CINEMATIC CODE OF SHORT PROSE

Natalia Nikoriak Dr., PhD, Associate Professor
Department of Foreign Literature, Theory of Literature and Slavic Philology
Yuri Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Ukraine

Aliona Matiychak Dr., PhD, Associate Professor
Department of Foreign Languages for Humanities
Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Ukraine

Summary. The paper is motivated by new perspectives in expending the boundaries of the literary text analyses in the aspect of intermediality theory. The short story "Freeze-Frame" by Tatiana Belimova from the collection "Rose Jam" (2015) is examined in the context of intermedial studies. The relevance of the paper is emphasized by new attitude to the interplay between different arts. The analysed text is a bright contemporary example of the active interaction between literature and cinema, where cinema manifests itself not only in terms of subject matter and personosphere. Respectively, the key techniques of film poetics (retrospection, editing, framing, medium and close-up, detailing) are built into the structure of the traditional literary genre, presenting, at the same time, a kind of cross-genre experiment, which allows to consider Belimova's short story as a sample of film narrative. The findings support that these techniques allow to reveal new receptive and interpretive properties of the literary text and to study in depth the specifics of the "intermedial vision" of the writer.

Keywords: intermedial poetics, cinematic code, film narrative, Tatiana Belimova, "Freeze-Frame".

Ukrainian literature actively proves that cinema has been its integral part for a long time. The growth of interest in film poetics is observed not only in the literary texts created in the notable for cinema 20s-30s and 60s-70s of the 20th century (these texts attracted the attention of Ukrainian researchers: N. Bernadska, L. Gorbolis, S. Pidopryhora, O. Punina, Ya. Tsymbal, V. Chuyko), but also in the texts of the beginning of the 21st century (T. Sverbilova). The list of authors who actively use cinematic poetics is constantly updated with new names.

The Ukrainian literary critic, teacher and writer, who has been twice awarded with the literary prize "Coronation of the Word", Tetiana Belimova (b. 1976) actively uses intermedial poetics. The author's first novel "Kyiv.ua" in 2013 won the third prize of the International Literary Competition "Coronation of the Word" in the nomination of "novels", gaining the favor of readers for its sincerity, dramatic narrative and "profound understanding of the human heart". And a year later, in 2014, the jury praised the manuscript of her next novel "The Free World" and the writer received the "gold" of the competition. However, T. Belimova is also known as the author of numerous scientific papers, including the study guide "Prose of Ukrainian Modernism of the 20s of the twentieth century" [1].
Besides the above-mentioned novels "Kyiv.ua" and "The Free World", the author's works include a collection of short novels and stories "Rose Jam", her novel-show "Magic Egg, or a Million for a Dream" written with the co-author Andriy Protsaylo, and other collections of short novels and short stories: "Lviv. Coffee. Love", "Puzzles of our Existence", "Lviv. Delicacies. Christmas", "Lviv. Cherries. Rains", "Lviv. Madams. Young Ladies", "Ukraine in Me". However, despite such an impressive creation, the short prose by T. Belimova is not in the focus of literary critics' interests; only a few scientific studies are devoted to her fiction. As for Belimova's short prose, it is generally out of scholars' sight. Thus, only the winning novels of the author were analysed by literary critics (S. Zhurba [3], N. Likhomanova [5], S. Filonenko [6]).

As for short prose it should be accentuated that the author launched her literary career with it. Thus, in the preface to the collection "Rose Jam" T. Belimova mentions: "At first, my short stories, short novels, and essays were published on the Internet, printed and passed on to friends as readers, and some of them were even published in reputable magazines, such as "Dnipro" or "Literary Ukraine". Well, maybe it would still be so, if I had not written my first novel and sent it to the "Coronation of the Word" [2, 5]. Having received first "bronze" and then "gold" at the "most famous and prestigious competition in the field of literature" [2, 5], she opened the way to the reader and "short genres".

