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The representation of “The myth of Sisyphus” by Albert Camus in the information retrieval dictionary model of ancient Greek mythology

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The article investigates evolution of the image of the mythological character Sisyphus in the Greek mythology and in the modern European literature on the example of philosophical essay of the French writer Albert Camus “Myth about Sisyphus”. On the basis of theoretical material with the help of corpus linguistics means (text corpora) the attempt to develop information model of dictionary of the old Greek mythology has been made. The purpose of the dictionary model is further studying and research of the Greek mythology.

Key words: myth, mythology, corpus linguistics, information model of dictionary.

Антонюк Г. Д., Кульчицький І. М. Репрезентація твору А. Камю “Міф про Сізіфа” у інформаційно-пошуковій моделі словника давньогрецької міфології? У статті простежено еволюцію образу міфологічного героя Сізіфа в давньогрецькій міфології і в сучасній європейській літературі на прикладі твору французького письменника Альбера Камю “Міф про Сізіфа”. На основі теоретичного матеріалу за допомогою засобів корпусної лінгвістики зроблено спробу розробити інформаційну модель словника давньогрецької міфології задля подальшого наступного дослідження та вивчення давньогрецької міфології.

Ключові слова: міф, міфологія, корпусна лінгвістика, інформаційна модель словника.

Антонюк Г. Д., Кульчицький І. М. Репрезентация произведения А. Камю “Миф о Сизифе” в информационно-поисковой модели словаря древнегреческой мифологии. В статье прослеживается эволюция образа мифологического героя Сизифа в древнегреческой мифологии и в современной европейской литературе на примере произведения французского писателя А. Камю “Миф о Сизифе”. На теоретическом материале с помощью средств корпусной лингвистики сделано попытку разработать информационную модель словаря древнегреческой мифологии с целью дальнейшего ее исследования.

Ключевые слова: миф, мифология, корпусная лингвистика, информационная модель словаря.

In French philosophy of the 20th century the problem of absurd is probably one of the most important ones. This problem is primarily connected with the philosophy of existentialism and above all with the work by Albert Camus ‘Myth of Sisyphus’.

When we think of myth, we may think of stories about heroes who are sons of gods (making them demigods) with either incredible strength or a god on hand to help the demigods in amazing adventures against the evils of the world. There is much more to myth than the heroic legends. Myth serves as explanation accepted by the people who share the myth. Very basic aspects of the world around us that myth explains are the course of the day and night or seasons, the mysteries of life and death, and the creation of everything [2]

The theme of paper is “The representation of “The myth of Sisyphus” by Albert Camus in the information retrieval dictionary model of ancient Greek mythology”.

The topicality of theme is provided by the necessity of text corpora compilation for the study of similarities and differences between the source and target language.

Existentialism is a term applied to the work of a number of 19th- and 20th-century philosophers who, despite profound doctrinal differences, generally held that the focus of philosophical thought should be to deal with the conditions of existence of the individual person and his or her emotions, actions, responsibilities, and thoughts [7]. The early 19th century philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, posthumously regarded as the father of existentialism, maintained that the individual is solely responsible for giving his or her own life meaning and for living that life passionately and sincerely, in spite of many existential obstacles and distractions including despair, angst, absurdity, alienation, and boredom [2].

Existentialism became fashionable in the post-World War years as a way to reassert the importance of human individuality and freedom.

Existentialism is foreshadowed most notably by 19th century philosophers Søren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche, though it had forerunners in earlier centuries. In the 20th century, the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (starting from Husserl's phenomenology) influenced other existentialist philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and (absurdist) Albert Camus. Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Franz Kafka also described existentialist themes in their literary works. Although there are some common tendencies amongst "existentialist" thinkers, there are major differences and disagreements among them (most notably the divide between atheist existentialists like Sartre and theistic existentialists like Paul Tillich); not all of them accept the validity of the term as applied to their own work [5].

