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THE INTERTEXTUAL AND INTERCULTURAL REFERENCES IN LODGE'S CAMPUS NOVELS

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ABSTRACT

The article supports the idea that Lodge's campus novels can be decoded as an argument for tolerance (expressed in a humorous and playful manner, but utterly serious in its message) towards all the aspects which make people different from each other, starting from the familial background and the education and reaching profession, social status, culture and religious beliefs which shape people's views on life.

KEYWORDS

Contextualization, culture and religious beliefs, intertextual component, intertextuality and interculturality.

INTRODUCTION

The intertextual component of the novels always brings the readers closer to literary texts. On one hand, if the intertextual reference hints at texts which are known to the readers, they feel somehow flattered by

the discovery, even proud that their previous knowledge helped them to understand the reference, and they always search for more. On the other hand, if the intertextual reference is overt enough for the

readers to realize which the text in question is, even though they do not know it, then they become curious what that text is about, and maybe look for it. Intertextuality also marks a highly significant aspect, namely that all texts are connected, which means that the mentalities which shape them are based on the same structures. This idea emphasizes the connection between intertextuality and interculturality.

The contemporary world needs more openness and tolerance, and these are achieved through enhancing one's horizons with the help of education and of experience. Thus, intercultural exchanges help people to discover new cultures and to respect their diversity. The intercultural references included in literary works encourage openness and acceptance. Moreover, in the novels, the inherent discrepancies between different cultures can be easily presented through the means of devices like irony and humor, thus making it much easier to overcome the cultural differences and to restrain from transforming them into insurmountable obstacles. The main primary sources will be only the novels which form The Campus Trilogy, but the article will also incorporate relevant aspects from other works by David Lodge, focusing on the novels which are thematically related to the topic of research, as well as on the theoretical volumes which are significant for the ideas analyzed. Last but not least, there are always difficulties in guessing and analyzing the trends in literature as they are emerging. Maybe this is the

reason for which there are very few critical sources regarding Lodge's novels written after 1990. Most of the critics focus on the two biographical novels he wrote after this year and not so many critics discussed aspects of his other works.

The names Lodge chose for the characters are highly significant from this perspective, as well as the rhetorical devices he employed. His theoretical works are very helpful in this endeavour, as Lodge includes in them examples and explanations based on his personal experience in novel writing. The next level analyzed in the second section consists of the structure of the novels where intertextuality takes the form of pastiche or parody. The roles of the narrative structures in the three novels are presented in turns, shifting from one novel to another, emphasizing the way in which other novels are parodied or mirrored through the narrative structures. The irony and the humorous effect are not omitted as they play a significant part in attracting the public towards the world of academia. The feminist component existent in all three novels, on the explanations of the critical theories embraced by one character or another, especially as the developments and notably the rivalries in the field of literary theory represent one of the themes in the second novel of the Campus Trilogy. It does not disregard the general manner in which literary theory is presented throughout the trilogy, consistent with Lodge's own ideas exposed in his critical works. Finally, the fourth

chapter focuses on the role of academia in the context of interculturality and globalization. This article firstly analyzes the manner in which characters from Britain and America interact with characters from various European countries and perceive their culture. Then it proceeds to presenting the complex mechanisms through which the activity of storytelling is culturally bound, focusing on the importance of storytelling in shaping the Self, according to Jerome Bruner, and analyzing the particular instance when characters from Britain and Turkey interact. Religious beliefs represent an important element in the complex constellation of one person's cultural background, as well as one of the most prominent themes of Lodge's novels. Religion is rather a marginal theme in The Campus Trilogy, however it is present enough to mark interesting parallels between characters in different novels by Lodge and to emphasize the significance it has in shaping the choices and decisions taken by the characters in the trilogy. Eventually, the intercultural relations are considered from a wider perspective, exemplified through interactions between people who share the same nationality but belong to different cultural categories like socio-professional, economical, educational and so on. The British literature published in the second half of the twentieth century is marked by the co-existence of modernist and postmodernist characteristics which confer it considerable complexity in terms of both the form and the themes. As the first novel written by David Lodge was published in the

1960, the British author born in 1935 is among the writers who successfully combine features of both literary tendencies in order to shape new and attractive literary worlds. Lodge published fourteen novels, one collection of stories, three plays (one of them was based on his eleventh novel and another was turned into a novella), twelve works of literary theory and criticism. The author's most recent volume is his autobiography and it was published in January 2015, marking his eightieth birthday. Lodge's campus novels represent the main object of analysis for this work which will present the intertextual references and the intercultural aspects the author included in this particular type of novels. Elements of Lodge's biography are essential in order to better understand his choice of topics for the works of fiction he published. The author obtained a permanent job in 1960 as a lecturer at the University of Birmingham and sixteen years after, he became Professor of English Literature at the same university. His academic trajectory included the University of California, Berkeley, where he was an Associate Professor in 1969. In 1987, Lodge chose to retire from his academic career and to go on with his novel writing. Thus, in his campus novels, he pictures worlds he is thoroughly acquainted with and his familiarity with the academic context makes the novels highly enjoyable. Besides academia, religion is a theme favoured by Lodge in his novels as his Catholic education strongly influenced him during his younger years. Changing Places: A Tale of Two

