

Interdiscursive Strategy of Integration in A. S. Byatt's Literary Discourse

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Abstract

The process of discourse interaction, also referred to as interdiscourse, presents one of the relatively new concepts in the field of modern linguistics. The notion is based on the theory which states that any discourse contains traces of other surrounding discourses. The relevance of our research is based on the fact that the versatile aspects of interdiscursivity are insufficiently studied, in particular the specificity of its implementation in the context of literary discourse. The aim of our research is to explore the phenomenon of discourse interaction and its strategies in A. S. Byatt's literary heritage.

Keywords: *interdiscourse, integration, diachronic, genre interdiscursivity, A. S. Byatt.*

Introduction

The notion of interdiscourse (a term coined by Norman Fairclough) presents a relatively new concept in modern linguistics. Interdiscourse is defined as a process of discourse interaction in a literary text, the study of which was initiated by M. Pêcheux who pointed out that “any discourse contains traces of other discourses” (Pêcheux 1982). However, the question of the demarcation line between them seems to be open due to the blurriness of the notions discourse and text on the one hand, and interdiscourse and intertextuality on the other. Consequently, there is no unified comprehension of this phenomenon in scientific literature (Foucault 2003; Fairclough 2003; Rozenfeld 2018; Widdowson 2004; Williams 1999; et al.). Taking into account the specificity of discursive processes with regard to the external factors, it appears possible to define interdiscourse as a process of interaction of a literary discourse with other verbal and non-verbal discourses within the scope of a definite literary text or a thematic unity of texts. A strong focus is laid on the shift to some other cognitive system, representing a circle of conceptual perception: an author (individual conceptual domain) – artistic reality (conceptual structure of a text) – a reader (cognitive mechanisms of perception) and their interaction.

1. The notion of interdiscourse and its specificity

The term ‘interdiscourse’ was coined by Norman Fairclough, one of the founders of critical discourse analysis. Discourse analysis, as stated by Fairclough, is not merely the linguistic analysis of texts, but an oscillation between a focus on specific texts and a focus on what he prefers to call the “order of discourse” (Fairclough 2003: 3). According to Fairclough, an ‘order of discourse’ is a particular combination or configuration of genres, discourses and styles which constitutes the discursive aspect of a network of social practices. Fairclough points out that critical discourse analysis aims at investigating the relationship between discourse practices and the wider social and cultural context. The term ‘order of discourse’ can be traced back to Michel Foucault (2003: 25), a French philosopher, who argues that discourses emerge and transform not according to a developing series of unarticulated, common worldviews, but according to a vast and complex set of discursive and institutional relationships, which are defined as much by breaks and ruptures as by unified themes. Based on the theoretical findings

of Foucault, the notion of interdiscourse was introduced, in order to indicate extraverbal processes external to discursive practice, which act as sociocultural and linguistic context and determine the semantic characteristics of discursive acts.

Foucault suggests that “the unity of a discourse is based not so much on the permanence and uniqueness of an object, as on the space in which various objects emerge and are continuously transformed” (Foucault 2003: 45). Therefore, the driving force of change occurring in a discourse is not some force external to discourse, but the discourse itself. ‘Space’ in Foucault’s statement implies the relationship between “institutions, economic and social processes, behavioral patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization” (Foucault 2003: 62). A discursive formation limits the form of objects, and, according to Foucault, this is a function of the interdiscursive relations between different discursive formations and the relation between discursive and non-discursive practices that constitute the discursive formation. In a narrow sense, interdiscourse denotes discursive-linguistic phenomena which in relation to a certain discursive integrity act as external.

M. Pêcheux (1982: 39) introduced a true innovation into the theory of discourse: his theory of interdiscourse, defined as the ‘complex whole in dominance’ of conditions of discourse production. Discourse began to be perceived as affected by several, mutually different, discursive formations (which are also called types of discourse) involved in unequal relations. In order to develop a method for describing such relations, an interdiscursive domain had to be taken into account which was conceived of as the linguistic ‘outside’ of single discourses. Based on this theory, any discourse contains traces of other surrounding discourses, thus the subject of discourse is not the only source of its meaning. It is also a discourse in the process of its formation, which is simultaneously disintegrated in the framework of complex relations of language and interdiscourse. That is, the object of discourse analysis was not the discursive formation itself but its constitutive frontier, and its identity was linked to the stabilization of a certain enunciative configuration. Interdiscourse was seen as a modality of a relationship which served to highlight such a configuration.