Camus was a friend of Sartre, until their falling-out, and wrote several works with existential themes including The Rebel, The Stranger, The Myth of Sisyphus, and Summer in Algiers. Camus, like many others, rejected the existentialist label, and considered his works to be concerned with facing the absurd. In the titular book, Camus uses the analogy of the Greek myth of Sisyphus to demonstrate the futility of existence. The first half of the book contains an extended rebuttal of what Camus took to be existentialist philosophy in the works of Kierkegaard, Shestov, Heidegger, and Jaspers [4].

The Myth of Sisyphus is a philosophical essay by Albert Camus. It comprises about 120 pages and was published originally in 1942 in French as Le Mythe de Sisyphes; the English translation by Justin O'Brien followed in 1955 [8].

Camus wrote The Myth of Sisyphus around the same time he wrote his first novel, The Stranger, at the beginning of World War II. Camus was working for the French Resistance in Paris at this time, far from his native Algeria. While it is never wise to reduce ideas to their autobiographical background, the circumstances in which this essay was written can help us understand its tone. The metaphor of exile that Camus uses to describe the human predicament and the sense that life is a meaningless and futile struggle both make a great deal of sense coming from a man, far from his home, who was struggling against a seemingly omnipotent and senselessly brutal regime.

The central concern of The Myth of Sisyphus is what Camus calls "the absurd." Camus claims that there is a fundamental conflict between what we want from the universe (whether it be meaning, order, or reasons) and what we find in the universe (formless chaos). We will never find in life itself the meaning that we want to find. Either we will discover that meaning through a leap of faith, by placing our hopes in a God beyond this world, or we will conclude that life is meaningless. Camus opens the essay by asking if this latter conclusion that life is meaningless necessarily leads one to commit suicide. If life has no meaning, does that mean life is not worth living? If that were the case, we would have no option but to make a leap of faith or to commit suicide, says Camus. Camus is interested in pursuing a third possibility: that we can accept and live in a world devoid of meaning or purpose [6].

The absurd is a contradiction that cannot be reconciled, and any attempt to reconcile this contradiction is simply an attempt to escape from it: facing the absurd is struggling against it. Camus claims that existentialist philosophers such as Kierkegaard, Chestov, and Jaspers, and phenomenologists such as Husserl, all confront the contradiction of the absurd but then try to escape from it. Existentialists find no meaning or order in existence and then attempt to find some sort of transcendence or meaning in this very meaninglessness.

Living with the absurd, Camus suggests, is a matter of facing this fundamental contradiction and maintaining constant awareness of it. Facing the absurd does not entail suicide, but, on the contrary, allows us to live life to its fullest.

The author identifies three characteristics of the absurd life: revolt (we must not accept any answer or reconciliation in our struggle), freedom (we are absolutely free to think and behave as we choose), and passion (we must pursue a life of rich and diverse experiences).

He gives four examples of the absurd life: the seducer, who pursues the passions of the moment; the actor, who compresses the passions of hundreds of lives into a stage career; the conqueror, or rebel, whose political struggle focuses his energies; and the artist, who creates entire worlds. Absurd art does not try to explain experience, but simply describes it. It presents a certain worldview that deals with particular matters rather than aiming for universal themes [9].

The book ends with a discussion of the myth of Sisyphus, who, according to the Greek myth, was punished for all eternity to roll a rock up a mountain only to have it roll back down to the bottom when he reaches the top. Camus claims that Sisyphus is the ideal absurd hero and that his punishment is representative of the human condition: Sisyphus must struggle perpetually and without hope of success. So long as he accepts that there is nothing more to life than this absurd struggle, then he can find happiness in it.

Also he appends his essay with a discussion of the works of Franz Kafka. He ultimately concludes that Kafka is an existentialist, who, like Kierkegaard, chooses to make a leap of faith rather than accept his absurd condition. However, Camus admires Kafka for expressing humanity's absurd predicament so perfectly suicide." If we judge the importance of a philosophical problem by the consequences it entails, the problem of the meaning of life is certainly the most important. Someone who judges that life is not worth living will commit suicide, and those who feel they have found some meaning to life may be inclined to die or kill to defend that meaning. Other philosophical problems do not entail such drastic consequences [7].

Camus also associates the feeling of absurdity with the feeling of exile, a theme that is important not just in this essay but also in much of his fiction. As rational members of human society, we instinctively feel that life has some sort of meaning or purpose. When we act under this assumption, we feel at home. As a result, absurdists feel like strangers in a world divested of reason. The feeling of absurdity exiles us from the homelike comforts of a meaningful existence.

The feeling of absurdity is linked to the idea that life is meaningless, and the act of suicide is linked to the idea that life is not worth living. The pressing question of this essay, then, is whether the idea that life is meaningless necessarily implies that life is not worth living. Is suicide a solution to the absurd? We should not be fooled, Camus suggests, by the fact that there are only two possible outcomes (life or suicide) – that there are only two possible answers to this question. Most of us continue living largely because we have not reached a definitive answer to this question. Further, there are plenty of contradictions between people's judgments and their actions. Those who commit suicide might be assured life has meaning, and many who feel that life is not worth living still continue to live [8].

Face to face with the meaninglessness of existence, what keeps us from suicide? To a large extent, Camus suggests that our instinct for life is much stronger than our reasons for suicide: "We get into the habit of living before acquiring the habit of thinking." We instinctively avoid facing the full consequences of the meaningless nature of life, through what he calls an "act of eluding." This act of eluding most frequently manifests itself as hope. By hoping for another life, or hoping to find some meaning in this life, we put off facing the consequences of the absurd, of the meaninglessness of life.

In this essay, Camus hopes to face the consequences of the absurd. Rather than accept fully the idea that life has no meaning, he wants to take it as a starting point to see what logically follows from this idea. Rather than run away from the feeling of absurdity, either through suicide or hope, he wants to dwell with it and see if one can live with this feeling.

As his starting point, Camus takes up the question of whether, on the one hand, we are free agents with souls and values, or if, on the other hand, we are just matter that moves about with mindless regularity. Reconciling these two equally undeniable perspectives is one of the great projects of religion and philosophy [10].

One of the most obvious – and on reflection, one of the most puzzling—facts about human existence is that we have values. Having values is more than simply having desires: if I desire something, I quite simply want it and will try to get it. My values go beyond my desires in that by valuing something, I do not simply desire it, but I also somehow judge that that something ought to be desired. In saying that something ought to be desired, I am assuming that the world ought to be a certain way. Further, I only feel the world ought to

be a certain way if it is not entirely that way already: if there was no such thing as murder it would not make sense for me to say that people should not commit murder. Thus, having values implies that we feel the world ought to be different from the way it is.

Our capacity to see the world both as it is and as it ought to be allows us to look at ourselves in two very different lights. Most frequently, we see others and ourselves as willing, free agents, people who can deliberate and make choices, who can decide what's best and pursue certain ends. Because we have values it only makes sense that we should also see ourselves as capable of embodying those values. There would be no point in valuing certain qualities if we were incapable of acting to realize those qualities.

While we generally take this outlook, there is also the outlook of the scientist, of trying to see the world quite simply as it is. Scientifically speaking, this is a world divested of values, made up simply of matter and energy, where mindless particles interact in predetermined ways. There is no reason to think that humans are any exception to the laws of science. Just as we observe the behavior of ants milling about, mindlessly following some sort of mechanical routine, we can imagine alien scientists might also observe us milling about, and conclude that our behavior is equally predictable and routine-oriented.

The feeling of absurdity is effectively the feeling we get when we come to see ourselves in the second of these two alternative perspectives. This is a strictly objective worldview that looks at things quite simply as they are. Values are irrelevant to this worldview, and without values there seems to be no meaning and no purpose to anything we do. Without values, life has no meaning and there is nothing to motivate us to do one thing rather than another.

Though we may never have tried to rationalize this feeling philosophically, the feeling of absurdity is one that we have all experienced at some point in our life. In moments of depression or uncertainty, we might shrug and ask, "what's the point of doing anything?" This question is essentially a recognition of absurdity, a recognition that, from at least one perspective, there is no point in doing anything.

Camus often refers metaphorically to the feeling of absurdity as a place of exile. Once we have acknowledged the validity of the perspective of a world without values, of a life without meaning, there is no turning back. We cannot simply forget or ignore this perspective. The absurd is a shadow cast over everything we do. And even if we choose to live as if life has a meaning, as if there are reasons for doing things, the absurd will linger in the back of our minds as a nagging doubt that perhaps there is no point.

It is generally supposed that this place of exile—the absurd—is uninhabitable. If there is no reason for doing anything, how can we ever do anything? The two main ways of escaping the feeling of absurdity are suicide and hope. Suicide concludes that if life is meaningless then it is not worth living. Hope denies that life is meaningless by means of blind faith [7].

Camus is interested in finding a third alternative. Can we acknowledge that life is meaningless without committing suicide? Do we have to at least hope that life has a meaning in order to live? Can we have values if we acknowledge that values are meaningless? Essentially, the author is asking if the second of the two worldviews sketched above is livable.

A feeling carries with it more than can be expressed in words. The feeling of absurdity—like the feeling of jealousy or the feeling of generosity—frames the way we look at the world and defines our perspective. A feeling is a worldview and comes prior to words. As such, Camus acknowledges that it is difficult to describe the feeling of absurdity. Instead, he offers a series of sketches to clarify the kinds of experiences that might provoke such a feeling.

We may experience a moment of awakening in the depths of weariness with routine. The impulse to ask why we bother leads us to the feeling of absurdity. Or the feeling may strike us as we become aware of ourselves as drift wood on the river of time: nothing we can do can extract us from time's inevitable progress. Or it may strike us when we see objects in the world divested of the meaning and purpose that we give them. In a moment of absurdity, we see them as naked "things." Or it hits us when we see a person talking animatedly behind a glass so that we hear nothing and his gestures seem a ridiculous pantomime without significance. Or we sense absurdity when we see a dead body and realize that this is our inevitable, cold, senseless end.

Corpus data is becoming increasingly multilingual. More and more corpus data is becoming available in an ever wider range of languages. Corpora are also being developed which encode an original text and its

translation into one or more other languages. These so-called parallel corpora are increasingly being used in contrastive language studies, language pedagogy and translation studies.

A parallel corpus is a corpus that contains a collection of original texts in language L_1 and their translations into a set of languages $L_2 \dots L_n$. In most cases, parallel corpora contain data from only two languages [1].

Parallel corpora are used to compare linguistic features and their frequencies in two languages subject to a contrastive analysis. They are also used to investigate similarities and differences between the source and the target language, making systematic, text-based contrastive studies at different levels of analysis possible. In this way, parallel corpora can provide new insights into the languages compared concerning language-specific, typological and cultural differences and similarities, and allow for quantitative methods of analysis [3].

Closely related to the use of parallel corpora in contrastive linguistics is their application in translation studies. Parallel corpora may help translators to find translational equivalents between the source and the target language. They provide information on the frequency of words, specific uses of lexical items as well as collocational and syntactic patterns. This procedure may help translators to develop systematic translation strategies for words or phrases which have no direct equivalent in the target language. On this basis, sets of possible translations can be identified and the translator can choose a translation strategy according to the specific register, topic and genre.

In recent times, parallel corpora have been increasingly used to develop resources for automatic translation systems.

Teachers are increasingly using parallel corpora in the classroom. In so doing they can determine the most frequent patterns of occurrence, enrich their personal knowledge of the language, design teaching materials and provide authentic data in their teaching. Parallel corpora may also be helpful in the planning of teaching units and the identification of specific, potentially problematic, patterns of use and are thus useful tools for syllabus design [1].

Conclusion : This research has been based upon the materials taken from books on Greek mythology and papers related to the theme, English and Ukrainian mythological dictionaries. The outgoing results are presented in an eye-friendly way in a comfortable format of information dictionary model.

The article presents a new approach to the compilation of the electronic encyclopedic dictionary of ancient Greek mythology, the understanding of the character of Sisyphus and constructing of parallel text corpora. The article examines the character of Sisyphus in the interpretations of writers of different historical époques, including Albert Camus. Modern scientific approach to the informational model of a dictionary is displayed by the usage of a relational database. The topicality of the research is developing of the compilation schemes of multifunctional electronic dictionaries. This is considered to be a perspective field in the modern lexicography.

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