Campuses, published in 1975, is the first volume of the Campus Trilogy making the object of analysis for this work. The main theme of the novel is academia, as Lodge contrasts the American and the British universities and ultimately societies. He presents two university professors, the American Morris Zapp from Euphoric State, sometimes known as Euphoria, and the British Philip Swallow from Rummidge, who are both part of an exchange scheme, each taking the others' place for one semester. Lodge builds his novel on binary oppositions, as he alternately presents each professor's experiences in the foreign cultural context. He points out the strong influence that each society has upon the visiting professors through alternating narrative structures. Such structures used are the traditional narrative, epistolary narrative, pieces of newspaper articles and flyers, and film script. Just like the narrative structures evolved chronologically, the characters' lives and ideas gradually change when they encounter different mentalities in a foreign society. If the human life follows a traditional narrative pattern, then choosing the film script for the final part of the novel suggests that the characters' lives were thoroughly changed by the visiting scheme. The visiting professors find themselves thrown in humorous and unexpected situations when trying to adapt to the foreign cultures. In his second book of the Campus Trilogy, *Small World: An Academic Romance*, published in 1984, Lodge transposes the myth of the Holy Grail into the contemporary world which is

moving inexorably towards globalization. Lodge describes all the details of the academic world, as he is very well acquainted with them. The readers meet again Zapp, Swallow and their wives, as well as other professors; the characters have affairs with their colleagues and problems with their partners; they try hard to write something good, and struggle with each other for a favorable review. Everything happens while travelling from one conference to another or while lecturing in various countries, as the global campus implies mobility and openness. The novel contains typical humorous contexts: characters facing unexpected situations, coincidences, and sudden turns in the development of the plot. As Lodge is thoroughly acquainted with English literature, he employs plenty of intertextual references and borrows various elements from the romance genre, as well as from the narrative structure of the grail quest. The romance patterns are transposed onto the "real life" of the contemporary times, which gives them an old-fashioned air and thus creates several humorous situations. The universal symbol of the grail becomes an allegory which represents the personal quest pursued by each character striving to fulfill his or her wishes and at the same time playing a certain narrative role in the quests of the other characters. In 1988 the final volume of the trilogy was published; it is the last novel which features Morris Zapp and Philip Swallow. In *Nice Work*, Lodge introduces Robyn Penrose, a young academic, and Victor Wilcox, the managing

director of an engineering company. Through the relationships between them, the author presents the decreasing importance of academia in the contemporary world. Being an academic himself, it must be hard for Lodge to draw a picture of the sad situation in which ordinary people living in a world dominated by mass production and making money, consider the work of academics' as having no value whatsoever. However, he manages to preserve the humoristic tone throughout his last novel of the Campus Trilogy. Lodge contrasts academia with the life of businessmen; while on the level of narrative structure, he chooses to use a pastiche of the Victorian industrial novel. The irony triggered by the obvious contrasts between academia and company management create the humorous effect in the novel. One of the secondary objectives reached by this thesis is to prove that humour and irony can always bring a topic closer to the public through their effect of annihilating any tensions, either overt or latent. These millennium-old devices acquire a significant role in the contemporary context of globalization, as they pave the way towards openness and tolerance. Any kinds of cultural gaps can be overcome through benevolence and humour, embracing the differences and accepting every person's cultural background. From this perspective, the thesis supports the idea that Lodge's campus novels can be decoded as an argument for tolerance (expressed in a humorous and playful manner, but utterly serious in its message) towards all

the aspects which make people different from each other, starting from the familial background and the education and reaching profession, social status, culture and religious beliefs which shape people's views on life. Moreover, the fact that Lodge employed devices like humour and irony in his campus novels serves the purpose of bringing the academia closer to the public and of discouraging the malevolent stereotyping which presents the academics as detached from the world, hidden in their ivory tower, without any connection to the realities outside academia. However biased, this image is unfortunately widespread, as presented in Lodge's Nice Work, and the thesis proves that playful irony and humour employed by the author in these novels turn them into a plea for tolerance and a means for reasserting, through questioning, the importance of academia in the contemporary world. As a powerful institution of education, academia plays a crucial part due to its ability to preach respect and tolerance for anything which is different, as well as to its role in enhancing the students' views and opening new horizons for them. Therefore, in the contemporary globalized world, academia is fundamental for educating more and more generations to be tolerant and to embrace cultural diversity. The relation between intertextual references and intercultural aspects represents one of the main personal contributions, as it brings a new perspective of analysis in the field, drawing significant connections between literature and the domain of cultural studies,

and at the same time emphasizing the importance of education in the world of globalization. The distinction between the layers of intertextuality presented in the third chapter and shaped on the mechanisms of analysis proper to the novels in question is among other personal contributions included in this thesis, as well as the choice of relevant and interesting examples (taken mainly from English literature, but not exclusively) employed in order to illustrate the different types of irony. Other personal contributions worth mentioning here are the connection between storytelling and culture and the manner in which storytelling is anchored in the cultural context. Other directions for future research projects include the role of the theme of religion in Lodge's novels, a comparison between the two biographic novels Lodge wrote, the gradual manner in which the theme of getting old became more and more present in his novels, and an analysis of the father-son relationships as they are presented throughout several of Lodge's novels. Hopefully, at least some of these various possible topics will be turned into ample research projects achieving successful results, as they are both relevant for the literary world and pleasant to follow and to work on. These possible research topics would fill several gaps in the field of literary studies, and so did the present thesis which compared, contrasted and connected various aspects which had not yet been associated among them.

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