Interdiscourse also refers to the specific surroundings of the discursive process, those external factors which determine the form and content of discourse. It is not a mere representation of existing discourses, simply the designation of prior discourses, or description of what is common for all discourses, but a linguo-sociocultural space of a discursive nature, in which a certain type of discourse is generated and formed. Interdiscourse presents a domain of existence and development of discursive formations, which, according to Pêcheux, “constitute a structure of a discourse in accordance with certain cultural and historical conditions” (Pêcheux 1982: 111). It also designates the discursive and ideological space which deploys the discursive formations, in functions of relationships of domination-subordination contradiction.

For the purposes of our research and taking into account the outlined specificity of interdiscourse, we consider it possible to define this notion as a process of interaction of a literary discourse with other verbal and non-verbal discourses within the framework of a certain literary text or a thematic unity of texts.

2. The interdiscursive strategy of integration in a literary discourse

Interdiscourse is, to a large extent, a recipient-oriented concept, which creates a hierarchy of contexts by means of including various codes from different areas of culture. It may be frequently manifested in a literary discourse, which is perceived as a compilation of literary

works that constitute the result of an interaction between the text, the author's intentions, and a complex set of possible reactions of the recipient. Literary discourse is manifested in the complex ideological and thematic unity of an indefinite number of literary works. This unity of literary works that are in close and dynamic interaction within the corresponding cultural and historical context provides the basis for the division of literary discourse into various types. Literary discourse, consisting of an infinite number of implementations of the intertextual structures, reveals itself as a chaotic combination of various types of discourse that educe the text to the interdiscursive level.

Literary discourse is inevitably related to the communicative space of the era in which it is created, and a literary text acts as the point of intersection of various types of discursive practices. The study of the interaction between different types of discourses opens up a possibility of a more diverse interpretation of the author's intention in a particular literary work. It also allows tracing the general tendencies of cross-discursive interaction and, therefore, reliably determining the cultural and philological context of the literary text. The interaction of discourses introduces a new sociocultural context into the main discourse and produces new meanings.

Interdiscourse, which results from a cognitive shift from one typological model of text production and perception into another, may be spontaneous or deliberate (simulated). Spontaneous interdiscursivity is manifested in "a natural process of reintegration of human knowledge dispersed in different discursive formations" (Kristeva 1980: 24). Deliberate interdiscursivity manifests itself as a special strategy of the author, which is implemented with the purpose of conscious and purposeful text production. The deliberate introduction of the lexical and structural features of other types of discourses into the literary discourse expands the semantic connections of the literary text and makes the discourse authentic.

The author of a literary text may include in its structure any kind of discourse in order to express their worldview. The presence of the elements of various types of discourses in the speech of the characters makes the model of reality, created by the author, complete. Interdiscursivity contributes to the ambiguity of the text, making its meanings multidimensional. It enables the text to discover its cultural justification and cultural context and allows the author to enter into a dialogue with the cultural context of the era as well as with the recipient of the text. The mechanism of interdiscursivity is implemented by means of various strategies of the author. Despite the increasing interest in exploration of the concept of interdiscursivity and abundance of research devoted to this notion, scientists have not investigated the peculiarities of interdiscursive interaction strategies in literary texts. For the purposes of our research, we should explore simulated interdiscourse as a result of a deliberate process of text production performed by the author of a literary text. We should differentiate between two types of discourse heterogeneity in a literary discourse: integration, which is performed as a singular inclusion in the domain of a literary text, and interaction as a reciprocal influence of discourses which is performed at the level of the entire text. Thus, various discourses may be implemented by the author of a literary text into the main discourse by means of integrative or interactive interdiscursive strategies. In order to perform the analysis of interdiscursive strategies in a literary text, we should designate the typical forms of interdiscursive relations. Interaction as an interdiscursive strategy may be implemented in a literary text by means of diachronic and genre interdiscursivity.

Diachronic interdiscursivity presents the process of interaction within the framework of a literary text of discourses which belong to distinctive epochs. As a spontaneous type of discourse interaction, interdiscursivity in its diachronic aspect relates to any written text since

all texts present a prerequisite and condition necessary for the formation of a new text. The interdiscursive process is attributed not only to the interaction of texts which belong to different epochs, but also to the interrelation of the systems of texts correlated with the norms and knowledge characteristic of those epochs. However, spontaneous diachronic interdiscursivity presents a certain difficulty in the process of its identification, as this kind of discourse interaction is involuntary and exists in all types of texts. Simulated diachronic interdiscursivity, on the other hand, is recognizable in a text, as a deliberate change of the discourse of modernity to the discourse of a particular historical epoch, or their interaction in a literary text.

Diachronic interdiscursivity may be expressed through the purposeful violation of the conventional speech norms. Nevertheless, the author of the simulated discourse, as well as the recipient of the text, as a rule, does not possess any communicative experience in the framework of the simulated discourse. Therefore, this lack of experience for appropriate discourse reproduction imposes certain restrictions on the possibilities of marking the simulated discourse in a text. Diachronic interdiscursivity is, to a large extent, determined by the general cultural competence and the knowledge of the author of a literary text. It is based on the author's intentions and the ability to reproduce a simulated discourse by reference to the knowledge obtained from other sources. The perception of the text by the recipient is respectively based on his/her ability to identify the simulated discourse created by the author.

Genre interdiscursivity presents a process of interaction within the framework of a literary text of discourses which represent various genres. Integration of distinctive genres creates a complex narrative which may intricate the perception of the text by the recipient. Genre interdiscursivity is implemented in the text by means of the use of characteristic features of distinctive genres. In the process of their interaction one genre can dominate the discourse, while the other performs a subordinate role; or their typical features are equally implemented in the text. The use of this type of discourse interaction is determined by the author's intentions and artistic conception.

3. The strategy of interaction

3.1: Diachronic interdiscursivity in A. S. Byatt's literary discourse

The interdiscursive strategy of interaction is implemented in Byatt's literary works in the form of reciprocal interaction of various genres and temporal discourses performed on the level of the whole text.

The novel *Possession: A Romance* by A. S. Byatt, which is considered to be Byatt's most prominent work, is a manifestation of the strategy of diachronic interdiscursivity at its finest. It establishes a dialogical relationship between the nineteenth and the twentieth century. Byatt defines it as an "attempt to connect a bygone time with the very present that is flitting away from us" (Byatt 1991: 2). The author notes that with the course of time and the older she becomes, the more habitually she thinks of her own life as "a relatively short episode in a long story of which it is a part". Byatt is known for her professional concern with the past, particularly the 19th century, as a researcher of the Victorian era, which was also reflected in her works.

The compositional organization of the novel is two-dimensional. It is based on the narration of two stories, which are of the same significance in the context of the novel and consist of overlapping sets of events. The narrative of the novel traces the adventures of two present-day literary scholars, Roland Michell and Maud Bailey, in their joint quest for the story

about the relationship of two fictional nineteenth-century poets, Randolph Henry Ash and Christabel LaMotte. The two temporal discourses are portrayed separately. Although the narrative of the novel is mainly located in the twentieth century, it moves backward in order to consistently reveal the development of the story between the nineteenth-century poets.

The novel reconstructs the impression of the Victorian novel. In *On Histories and Stories* A. S. Byatt noted that “it seems somehow important to be able to make coherent texts using words as they were used, together” (Byatt 2001: 3). She also believes in historical resurrection through fiction and states:

I do believe that if I read enough, and carefully enough, I shall have some sense of what words meant in the past, and how they related to other words in the past, and be able to use them in a modern text so that they do not lose their relations to other words in the interconnected web of their own vocabulary.

(Byatt 2001: 6)

Thus, the authenticity of her nineteenth-century texts is of great importance to the writer.

Possession, as a complex multi-layered novel, which, as Byatt herself states:

[...] plays serious games with the variety of possible forms of narrating the past – the detective story, the biography, the mediaeval verse Romance, the modern romantic novel, and Hawthorne’s fantastic historical Romance in between, the campus novel, the Victorian third-person narration, the epistolary novel, the forged manuscript novel, and the primitive fairy tale of the three women, filtered through Freud’s account of the theme in his paper on the Three Caskets.

(Byatt 1991: 7)

The ‘forged manuscript novel’ in Byatt’s perception refers to the variety of texts created by her, which are aimed to represent the Victorian discourse.

The sophisticated process of recreation of the discourse of the past is presented in different ways. A. S. Byatt aimed to create an illusion of fidelity to the nineteenth-century environment. She pointed out that writing Victorian words in Victorian contexts, in a Victorian order, and in Victorian relations of one word to the next was the only way I could think of to show one could hear the Victorian dead. Byatt also informed that she “read the dead writers Christabel read, the French monk, Jean d’Arras, John Keats and John Milton, whose snakes and Lamias inform her writing” (Byatt 1991: 4). For the Victorians were not simply Victorian. They read their past and resuscitated it. Representation of Victorian discourse in the novel is embodied in the use of Victorian vocabulary, Victorian documents and the omniscient Victorian narrator. Victorian vocabulary is represented through stylization of literary texts of that period, such as tales and poems, written by fictional characters.

Byatt’s conviction of the possibility of restoration of the nineteenth-century discourse is illustrated in the extracts of Victorian poetry. However, the author states that “the 19th-century poems that were not 19th-century poems wrote themselves. They fitted into the metaphorical structure of my novel, but were not mine, as my prose is mine” (Byatt 1991: 1). Nevertheless, these instances of Victorian poetry were also written by the author herself:

Since riddles are the order of our day
Come here, my love, and I will tell thee one.

There is a place to which all Poets come
Some having sought it long, some unawares,
Some having battled monsters, some asleep
Who chance upon the path in thickest dream,
Some lost in mythy mazes, some direct
From fear of death, or lust of life or thought
And some who lost themselves in Arcady [...]

(Byatt 1991: 420)

The discourse of the past is also evidenced in numerous insertions of non-literary Victorian documents, such as diaries and private letters. A unified picture of the past is presented through these textual traces:

We are rational nineteenth-century beings, we might leave the coup de foudre to the weavers of Romances - but I have certain evidence that you know what I speak of, that you acknowledged, however momentarily (that infinite moment) that at least what I claim is true

(Byatt 1991: 175)

They serve as manifestation of the everyday speech of the Victorian characters of the novel:

My dear, I sit here and write, to whom but thee? I feel better here amongst thy things-the pen is reluctant to form 'thee', 'thy', there is no one there, and yet here is still a presence [...]. I am no blind mouldiwarp, my Lady, nor no well-trained lady's maid to turn my head and not see what is stated not to concern me. You need not hurry them away to lie in your sewing-basket or run upstairs to fold them under your handkerchiefs. I am no Sneak, no watcher, no Governess. A governess is what I am most surely not. From that fate you rescued me, and you shall never, for one moment, one little moment, suppose me ungrateful or making claims.

(Byatt 1991: 42)

The discourse of the twentieth century is also reflected through perception of the past by the main character. Roland, a Victorian scholar, who lives in the basement of a decaying Victorian house, and reads books covered in "tenacious Victorian dust", attends "international conferences on Victorian poetry" and in his quest visits Seal Court, an example of "Victorian Gothic at its most tracery-like" with "a Victorian water garden" (Byatt 1991: 96).

Another feature which contributes to the representation of Victorian discourse in the novel is the use of a third-person omniscient narrator. It is widely recognized that the nineteenth-century narrator was assuming the omniscience of a god. However, Byatt perceives this kind of narrator as a kind of a fictive narrator who can creep closer to the feelings and the inner life of characters – as well as providing a Greek chorus – than any first-person mimicry. This omniscient narrator is deliberately used by her three times in the historical narrative, always to tell what the historians and biographers of the fiction never discovered, always to heighten the reader's imaginative entry into the world of the text.

The combination of various forms of realization of the past creates its persuasive image and serves as a manifestation of discourse of the nineteenth century. The discourse of the past in *Possession* influences the development of the action, since the process of deciphering the

mysteries of the past forms the basis of the novel's narrative. Fiction and history are blended in order to create a new perception of the past and the present as well. The development of the story in two temporal discourses puts readers in a position which allows them to form multiple judgments and interpretations.

3.2: Genre interdiscursivity in A. S. Byatt's literary discourse

The interactive strategy of genre interdiscursivity is used by Byatt in her story *The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye*. Byatt herself refers to it as a fairy story, a term, which presumably may be the result of combination of two literary genres: a short story and a fairy tale. However, the story in its nature also presents some characteristic features of novellas, particularly in its length. As a novella, it depicts the tale of one particular character and does not involve any major conflicts or sub-plots. In *On Histories and Stories*, while reflecting on the process of writing of this story, Byatt points out that it was written as a result of her discovery, that "an interest in tales is something the young have, and the ageing rediscover" (Byatt 2001: 131). She perceives a literary fairy tale as a wonderful, versatile hybrid form, which draws on primitive apprehensions and narrative motifs, and then uses them to think consciously about human beings and the world.

A fairy story is a combination of two narrative types which results in a synthesis of a folklore discourse of a fairy tale and a realistic discourse of a short story. As Byatt states, these are modern literary stories and they do play quite consciously with a postmodern creation and recreation of old forms. The manifestation of the interactive strategy of genre interdiscursivity in *The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye* is expressed through its compositional diversity as well as the interaction of fairy and realistic elements. The characteristic elements of the two genres can hardly be differentiated due to their vague outlines. The text presents a transition from a realistic narrative to a fairy tale narrative. Their synthesis is represented by means of various compositional and structural forms. The fairy tale discourse in the story is introduced by the very opening sentence:

Once upon a time, when men and women hurtled through the air on metal wings, when they wore webbed feet and walked on the bottom of the sea, learning the speech of whales and the songs of the dolphins, when pearly-fleshed and jeweled apparitions of Texan herdsmen and houris shimmered in the dusk on Nicaraguan hillsides, when folk in Norway and Tasmania in dead of winter could dream of fresh strawberries, dates, guavas and passion fruits and find them spread next morning on their tables, there was a woman who was largely irrelevant, and therefore happy.

(Byatt 1995: 43)

The cliché 'once upon a time' serves as an immediate signpost of a fairy discourse. Different variations of fairy tale clichés may be evidenced throughout the whole text "At the time when my story begins the green sea was black, sleek as the skins of killer whales, and the sluggish waves were on fire, with dancing flames and a great curtain of stinking smoke" (Byatt 1995). The protagonist of the story is also introduced through the help of a fairy tale cliché of directly addressing the reader: "Nevertheless our narrator, whose name was Gillian Perholt, found herself in the air, between London and Ankara". The omniscient narrator serves as a reminder of a fairy discourse in the story: "Equally, you can imagine Emmeline Porter for yourself, she has no more to do with this story" (Byatt: 1995: 45).

The interaction of the two discourses is reflected in Gillian's attitude towards the magical creature, and its abrupt appearance in her hotel room: "She was later to wonder how she could be so matter-of-fact about the presence of the gracefully lounging Oriental daimon in a hotel room". She does not question the fact of existence of this marvelous being, as "at the time, she unquestioningly accepted his reality and his remarks as she would have done if she had met him in a dream – that is to say, with a certain difference, a certain knowledge that the reality in which she was not everyday" (Byatt 1995: 82). The other characters of the story also perceive the djinns as quite prosaic. Gillian's colleague and friend, Orhan, in his speech during the conference informs, that these creatures are "one of the three orders of created intelligences under Allah [...], formed of subtle fire, and man, created from the dust of the earth". There are three orders of djinns – flyers, walkers and divers; they are shape-shifters, and like human beings, divided into servants of God and servants of Iblis, the demon lord. The Koran often exhorts the djinns and men equally to repentance and belief, and there do exist legal structures governing the marriage and sexual relations of humans and djinns. They are creatures of this world, sometimes visible, sometimes invisible; they haunt bathrooms and lavatories, and they fly through the heavens. They have their own complex social system and hierarchies.

A fairy tale discourse is also reflected in a common motif of magical wishes. After the main character of the story releases the djinn, he grants her three wishes and informs her on the limits of his magical abilities:

There are laws of the praeternatural within which we work, all of us, which cannot be broken. You may not, for instance, wish to have all your wishes granted in perpetuity. You may not wish for eternal life, for it is your nature to be mortal, as it is mine to be immortal. I cannot by magic hold together your atomies, which will dissolve.

(Byatt 1995: 78)

He also emphasizes, that the number of wishes is restricted to three, a typical magical number peculiar to a fairy tale discourse: "Three is three, a number of power" (Byatt 1995: 79). Thus, as peculiar to fairy tale, the fairy discourse in Byatt's story is characterized by some definite rules. She notes that:

[...] an all-important part of our response to the world of the tales is our instinctive sense that they have rules. There are things that can and can't happen, will and won't happen – a prohibition is there to be broken, two of three brothers or sisters are there to fail, the incestuous king will almost always dance at his daughter's wedding to the prince in whose court she has found refuge as a kitchen slave or a goose girl

(Byatt 1995: 12)

Contrary to a characteristic fairy tale 'happily ever after', the story's resolution is unpredictable and more typical for a novella. Since the preternatural laws require the Djinn to remain Gillian's service until all three wishes have been made, the protagonist uses her third wish to implement the Djinn's dearest desire and grant him freedom.

In the subtitle of her novel *Possession* Byatt defines it as romance. The choice of the subtitle as a clarification of the genre serves as an invitation for the readers to approach the text as an example of this genre. Byatt notes that romance allows for "a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material", which a writer "would not have felt himself entitled to assume, had he professed to be writing a Novel" (Byatt 1991: 2). In her comparison of the two genres she

suggests, that a novel is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience", while a romance "must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart - has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation. The reasons behind her choice of the genre are explained by her in the following way "The point of view in which this tale comes under the Romantic definition lies in the attempt to connect a bygone time with the very present that is flitting away from us" (Byatt 1991: 4).

However, the genre, as defined by Byatt, is not homogeneous in its nature, and the traces of many other genres may be evidenced in the text of this novel. This fact provides the basis for the possible use of genre interdiscursivity by the author.

Possession is often defined as a neo-Victorian novel, the term which was coined and defined by Dana Shiller as a subset of the historical novel "at once characteristic of postmodernism and imbued with a historicity reminiscent of the nineteenth-century novel" (Shiller 1997: 1). This novel is also referred to as historiographic metafiction, a work of fiction, which combines literary devices of metafiction with historical fiction. The term was coined by Linda Hutcheon. According to Hutcheon, in *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, works of historiographic metafiction are "those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages" (Hutcheon 1988: 5). She defines such novels as those, "whose metafictional self-reflexivity (and intertextuality) renders their implicit claims to historical veracity somewhat problematic" (Hutcheon 1989: 3). This genre is used as a representation of history and fiction as human constructs. Since Byatt knowingly engages the readers in a dialogue with texts of the previous century; by doing so, the past and present become connected. Hutcheon calls the modern kind of narrative as the mimesis of process, in contrast to the Victorian linear narration which is called 'the mimesis of product'. Thus, Byatt's narrative can be referred to the definition of 'the mimesis of process' as it consists of multiple levels of narration.

Conclusion

Interaction, as an interdiscursive strategy, may be implemented in a literary text by means of diachronic and genre interdiscursivity. Diachronic interdiscursivity presents the process of interaction within the framework of a literary text of discourses which belong to distinctive epochs. It depends on the general cultural competence and the knowledge of the author of a literary text. It may be expressed through the purposeful violation of the conventional speech norms. Diachronic interdiscursivity finds its full manifestation in Byatt's most prominent work and a Booker-prize winning novel *Possession*, as it establishes a dialogical relationship between the nineteenth and the twentieth century. The novel is based on the narration of two stories, which are of the same significance and present different temporal discourses, which are portrayed separately. A unified picture of the discourse of the past is presented through various textual traces, as they serve as a manifestation of the everyday speech of the 19th-century characters. The representation of the Victorian discourse in the novel is embodied in the use of Victorian vocabulary, Victorian documents and also the omniscient Victorian narrator. The combination of two temporal discourses and their simultaneous development allows the readers to form multiple judgments and interpretations.

Genre interdiscursivity, as one of interdiscursive strategies, presents a process of interaction within the framework of a literary text of discourses which represent various genres.

It may be implemented in the text by means of the use of characteristic features of distinctive genres and is determined by the author's intentions. It is used by Byatt in *Possession* since the novel combines the features of several genres. Although it was identified by the author as a romance, *Possession* is also often referred to as a neo-Victorian, a subset of a historical novel, and as historiographic metafiction, a work of fiction, which combines literary devices of metafiction with historical fiction, since Byatt engages the readers in a dialogue with texts of a previous century, connecting the past and the present. The strategy of genre interdiscursivity was also implemented by Byatt in her story *The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye*, which was defined by the author as a fairy story. This term presumably denotes the result of interaction of two literary genres: a short story and a fairy tale. In addition, the structure of the story also resembles another literary genre – a novella. The *Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye* combines two narrative types, which results in a synthesis of the folklore discourse of a fairy tale and the realistic discourse of a short story. Their manifestation is expressed through the compositional diversity of the story as well as the interaction of fairy and realistic elements, the use of fairy tale clichés and other fairy elements, such as magical creatures, magical wishes, and magical numbers.

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