ demonstrate shared ideas, views, and actions, and model future successful relationships and positive communication. The pronoun in *we-discourse* serves as a text-forming category that sets the tone and nature of communication.

We define *we-discourse* as an oral or written text in which the pronoun *we* and *we-semes* are used to identify and unite the speaker and the addressee; as a coherent text which reflects the sociocultural interaction of communicators; as a specific type of communicative act that considers the recipient’s perspective and models their communication and relationship with the sender; as a communicative event whose parameters are determined by the concept of *collectivity*; as an indicator of the social context (encompassing participants in communication), cultural traditions, cognitive attitudes, and values in speech; as a macro-discourse that generates texts of various genres, each dominated by different communicative intentions; as a unique mental space manifested through the implementation of communicative models aligned with the structure of the concept of *collectivity* [1].

There is a necessity to focus on *we-discourse* from a literary perspective to examine its wider narrative force within fiction. The study of *we-discourse* from a literary standpoint provides more insight into the ways various linguistic units and forms shape collective identity through narration and storytelling. Contemporary writers frequently employ the pronoun ‘we’ as more than a linguistic tool. It becomes an essential discursive and structural element to redefine the notions of collectivity and commonality, to change traditional boundaries between the reader and the narrator, the individual and the community.

The investigation of how literature engages within *we-discourse* in modern fiction reveals the role of language in the construction of collective identity within literary narratives. In fiction, ‘we’ performs different roles and possesses several functions, which indicate how discursive units construct and manifest wider social and cultural contexts: «*We were happy then, we took care of each other*», «*we all must learn patience; we all face our final lap someday*» (the narrator, other characters, all people) [2].

This synthesis of linguistic and literary perspectives provides a productive framework for the study of fiction, which both mirrors and reimagines the collective identities of modern society.

References

1. Gryshchenko O. The Multiplicity of Discourse: Typological Challenges and Emerging Forms. *Transcarpathian Philological Studies*. Uzhgorod, 2025. P. 54–61.
2. Stein G. The Art of Racing in the Rain. New York : Harper, 2008. 336 p.