Therefore, the intermedial discourse of T. Belimova's short prose is extremely diverse. In her texts the author intertwines the codes of different art types – painting, sculpture, choreography, installation, music, cinema, revealing a wide range of inter-artistic links. Intermedial codes are an integral part of the structure of her text, allowing an in-depth analysis of its receptive resource at the compositional, visual and genre levels. In addition, it should be mentioned that text is a product of "artist's intentions", it "is a clear capacious paradigm that realizes itself through the process of perception" [7, 6], its originality "is produced by the peculiarities of the author's artistic thinking, the worldview" [4, 25] and receptive needs, so the use by the writer of cinematic poetics is not unexpected.

The cinematic code is clearly manifested in Belimova's short story "Freeze-Frame"; the plot of it presents several episodes from the life of a film director. The paratextual complex adjusts the recipient to the appropriate perception and suggests that cinema will be the overarching theme of this text. Acquaintance with the main character – Myroslav – "the famous film director, who returned to the place of his childhood selecting a location for his new movie" [2, 85], occurs in the knotting of the intrigue (plot opening) of the story. In fact, his "sketches for a new film" become both the beginning of a literary text and his notes. However, T. Belimova not only outlines the cinematic personosphere of her short story, but also invites readers to immerse in the complex creative process of writing a film script: "This must be used with good effect – such an opposition: the apple tree in full blossom like a bride in the background of deep-green leaves, and almost leafless nut tree", – he stopped and quickly wrote just on his knee, and the letters, large and stretched, appeared in his notebook, on the cover of it there was a single word – Maryna" [2, 85].

The cinematic receptive setting of this story is also stipulated by the active involvement of film poetics technique. From the first paragraphs the reader plunges into the "cinematic environment" with the use of retrospection, editing, medium and
close-up, detailing: "Half a turn of the head! Stop! Taken? Is he approaching a tree? Is the tree approaching him? He is standing under the apple tree, that very apple tree! When was it? Ten, fifteen years ago? Or maybe only yesterday? He and she... They were standing here, under this apple tree. Myroslav keeps aloof and seems to see himself – still a very young boy... Here he looks at her in love, as if seeing for the first time: white blossom slowly falls on her dark hair, plaited in two long braids. She is still a girl, and her thin delicate face with slyly outlined lips and an aristocratic, thin nose is almost next to him! But the main thing is not even that. May he have already known then that he would become a film director, and what about his attention to detail – was it inevitable for him? The main thing in her face is her eyes! Big, childish, dark eyes. It's hard to breathe because of her glance ... And he wants to still this moment forever. Just to close his eyes and say: "Freeze-Frame!" [2, 85]. Retrospective frames are embedded in the present, blurring the line between memory and reality. It should not be forgotten that quite often the plot of her stories is based on juxtaposed time frames.

With the help of a "supposed camera" the reader is given the opportunity to see "close-up" all the "details" with the eyes of the character. Even the apple tree, the apple blossom, which are repeatedly mentioned in the story, can be interpreted as a film allusion that establishes a kind of intertextual dialogue with famous film frames from "Earth" (1930) by Olexandr Dovzhenko or "A Spring for the Thirsty" (1965) by Yuri Ilyenko. Accordingly, the fragment with "flying cranes" can be perceived in the way, where the words allusively connote with the famous feature film "The Cranes are Flying" (1957) by M. Kalatozov (the film won the Palme d'Or at the 1958 Cannes Film Festival): "Cranes are flying through the wide clear spring sky – a lonely couple flying somewhere to their sprawling nest, made on a high pole. Back in March, they brought a new spring and new hope to Ukraine. Myroslav is making a video of their flight on his iPhone. These stills must be included in his film! Of course, they have to! This still frame will open the film, and... the apple blossom" [2, 87].

The film editing principle of the architectonic-compositional model of the short story "Freeze-Frame" is fixed by the author using the conventional division of the text into stills with time gaps between them. In fact, frame-by-frame creating of the screenplay is extrapolated to frame-by-frame recording of the film director's life: "Next frame. A year passed like another day of the calendar. He became older. But did he become wiser? More experienced? Time will tell. Spring again. However, this year it is cold, unfriendly. It has just drizzled, but the gray clouds have spread barely, and the pale, startled sun is rising into the sky, as if on an improvised stage in a village club" [2, 86]. Fragments of descriptions-reflections (a kind of remark) are organically combined with events and dialogues, which imitate the style of scriptwriting. In addition, T. Belimova incorporates the screenplay narrative in the structure of her story, as if blurring the line between the texts:

"Maryna is a pretty girl of eighteen. She is thin, slender. She is cooking in a small kitchen. Besides her, there is also her father in the house.

