

Summary

The subject of the research in the doctoral thesis is the lexis of colours in short stories written by Maria Konopnicka. The material was selected on the basis of 71 short stories written by Konopnicka which were collected in *The Collection of short stories* published under the editorship of Alina Brodzka. Taking into account the considerable size of the collected lexis, only the expressions related to colours were excerpted. The phenomena connected with light and shade (material from this group can constitute the basis for a separate major study) were omitted. The analysis does not include the writer's poetic works, fairy tales and texts related to literary criticism. The short stories included in the research constitute a genre consistent source base.

The dissertation has a two-part structure, analytical-interpretative and dictionary. The adopted conception allowed a detailed analysis of the excerpted material and enabled to draw the general and detailed conclusions related to the function of colours and the literary technique used by Konopnicka. The analytical part of the dissertation consists of two chapters (I Formal-structural and statistical analysis of the lexis of colours, II The functions of colours and their stylistic value in the creation of the presented world in short stories by Maria Konopnicka) in which the structure, statistical and semantic phenomena and stylistic value of the collected lexis of colours in the creation of the presented world were discussed. The dictionary of colours, which complements the analytical part, contains the whole collected lexis of colours (296 entry words, 335 semantic units, 2837 uses), arranged into the nesting of entries, according to the fields of colours, in decreasing order, starting with the broadest field.

The second chapter of the dissertation contains the analysis of stylistic phenomena and presents the functions of the collected lexis in the presented world of Konopnicka's short stories. The analysis of the collocations of the colour terms enabled to isolate those elements of the presented world in which the writer used the colour expressions. Taking into account the issues addressed in the short stories, the colours appeared in the descriptions of characters (especially when presenting their physical appearance, clothes, products of human activity, mental, spiritual, social life etc.) and in the descriptions of various elements of the world of nature (both animate and inanimate).

The collected examples of vivid (in terms of colours) descriptions of characters and flora and fauna show that Konopnicka preferred the direct type of their depiction. Stylistic devices such as metaphors, comparisons and epithets, used for indirect depiction, are far less frequent.

As far as semantic transformations are concerned, the study comprises the three most representative stylistic tropes, namely metaphors, comparisons and epithets. It is worth noting here that the issues devoted to stylistic devices and discussed in this part of the dissertation constitute novel research. The literature review on this subject indicates that so far no study devoted to the means of artistic expression in prose works of Maria Konopnicka has been made.

The choice of metaphors, comparisons and epithets used by the writer results from genealogical principles of a short story as a small form of a prose work. The characteristic feature of the means of artistic expression created by Konopnicka is their comprehensibility, simplicity and the ease of perception, which resulted from the fact that the author used vocabulary which was known for the reading public and close in terms of semantic collocation. As a result, vivid metaphors, comparisons and epithets are characterized by comprehensibility and vividness, without losing their artistic value.

The expressions of colours in the short stories as well as the depictions created by means of these expressions have, in the majority of cases, conventional or sometimes even stereotypical character. Among almost 300 names of colours there were only 8 neosemantisms and 3 expressions which can be regarded as the writer's neologisms.

The dictionary of colours constitutes an essential part of this dissertation. It contains the whole collected lexical material. Each entry (article) is built in a traditional way, which is the most common way in thematic dictionaries which already have some tradition in Polish lexicography. An entry (article) includes an entry word, definitions, examples, collocations (expressions, phrases) and the selected quotation locations. Moreover, the figurative meanings and comparisons were also isolated.

The analysis of functions, structure and frequency revealed a number of features which are characteristic of Konopnicka's writing technique. The most important features include: vividness, clarity, simplicity, conventionality in the choice of linguistic devices. The spectrum of colours used by the writer is very wide. The colour terms assigned to particular colour fields represent the full set of chromatic and achromatic colours. In the short stories, these colour terms fulfil mainly descriptive and isolating functions but never a decorative one. The use of the lexis of colours was always justified and adapted to the issues addressed in the short stories. Vividness in descriptions was usually assigned to a mimetic function and realism in the

depiction of world. The study of the size of the particular colour fields showed that Konopnicka preferred expressions from red, white and blue colour fields. She used expressions from yellow, silver and violet colour fields the least frequently. The dominance of colour terms from red and blue colour fields is a characteristic feature of the writing technique of other writers from the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century (Sienkiewicz most often used colour terms from the red colour field and Żeromski from the blue colour field).