

**V. Yashkina, O. Pakhomova**

**В. В. Яшкіна, О.В. Пахомова**

*Oles Honchar Dnipro National University*

*Дніпровський національний університет імені Олеся Гончара*

**WHEN POETRY SPEAKS:**

**EMILY DICKINSON AND HER INDIVIDUAL STYLE**

**КОЛИ ПОЕЗІЯ ГОВОРІТЬ: ЕМІЛІ ДІКІНСОН ТА ЇЇ**

**ІНДИВІДУАЛЬНИЙ СТИЛЬ**

The proposed study is focused on the search for individual and authorial features of the poetic style in Emily Dickinson's works, which is largely determined by the peculiarities of the poet's general picture of the world, formed under the influence of her attention to nature due to the limitations of the social experience of communication.

Emily Dickinson is one of the most widely read American poets of all time. With her unique author's style and figurative language, she was ahead of her time and continues to attract domestic and foreign researchers to "think" on understanding what a metaphor is, where are the limits of the author's imagination, and how can they be achieved.

The purpose of this article is a general review of the artistic originality of Emily Dickinson's authorial style and the uniqueness of linguistic and stylistic means of creating imagery in her poetry.

At present there is a need to address the world of the poetic personality of Emily Dickinson in the light of growing attention to the work of women writers and poets and their role in the general cultural process, taking into account the special interest that has arisen recently in such global concepts as the linguistic image of the world, the author's picture of the world, as well as the world of a creative person. The world of the poet is of particular value in this chain.

Many of Dickinson's poems still need to be deciphered, as the poet balances between adherence to the rules of English grammar and the use of free word order in a sentence, where meaning is prioritized over the need to adhere to correct syntactic form.

*Keywords:* individual style, poetics, conceptual metaphor, nature, source of inspiration, image.

Запропоноване дослідження зорієнтоване на пошук індивідуально-авторських рис поетичного стилю творів Емілі Дікінсон, який значною мірою зумовлений особливостями загальної картини світу поетеси, що формується під впливом її уваги до природи через обмеження соціального досвіду спілкування.

Емілі Дікінсон - одна з найбільш читаних американських поетес усіх часів. Своїм неповторним авторським стилем та образною системою вона випередила свій час і продовжує залучати вітчизняних та зарубіжних дослідників до «співпраці» над розумінням, що таке метафора, де межі авторської уяви, та як можна їх досягти.

Метою даної статті є загальний огляд художньої своєрідності авторського стилю Емілі Дікінсон та унікальності мовно-стилістичних засобів створення образності у її поезії.

Сьогодні виникає необхідність звернення до світу поетичної особистості Емілі Дікінсон у світлі зростаючої уваги до творчості жінок-письменниць і поетів та їхньої ролі у загальнокультурному процесі, з урахуванням особливого інтересу, що постав останнім часом до таких глобальних понять, як мовний образ світу, авторська картина світу, світ творчої особи. Особливу цінність у цьому ланцюжку представляє світ поета.

Багато віршів Дікінсон ще потребують розгадки, оскільки поетеса балансує між дотриманням норм граматики англійської мови та використанням вільного порядку слів у реченні, де смисл є пріоритетним на противагу необхідності дотримання правильної синтаксичної форми.

*Ключові слова:* індивідуальний стиль, поетика, концептуальна метафора, природа, джерело

**Introduction.** Poetic works of the 19th century American poet Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1886) are considered among the most outstanding examples of English-language literature. American writer of the late romantic era was little known during her lifetime, but today she deservedly stays in the rank of the most important figures of not only American but also world poetry.

During her lifetime, Emily Dickinson printed only 10 of nearly 1800 poems, and her work became public only after her death, when in 1886 Lavinia, Dickinson's younger sister, discovered a drawer with her poems. From the date of the first publication of the poetry collection in 1890 and until now, Emily Dickinson has attracted attention of general public, philosophers and literary critics with that deep drama and vulnerable courage of feelings embodied in her poems.

Unfortunately in the first publications Emily Dickinson's poems were heavily edited to conform to the accepted poetic conventions of the time. They were unique and non-conventional for their era. First of all, they contain short lines, fragmentary sentences and usually do not have headings. The poet uses oblique rhyme, as well as not typical capital letters and punctuation, and most importantly, the thoughts, feelings and experiences presented in poetry create a peculiar and unique picture of the worldview that reflects an original philosophy of life, which differed from the views of all contemporary thinkers and was ahead of it.

One of the earliest Dickinson's reviewers, V. Howells, wrote in 1891: "...due to the work of Emily Dickinson, America or, rather, New England has made an excellent addition to the literature of the world, and it should not be overlooked" [1, c. 21].

Although early criticism of Emily Dickinson's work focused generally on her eccentric and reclusive nature, over time she became widely recognized as a pioneering proto-modernist poet. H. Bloom, the famous critic, placed her next to Walt Whitman, Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, Thomas S. Eliot and Hart Crane as an outstanding American poet

**Analysis of research and publications.** In general, the study of Emily Dickinson's work began with the periodization, in which three clear periods are distinguished: the first (until 1861), during which the poet wrote mostly subtly

sentimental poetry about personal relationships and friendship; the second period (1861-1865) is short, but fruitful: she wrote 86 poems which present the themes of life and death; the last period of the poet's work (1866-1886) lasted twenty years [9]. T. Johnson and R. Franklin systematized all the poems of Emily Dickinson, created their chronological list, and published complete collections of her unedited poems.

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The creativity of Emily Dickinson was fruitfully discussed in literary studies (H. Bloom, A. Zverev, V. Markova, I. Kashkin, S. Pavlychko, P. Petingel, A. Salska, T. Farr, O. Yavasyuk and others) and linguistic stylistics (J. Depman, J. Shakespeare, Ch. Dierce). Semantic and cognitive aspects are considered in the works of Sh. Alfrey, M. Zapedowska, the issue of conceptual metaphors was researched in the works of H. Ickstadt, G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, P. Werth, P. Stockwell. P. Crumbley, Ch. Miller, R. Weimakuth studied the graphic level, O. Fischer, M. Higura, M. Freeman focused their attention on the syntactic level in the poetry of Emily Dickinson.

The analysis of Emily Dickinson's poetic works shows that scientists applied a number of methodological approaches and scientific methods, among which the following should be mentioned: interpretive, component, linguistic-stylistic and conceptual types.

**The statement of the main research material.** The aim of this article is a general review of Emily Dickinson's artistic style originality and research of her uniqueness as poet with her own linguistic and stylistic means of expression.

Emily Dickinson is conventionally attributed to the movement of American Romanticism, which is evidenced by her rich imagination, the use of symbolism, which creates a romantic mood in the poems. One of the key features of romanticism in her work is the focus on nature and its colors. The protagonist seems to be enchanted by the beauty of nature, and therefore the beauty of life. But the images of nature in the poetry of E. Dickinson are somewhat different from other writers of romanticism, because in her eyes the natural world is somewhat incomprehensible and elusive and is embodied mainly not in landscapes, as we observe in most poetic works of other authors, but in a certain moderate philosophy and worldview.

The image of nature in Emily Dickinson's poetry has two sides: in some poems

nature appears as lively, beneficial, merciful and infinitely beautiful, while in other works it turns into an incomprehensible, elusive, and sometimes even destructive force. Through the prism of her perception, Emily Dickinson describes aspects of nature that are usually neglected by the representatives of romantic trend, as in the poem “A narrow Fellow in the Grass”:

A narrow Fellow in the Grass  
Occasionally rides -  
You may have met him? Did you not  
His notice instant is –  
The Grass divides as with a Comb,  
A spotted Shaft is seen,  
And then it closes at your Feet  
And opens further on...» [7, c. 435]

The realism of natural depiction in this poem may serve as a vivid example of the author's style and its characteristics. Lexical and syntactic means: *narrow Fellow in the Grass, the Grass divides as with a Comb, a spotted shaft is seen, and then it closes at your feet / and opens further on*, as well as the phonetic ones are combined in such a way that a mental image of a snake arises, although the object itself is not named. The image of a snake is formed as a visual and auditory picture due to the alliteration of hissing consonant sounds /s/, /z/ and /ʃ/, imitating the hissing of a reptile, and the metaphor “spotted spear” – a snake, where the similarity of the form and content of the mental image is observed.

On the example of this poetry, we also could trace the characteristic feature of Emily Dickinson style at the graphic level. Her poetry is dominated by the dash as the main punctuation mark. P. Crumbley and R. Weisbuch noted that with the help of dashes, the author enhances the possibilities of discourse, and this leads to an increase in the importance of the role of the reader in the process of reconstructing linguistic meanings. The author tries to emphasize the significance of certain verbal and poetic images through a number of dashes and fragmented sentences, which creates the effect of internal speech.

The individual “grammar” of Emily Dickinson is largely determined by the

peculiarities of the poet's worldview, which is formed under the influence of her hyperbolic attention to nature due to the limitation of the social experience of communication. The poetess balances between observing the rules of English grammar and using the free order of words in the sentence ("*You may have met him? Did you not*"), where the meaning is prioritized against the need to observe the correct syntactic form.

At the syntactic level, the originality of her style is observed in the use of inversions (*His notice instant is*), which contributes to the additional semantic load of lexical elements. In the texts of Emily Dickinson, inversion is constructed in such a way that the elements of the syntagm with the greatest semantic load are at the beginning of the sentence, thanks to which the effects of novelty and amazement are simultaneously achieved.

In this poem, the world of nature is vividly depicted and it appears as calm and harmonious. We see the shock of a character from meeting with the snake and fill its terror of the unknown: all this is successfully described, but this does not prevent the poet from calling this terrible creature "fellow", which embodies a friendly and benevolent appeal.

However, in the later period of Emily Dickinson's work, we may notice a certain personification of nature elements: trees, flowers and other phenomena appear as individuals with intelligence and feelings, which in a certain way draws a parallel with people [8, p. 6]. The author's poems are characterized by the personification of inanimate objects and phenomena, the spectrum of which is extremely wide:

Lightly stepped a yellow star  
To its lofty place –  
Loosed the Moon her silver hat  
From her lustral Face –  
All of Evening softly lit  
As an Astral Hall –  
Father, I observed to Heaven,  
You are punctual [7, p. 709].

Nature in the works of Emily Dickinson hides many symbols. The poet often

describes changes that testify to the stability of the world order. There is a contrast between the transience of human life and the infinity of the cycle of changing seasons. In general, natural cyclicality is the background for the reader's awareness of the course of human life. For example, summer is a symbol of celebration and prosperity, spring symbolizes the awakening of life after death, and winter, on the contrary, is a symbol of the inevitable end. Perhaps this was the reason why Emily Dickinson avoided winter landscapes, because she longed for life after death [6].

Also a characteristic feature of Emily Dickinson's lyrics is the theme of love and torment of feelings. The concept of LOVE is one of the defining in her poetic texts. In her works, the poet does not reduce love to a certain template, but experiments with its various visions.

1) LOVE - LIMITLESS UNIVERSE (*Love - though art high - / [...] / Love - though art deep - / [...] / Love - though art Veiled*).

2) LOVE - LONELINESS: *Love reckons by itself - alone - .*

3) Emily Dickinson compares love and poetry (*This - would be Poetry - / Or Love - the two coeval come -*), where LOVE is POETRY is the key metaphor.

In the vision of Emily Dickinson, love is a living being (*But love is tired and must sleep, / And hungry and must graze*). Such metaphors can be unified into one key conceptual metaphor: FEELING IS A LIVING BEING, which we consider to be another dominant feature of the poet's individual style.

The author loves to write about insurmountable obstacles on the way to her beloved, which the protagonist desperately tries to overcome, but all without success. The theme of love is inseparable from the theme of death. The feelings in the poems are often tested by death. The love of the main character is always sorrowful and tragic, elevated to the abstraction of being, which is stronger than death. The speaker of the poems believes in love as freedom, recognizes that its duration is longer than life itself, which can be seen in the poem "Unable are the Loved to die":

Unable are the Loved to die

For Love is Immortality,

Nay, it is Deity—

Unable they that love—to die

For Love reforms Vitality

Into Divinity [7, c. 281]

Emily Dickinson often uses the word “Immortality” in her poetry. In general, the words “immortal” and “immortality” were used in the works of the author more than 50 times. The poetess believes in immortality and considers it a state of continuous birth, death and rebirth.

As we mentioned earlier, Emily Dickinson transferred all her feelings to the protagonist and the pronoun “I” became the most frequent in her poetic vocabulary. So the poet wrote only about herself. Turning to the biography of Emily Dickinson, one may think that her “I” is somewhat pitiful and suffering. But in fact, this is the “I” of a self-sufficient strong woman who self-ironically declares “I am Nobody”:

I'm Nobody! Who are you?

Are you — Nobody—too?

Then there's a pair of us!

Don't tell! They'd banish us—you know!

How dreary—to be—Somebody!

How public—like a Frog—

To tell your name—the livelong June—

To an admiring Bog! [7, p. 487]

The poem opens with an [oxymoron](#): the speaker introduces themselves just like someone would in real life by saying their name, though the speaker calls themselves “Nobody”. The capitalization of this word subverts the typical social introduction, because they are joyfully and enthusiastically claiming that they are “Nobody!” In other words, the speaker’s name or identity is the *absence* of a name or identity. This is a proclamation, encouraging others to feel that there is nothing wrong in being “nobody too”.

In the only comparison in this poem, the author puts an equal sign between being “Somebody” and being like a Toad. This Toad is a “public” creature: this fact is explained by announcing its presence with a loud croak while all the other Toads around it do the same. This comparison suggests that “Somebody” also likes to talk

about himself to other “Somebody” all “livelong June” (as if croaking), and their whole community is “admiring Bog”.

As much as Somebody wants to be recognized as unique and special, the way they try to achieve that recognition actually makes them all too similar to each other. Thus, the sounds that “Somebody” makes are gently mocked in the poem, and the comparison suggests that, for all their hype, they ultimately carry nothing but nonsense.

In today's world, which is obsessed with social media and public perception, the poem may be even more relevant than when it was written. This confirms the thesis that Emily Dickinson foresaw artistic pursuits many years ahead.

**Conclusion.** Emily Dickinson is one of the most widely read American poets notwithstanding the epoch. With its unique author's style and figurative system, she was ahead of her time and continues to attract domestic and foreign researchers. There is a need to turn to the world of the poetic personality of Emily Dickinson in the light of growing attention to the work of women writers and poets and their role in the general cultural process, taking into account the special interest that has arisen recently in such global concepts as the linguistic image of the world, the author's picture of the world, the world of a creative person. The world of the poet is of particular value in this chain. Many of Dickinson's poems still need to be deciphered.

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