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**ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННО-ВРЕМЕННЫЕ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКИ В ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОМ ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИИ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ РОМАНОВ П. Г. ВУДХАУЗА О ДЖИВСЕ И ВУСТЕРЕ)**

Данная статья посвящена анализу пространственно-временной структуры на примере цикла романов П. Г. Вудхауза о Дживсе и Вустере. Время и пространство в литературе имеют существенное жанровое значение. Время в романах П. Г. Вудхауза упорядоченно, все события расположены в линейном порядке. Хотя скорость течения сюжетного времени может укоряться и замедляться. Установлено, что объединяет пространство романов из цикла о Дживсе и Вустере скорее не четкая адресная определенность, а такие критерии, как социальный класс, определенный уклад жизни, нормы и правила поведения находящихся в нем людей, родственные и дружеские связи. Герои не просто помещены в замкнутое пространство, они не ощущают потребности вырваться за пределы очерченного круга. Таким образом, романам П. Г. Вудхауза присущ своеобразный эскапизм.

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# Теория литературы. Текстология

## Theory of Literature. Textual Criticism

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*The research focuses on the study of the space-time structure in P. G. Wodehouse's Jeeves and Wooster novels. Time and space in the literature show significant genre specifics. Time in P. G. Wodehouse's novels is logic-consistent, events are presented in a streamline order. However, the flow of the plot time can accelerate or slow-down. It is established that social class, lifestyle patterns, standards and the code of conduct, as well as relatives and friends, shape the spatial integrity of Wodehouse's novels. The heroes are not simply locked up in an enclosed space; rather, they have no pursuit to break its predetermined limits. Thus, the world in Wodehouse's novels is marked by escapism.*

*Key words and phrases:* space-time structure; plot; chronological sequence; chronotope; space limits; perceptual time; static characters; artistic convention; comic character; escapism; intrigue; emotional modality of narrative; comic nature.

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### CHRONOTOPE FEATURES IN LITERATURE (JEEVES AND WOOSTER BY P. G. WODEHOUSE CASE-STUDY)

The relevance of this research is related to the long-standing need of the complex study of the artistic techniques and means involved in the works of one of the outstanding comic writers of the XX century, P. G. Wodehouse, whose cultural heritage has been explored relatively little. Articles devoted to the writer are written mainly in the genre of prefaces to individual editions of his books. Even in English-speaking countries, the literary heritage of the writer is clearly not enough studied. The critical literature about P. G. Wodehouse's novels is represented by articles of a predominantly essayistic character and several, relatively recent, monographs.

Besides, a large number of diverse points of view on certain categories of text indicate the need for further research both in the accumulation of practical material and in its theoretical justification.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the fact that it is focused on the space-time structure in P. G. Wodehouse's Jeeves and Wooster novels as we consider that linguistic means of expressing time and space can be regarded as a major approach in the methodology of researching any literary text.

Accordingly, the aim of the research is to consider the space-time characteristics as a categorical basis of the literary text, as well as a genre-forming factor. The objectives of the study are to analyse specific features of P. G. Wodehouse's texts in the perspective of spatial structure and temporal one of a literary text and its influence on the text structure in general.

To date, there are enough works relating to certain categories of a text. However, the hierarchy of categories of the text, their classification has not yet been determined, the questions about what concepts certain categories convey, what means are involved in the expression of categories are not fully developed. Various text categories were outlined, among them being cohesion, continuum, retrospection / prospectus, modality, integration and completeness, pre- and post-information, story about the world / retelling of the world, progression / stagnation, time and space, consistency, modality, etc. A large number of diverse points of view indicate the need for further research both in the accumulation of practical material and in its theoretical justification.

Like any phenomenon in this world, every literary work has a certain structure, more or less complex, due to which a literary work acquires an aesthetic significance and the ability to influence the addressee, in this case, the reader. Moreover, any artistic work loses its aesthetic effect, if its form is destroyed [2].

Any literary text is a certain situation mapped and recreated by the author, where any action unfolds under certain space-time conditions that create internal relations and relations with real, extra-linguistic reality. The categories of space and time are universal categories of human existence, and no form of human existence or human activity

can be found outside the space-time characteristics. M. Bakhtin writes that “time and space in literature manifest genre significance. We can directly say that the genre and genre varieties are determined precisely by the chronotope, and in the literature the leading principle is time” [1, c. 235]. Discussions on the spatial-temporal structure of the text can be found in works by M. Bakhtin, D. Likhachev, Yu. Lotman, J. Poulet, R. Jakobson and others.

Hence, the spatial-time system of the literary text has a special meaning, and the categories of space and time in literature are singled out as a categorical basis of the literary text and a genre-forming factor. The spatial and temporal orientation of a literary text largely determines the nature of the language tools used by the author. Therefore, the features of these categories structure can be considered as the main features of a particular type of text. Thus, E. Kitaeva writes that analysis of spatial-temporal structure of a literary text, linguistic means of expressing time and space can be regarded as a major approach in the methodology of researching any literary text [3; 4].

While identifying the spatial-temporal structure in literature, it is necessary to take into account the universal properties of space and time as philosophical categories, as well as topological properties of literary space and time as a particular form of manifestation of universal categories.

Philosophers say that there is real/physical time-space and perceptual time-space. One of the first who understood how complicated and contradictory this question is was St. Augustine: “The past has already passed, the future has not come, and there is no real present. Or on the contrary – only it is... The past owes its existence to our memory, and the future owes our hope” [11, p. 666-667]. Indeed, is not our perception of time and space the product of our consciousness or, more precisely, the brain? Can we still say in the XXI century that time flows “like a river”, without interruptions and at the same speed, in and of itself, evenly and unidirectionally? The picture seems to be different. The brain is in a constant process of determining what, in what order, when and where everything occurs; moreover, the brain has to compare all this and produce the most adequate picture of the world. Let us also recall the time illusions, the dependence of the time perception on the emotional state, etc. – the issues that A. Bergson dealt with and, perhaps, most fully developed [10]. In addition, various processes in the brain itself proceed at different speeds, and there are time windows that allow us to classify the incoming information. In other words, it is our brain, that creates time in which we exist, and this is also a kind of the subjective reality [8, c. 332, 333].

The time flow in literature has no limitations. The interaction of past, present and future can manifest itself in the most unexpected combinations. The course of real time is rigidly ordered, all events in real life are arranged in a strictly linear order, with relations of precedence and succession, one event is always “earlier”, another – “later”. In a literary work, such dependence is optional and is often violated. Sequence of events in a literary work is not regulated by physical time.

According to its main characteristics, literary time is closer to the subjective forms of time awareness, namely, to perceptual time, the latter being subject to non-objective physical laws of people’s consciousness functioning. However, time in literature is much wider, more diverse, more complex and mobile in its form than perceptual time. Time in literature can enhance the diversity of the subjective perception of time. Along with the fact that literary time can rely on the form of objective time, literature provides an example of the most sophisticated combinations of various time forms. As noted by D. S. Likhachev, “literary time is the most voluminous and diverse time, since it somehow includes all other forms of time, it subordinates these forms to its artistic tasks” [5, c. 250].

The issues of the space category in literature are developed to a lesser extent than the issues of time, however, scholars insist that along with time, space is an organizing element in a work of literature. Yu. M. Lotman, V. N. Toporova, S. Yu. Neklyudova made an interesting contribution to the development of this problem at the theoretical level. Among foreign researchers, the works of M. Blancheau, R. Bournev, I. Kestner, S. Spencer, J. Frenk and others are of particular interest.

In general, the category of literary space is organized according to the principles relevant to the category of literary time, including in its structure the properties of real and perceptual spaces. However, these properties reveal themselves in their own way, following the laws of world perception in art. As well as the category of time, perceptual and real space do not exist separately, naturally there is a certain correspondence between them, since the perceptual space reflects, models the real.

Perceptual space is a space that exists exclusively in the human mind. It also has a certain structure and certain properties, acts according to certain laws, but unlike real space, it is ruled exclusively by the whims of people; while real space is uniform for the objective world, the perceptual space is different for different people.

Though P. G. Wodehouse is a well-known novelist, his works have been studied relatively little. Until recently, in Russia, only articles written in the genre of prefaces to individual editions of his books could be found. Most comprehensive and complete research of P. G. Wodehouse’s literary heritage has been carried out by E. V. Shabunina [9]. Moreover, British or American literature studies showed little interest to his works and included primarily the following contributions: Edwards O. D. P. G. Wodehouse. *A Critical Essay* (1977) [12]; Benny Green. *P. G. Wodehouse: A Literary Biography* (1981) [13] and Hall R. A. *The Comic Style of P. G. Wodehouse* (1974) [14].

The most acclaimed works created by P. G. Wodehouse are novels about Jeeves and Wooster, where the reader gets acquainted with the life and adventures of the young English aristocrat Bertie Wooster and his valet Jeeves. The unity of the entire set of novels about Jeeves and Wooster is created by the figure of the narrator, as well as an unusually funny and comic couple of characters, one of whom constantly finds himself in various ridiculous situations, and the other one always finds a way out of these seemingly hopeless situations. Each novel of the set can be perceived as an independent work. While the set of novels was created over half a century, the plot-compositional structure of each novel, a kind of formula according to which they are tailored, remained virtually unchanged.

The eccentric main characters of P. G. Wodehouse, as well as many eccentric minor ones, appear in every novel, without changing either internally or externally, retaining their comic features and even their age, remaining identical to themselves. Likewise, the storyline that goes through all the novels about Jeeves and Wooster remains the same. This self-identity seems to become one of the reasons for the writer's success; as the continuity includes all characteristic features of the plot model, spatial-time parameters, the system of characters and style [9].

The P. G. Wodehouse's text study shows that the character of the artistic composition is reduced to one entity integrating parts and elements into one whole, which is always created in the simplest and most natural way: the plot is constructed in a direct chronological sequence, the narration is presented by a single narrative type throughout the whole novel, chronotope is organized by spatial and temporal limitations. Thus, in most cases, the set-up, narrative arc, culmination and denouement last about two weeks and take place in the same place.

Up to the twentieth century, direct speech in literature reflected "the real time"; time went faster in narration, while in description it slowed down or stopped altogether. With the development of more complex speech forms in literature (novel, story and drama), such as descriptiveness or indirect speech (in its varieties), they began to "superimpose" on the character's speech, which, accordingly, began to be transmitted in either more condensed way, or more slowly.

In the novels about Jeeves and Wooster, the speed of plot time can be perceived through speech forms. However, only one speech form is used, namely, direct speech, which is presented in the form of a dialogue and, especially, an internal dialogue.

It should be noted that time in the novels is organized in an orderly manner, all events are arranged in the relations of precedence and succession, temporal order is not violated in any sense. Nevertheless, continuity is hardly preserved – time in the novels, of course, is discontinuous. The novel portrays a certain amount of time within the whole work, but the story begins and ends. There is no unity of discontinuity and continuity, as a universal form of functioning in art.

The structure of the time category in P. G. Wodehouse's novels is shaped by the relationship of plot time and event time. The flow speed of plot time is characterized by alternations in accelerated pace and slowed pace of the development of the action in time. The slowdown occurs within the events which are of the paramount importance for the plot development, rather than in author's descriptions, reasoning or generalizations (the main character, Bertie Worchester, is the narrator himself). Therefore, we came to the conclusion that it is worth talking not so much about the change in the speed of time flow in the novels, but about its compression and stretching.

The narrative information of the sequential course in the plot development constitutes the event basis for P. G. Wodehouse texts. Event time is constructed consistently almost throughout the length of the novel, when all events, incidents, changes occur directly "in front of the reader"; in other words, they are all described. Actions are not reflected separately, but in a single stream of interrelated events. The speed of plot time and the successive development of events are expressed by morphological, lexical means, as well as compositional means and contextual conditions.

The analysis of the spatial structure in the novels about Jeeves and Wooster shows that there are boundaries, that the space is conventional and closed. The beginning in all the novels is set in Bertie Wooster's apartment in Berkeley Square – the generic name of the "fashionable apartment" in one of the prestigious districts of London. Further development of the plot is placed in one of the country estates: Brinkley Court in Worcestershire – the country house of Aunt Dahlia and Uncle Tom ("Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit" [15], "Jeeves in the Offing" [16]); Chaffnell Regis in Somersetshire – the estate of Lord Chaffnell ("Thank You, Jeeves!" [17]); Totleigh Towers in the county of Gloucestershire – Basset's country house ("The Code of the Woosters" [18]) etc.

All the estates, where events unfold, are located in the vicinity of London; and, although it is possible to find separate spatial landmarks, no specific indicators expressed by lexical means were found. Thus, the place of the main action in the novels is a collective image of the "big country estate". Uncertainty of space is expressed in the fact that the nature of the place, its geographical, cultural and historical features are irrelevant to the nature of the events described.

According to the peculiarities of artistic conventionality, time and space in literature can be divided into abstract and specific. In P. G. Wodehouse's novels, these two parameters obviously belong to the category of abstract, which lacks clearly defined specificity; therefore, even when action is set in some specific city, it does not affect the characters and their actions, the essence of intrigues, the emotional environment of the story, etc.

At the same time, it is important that the action takes place in England. Spatial landmarks are introduced by the author in such a way as to bring a certain "local British flavour" into the narrative. However, the local "specificity" does not provide an exhaustive explanation of the main intrigue, conflicts and problems raised. Such things as a social class, a certain way of life, code of behaviour, people in it, kinship and friendship create the "spatial landmarks" in the novels. It is these norms, rules and people that define the boundaries of the world in which the characters live.

Therefore, the spatial characteristics of P. G. Wodehouse's world can be expressed by the words of Yu. Lotman, said in fact about Gogol's prose, but quite accurately conveying the specifics of the author's creative model: The world where "big" events occur is somewhere outside (outside inner novel space. – *E. Shabunina*). <...>. The average people themselves never cross the border between the inner and outer space, they are not included in the active life of the "big" world. Moving from city to city, they maintain the uniformity of their environment, and therefore remain virtually "static" [7, c. 285, 291].

Indeed, no events from the outside world reach P. G. Wodehouse's heroes – no news of political, scientific, cultural life prevents them from enjoying their peaceful way of life. Thus, the artistic world of P. G. Wodehouse's novels is a closed space with its own borders protecting it from the outside world or, according to Yu. Lotman, the outside world is defined by "the scale of the inner space".

The characters are not just placed in a closed space, they do not feel the need to break out of the outlined circle. Static character of the novels space, according to M. Bakhtin, is expressed in the fact that the world and man in it are not developing and absolutely static.

The potential for their growth or changes in any way is not shown. The depicted action does not bring any destructions, renovations, changes or new creations. The static nature of the space created in the novels of the writer is the cause of the “merging” of characters with it. What happens is that M. Bakhtin called “organic attachment, the increment of life and its events to the place” [1, c. 374], characteristic for the idyllic chronotope.

The research shows that the space-time structure in the novels about Jeeves and Wooster creates a unique world the main characteristic of which is escapism; the world of the novels is rather artificial, blocked from the “big world”, serene, limited in time and space. Analysis of the spatial-time structure shows that, according to the features of artistic conventionality, time and space in the novels of the writer belong to the category of abstract ones that do not have clearly defined specificity, and therefore do not have a significant impact on the characters and actions of the characters, on the essence of intrigue, on the emotional tone of narration, etc., which is essential for the understanding and further study of the nature of the comic in the works of P. G. Wodehouse.

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#### ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННО-ВРЕМЕННЫЕ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКИ В ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОМ ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИИ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ РОМАНОВ П. Г. ВУДХАУЗА О ДЖИВСЕ И ВУСТЕРЕ)

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Данная статья посвящена анализу пространственно-временной структуры на примере цикла романов П. Г. Вудхауза о Дживсе и Вустере. Время и пространство в литературе имеют существенное жанровое значение. Время в романах П. Г. Вудхауза упорядоченно, все события расположены в линейном порядке. Хотя скорость течения сюжетного времени может укоряться и замедляться. Установлено, что объединяет пространство романов из цикла о Дживсе и Вустере скорее не четкая адресная определенность, а такие критерии, как социальный класс, определенный уклад жизни, нормы и правила поведения находящихся в нем людей, родственные и дружеские связи. Герои не просто помещены в замкнутое пространство, они не ощущают потребности вырваться за пределы очерченного круга. Таким образом, романам П. Г. Вудхауза присущ своеобразный эскапизм.

*Ключевые слова и фразы:* пространственно-временная структура; сюжет; хронологическая последовательность; хронотоп; замкнутое пространство; перцептуальное время; статичные герои; художественная условность; комический характер; эскапизм; интрига; эмоциональный тон повествования; природа комического.