Frame one. Her father is sitting on a sofa bed in a larger house, Maryna looks out of the kitchen. She is worried because she feels her father's anxiety. Maryna doesn't know yet that he is faced with a difficult choice: he has to pass with her the news to the men in the woods (he can't do it himself, because he has been seen by
the "soviets" and is "under the supervision") and thus, he has to prove his loyalty to the common cause; otherwise, he may not send his only daughter to the insurgents, but then how to live on and look into the eyes of his neighbor, whose son was beaten to death yesterday, unrecognizably distorted, brought at night on a cart and dumped in the yard ("You can bury him! But mind!").

Frame two. Dialogue of father and daughter.
- Put on something dark... The horse is already waiting for you! You will go quietly to the old mill in the woods. Take the bag. If someone stops you, you say, you haven't heard that they don't grind there anymore...

Maryna silently obeys her father's orders. He was wet with excitement, red spots appeared on his face. He is breathing hard. He hesitates. Not sure if he's doing it right. Maybe still go himself?
- Dad! Do not worry! Everything will be fine with me! – Maryna says softly.
She put on a grey home-woven skirt and a black grandmother's shawl on her head.

As she turns to the door, her father blesses her, so that she cannot see it, but aloud, angrily to hide his excitement, he says:
- Come there soon! Don't linger! You are not going to get married! May one foot be here, the other be there!" [2, 86–87].

The screenplay text is vividly visualized by the reader/viewer, conventionally turning it into the film frames, shot on the camera: "Stop! Taken! But will the film director really make his dream come true? Will he come to his native village to shoot a film about his family (simple, Ukrainian), whose story is the history of the whole Ukraine reproduced in miniature? Funds... The whole problem is in funds, more precisely, in their lack..." [2, 87].

The cinematographic theme is expanding, as the author articulates the current problem of modern Ukrainian cinema – the constant lack of funding. However, this collision of the story gets its solution, the patron is at last found: "A businessman, wealthy enough to sponsor art. From here, but it was more than twenty years ago as he left for America. Successful, rational, sober with the Western (acquired over the years) awareness of importance, this unexpected patron did not insist on anything and even looked at the screenplay (as it seemed) quite briefly. He was also indifferent to mentioning of his name in the movie credits: "You can mention if necessary" "[2, 88]. The wife of this businessman was Ukrainian Maryna – the first love of the director and the prototype of the main character in the upcoming film. The identification of the woman by the director's consciousness is also presented in a cinematic way: "Freeze-frame! Stop breathing! Stop dreaming! It's like a movie! But it's not a movie at all! This is his, Miroslav's, first love! Or just a sketch? The silhouette of what was or just dreamed" [2, 88]. However, the cherished image from the past and the real woman turned not alike, as the "Barbie doll" did not evoke in the film director any emotions [2, 89]. Therefore, the director's decision about the actress for the leading role was made spontaneously: "– You know, Maryna, let my Myrosia play the role of Maryna in the film, and for the adolescent character we will find a girl like her" [2, 90]. The offer, which first surprised his wife, and, at the same time, caused a feeling of sincere gratitude.
Thus, T. Belimova's story "Freeze-Frame" is a bright modern example of active interaction between literature and cinema, where cinema manifests itself not only in terms of subject matter and personosphere. The key techniques of the film poetics (retrospection, editing, framing, medium and close-up, detailing) are built into the structure of the traditional literary genre, presenting, at the same time, a kind of cross-genre experiment, which allows to consider it as a sample film narrative. At the same time, these techniques allow to reveal new receptive and interpretive properties of the text and to study in depth the specifics of the "intermedial vision" of the writer.

References: