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**LEXICAL STYLISTIC REPRESENTATION (METAPHORS,
ALLEGORIES, EUPHEMISMS) OF LGBTQ+ CHARACTERS IN
CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH LITERATURE BASED ON “NO ASHES
IN THE FIRE” BY DARNELL L. MOORE**

Bachelor’s thesis

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Olen koostanud töö iseseisvalt. Kõik töö koostamisel kasutatud teiste autorite tööd, põhimõttelised seisukohad, kirjandusallikatest ja mujalt pärinevad andmed on viidatud.

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PREFACE

Literature plays a major role in the modern world, especially in shaping character representation, since 30% of the population interacts with it daily (NielsenIQ, 2017). The importance of literature in terms of creating public opinion is observable, especially when it relates to vulnerable groups such as the LGBTQ+ community (Ekmeççi, 2016). The use of lexical and semantic literary devices can influence the reader's attitude towards the subject, so the specifics of their use are an important topic. First of all, the representation itself as a fact and its sufficiency or insufficiency in a particular work plays a significant role (Guskos & Nordmann, 2023). Not only does representation as a fact play a significant role in literature, but also how the characters are represented. LGBTQ+ characters are often stereotyped in literature, which negatively affects the public perception of the social group among readers (Guskos & Nordmann, 2023). In addition to the stereotypical image, the use of specific means of literary expression, such as metaphors, epithets, plot features, the choice of specific vocabulary in relation to LGBTQ+ characters, plays an important role in representation (Blackburn et al., 2015).

“No Ashes in the Fire” by Darnell L. Moore was not only noted as one of the best works in the year of its release according to *The New York Times* (2018c, para. 89) but also narrates about an LGBTQ+ character while it might contain means of literary expression that can influence perception.

The research problem is that, even though literature tends to influence readers' attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people and given the popularity of reading in the contemporary world, questions about how exactly the lexico-semantic solutions used in literature to represent LGBTQ+ characters (metaphors, allegories, euphemisms) influence readers' attitudes remain under-researched in the context of contemporary English-language literature.

This research aims are to define aspects of characters' lexical stylistic representation in literature and its role in possible impact on the reader with regard to the use of lexical stylistic means, e.g., metaphors, allegories, euphemisms, in such representation, to reveal issues of depicting LGBTQ+ characters in contemporary literature by the example of “No Ashes In The Fire” by Darnell L. Moore and means to achieve it, to conduct a comparative analysis of the use of lexical lexical and stylistic devices (metaphors, allegories, euphemisms) for representation of LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ characters in the book by focusing on metaphors,

allegories, euphemisms and to study how different forms of representation influence readers' (young people who speak English and are able to understand fiction in it) attitudes towards the characters in particular and towards the social group in general.

This research paper consists of an introduction, two main chapters and a conclusion. The Introduction discusses literary representation of characters, lexical stylistic means of its expression and the impact it might have on readers. Chapter I, "Literary Representation of LGBT persons and its Impact on the Reader", is devoted, first of all, to the patterns found not only in literature, but also in other types of art (cinema, music, etc.), psycholinguistic aspects of such influence. Chapter II, "Representation and Use of Devices to LGBT+ Characters in book "No ashes in the fire" and Their Influence on Readers' Attitude" analyses the difference in the author's use of various means of literary expression to the characters of the work and its effect on readers' attitudes towards individual LGBT+ characters and the social group they represent. The conclusion summarises the theoretical and practical parts and assesses the extent to which the study proves the hypothesis.

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INTRODUCTION

LGBT+ is an acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, trans, bisexual and other. In general, it is often used as a designation for all people whose romantic and/or sexualized behaviour differs from heteronormative behaviour. Representation is how a social group is viewed and described within a particular context. Aspects of representation can be quite different, ranging from the context in which representatives of a social group are mentioned, to the choice of vocabulary used to refer to them, and many others. LGBTQ+ individuals constitute an integral component of society, yet they also comprise one of the most vulnerable social groups, frequently encountering numerous problems, notably including a deficiency of representation within a culture (Ekmekçi, 2016). At the same time, the visibility increase of LGBT+ people yields advantageous outcomes for its societal positioning, thereby potentially enhancing the well-being of its representatives (Guskos & Nordmann, 2023).

Vulnerable Groups and their Position in Society

Speaking about the influence of literature in general and methods of literary expression in particular on the perception of characters belonging to the "vulnerable group", first it is necessary to define what is meant by the vulnerable group in general and what social problems such social groups face nowadays. For example, in addressing the issue of vulnerability of the LGBT+ social group, Ekmekci (2016b) considers the very concept of its vulnerability as a consequence of the simultaneous impact of a multitude of factors - cultural, social, philosophical and many others. affecting the actual situation of the social group. Despite the importance of understanding sexual orientation and gender identity as integral components of normal human existence and identity formation, members of the LGBT+ community often find themselves in a vulnerable position, for example in terms of access to health care (Ekmekçi, 2016b).

At the same time, it is important to take into account that within the history of literature, the group of LGBT characters has always remained, to one degree or another, depending on the specific era, a vulnerable group. Same-sex relationships in literature began to appear openly only at the beginning of the last century, while before that, for a long time, it was a taboo topic, as was the manifestation of same-sex relationships in itself (Saranya, 2024).

History of LGBT+ in Literature

The appearance of LGBT+ characters in literature and the concept of LGBT literature in general is not new. For example, the poetess Sappho described same-sex relationships between characters in her works during the Ancient Greek era in the 500s BC (Hallet, 1979).

However, as public opinion changed, LGBT literature changed. At one point in time, the world became less tolerant of same-sex relationships, and such relationships between characters were hidden and not shown in such a detailed way in literature. At some point the topic of LGBT in literature became so taboo that there were even arguments about whether Sappho was writing about LGBT relationships or whether it was an error in perception of her texts (Hallet, 1979).

In general, the period of the late 19th-early 20th century can be called the epoch of active return of the LGBT theme to the pages of books. During this period, along with the beginning of the general liberalization of society, more and more openly writers show LGBT characters, their number in literature is growing and the genre diversity of works in which it is possible find such characters is expanding, as well as their role is changing - more and more often such characters become the main characters of works, representing the social group in a wider range of different situations, showing LGBT identity not so much as something special, but simply as a natural manifestation of personal identity (Beaulieu, 2020).

Speaking in general about the path that the LGBT theme has taken in the history of world literature from ancient times to the present, literary historian Halperin (1989) notes that this theme and attitudes towards it have changed not only in terms of the permissibility or inadmissibility of such behaviour, but also the fundamental approaches to what human sexuality is and what can be affected by its expression. For example, the more loyal approach to homosexuality in ancient literature is primarily due to the fact that people of that time were generally less inclined to group people into particular social groups based on conventional attributes, paying more attention to how these attributes show each person as a person, demonstrate his or her relationship with the world around him or her, social status, philosophy of life (Halperin, 1989).

At the same time, in the literature of the Renaissance, significantly less openness towards same-sex relationships is observed, primarily due to the increasing influence of modern monotheistic religions on society (primarily Christianity), which not only directly prohibited such relationships, but also generally increased division society into “right” and “wrong”, paying much less attention to issues of the individual and more often speaking about people as, first of

all, representatives of their social group, acting on its behalf (Homosexuality in Renaissance Florence: The Ambiguities of Neoplatonic Thought, 2020).

A noticeable paradigm shift in the approach to LGBT people in literature, which, as mentioned above, arose at the end of the 19th century, is largely due to the fact that culture again began to acquire more individualistic outlines, paying more attention to a specific person in its various manifestations, and to a lesser extent sought to differentiate social groups into “right” and “wrong”, generally changing the approach to a person, primarily considering him as an individual and only as a secondary factor identifying him in a specific social group (Hammack, 2005).

LGBT+ in Contemporary Literature

In recent years, there has been a noticeable trend towards a change in the role of LGBT+ characters in literature. While previously such characters were mostly presented as stereotypical and/or negative characters, today LGBT+ characters are increasingly appearing in works as protagonists and/or positive protagonists, and the number of references to such characters in literature is increasing. However, such trends are not in themselves exclusively positive. Thus, despite the fact of quantitative growth, the quality of such representation is often questionable, as well as the impact of such representation on public opinion. Blackburn and Smith (2010) see literature as an important part of the formation of attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people in society, with the influencing factors being not only the presence of such characters but also the literary techniques used in their treatment, the choice of vocabulary and plot elements. For example, such concept as "Metonymic configurations" is considered. Metonymic configurations are defined as "the way in which patterns of behaviours, which are marked by gender, sexuality, and other normalized constructions, are "built up through the simple fictive practice of developing conflict and/or thematic implication through interactions among diverse and contrasting characters (often character stereotypes)" (Blackburn et al., 2015c, p. 7).

The behaviour of LGBT+ characters is often stereotypical, which can have a negative impact on the role of community's representatives in society. For example, according to Blackburn, Clark and Nemeth (2015) the behaviour of characters, even if they are LGBT, is often directly associated with heteronormative attitudes in society, which can affect the understanding of a person's gender role in society, and thus the LGBTQ+ community (Blackburn et al., 2015.). Authors believe that simply including LGBTQ+ characters in literature is not enough. What is

more important is how these characters are portrayed within the work, rather than the mere fact of their presence. Thus, many LGBTQ+ characters are portrayed as stereotypical and still subject to heteronormative norms of behaviour, which ultimately does not improve society's attitude towards members of this social group, and in some cases can even potentially reinforce stereotypes. Persons who do not obey the heteronormative model of behaviour are often marginalised in literature, which also strengthens the negative impression of them in the eyes of the reader (Blackburn et al., 2010).

Literary Devices and their Impact on Reader's Attitude

To further analyse the means of literary expression, it is necessary to first determine which devices should be considered first in the context of this work and why.

Metaphor is a turn of speech, the essence of which is the use of words and expressions in a figurative sense on the basis of the presence of any analogy or similarity (Ricoeur, 2004). The role of metaphor in modern literature has especially intensified under the influence of the Formalist view of prose and poetry. Thus, the use of metaphors is primarily seen as related to the use of primarily the semantic meaning of the word used, which strengthens their connection to the object being described and their influence on the reader through easier comprehensibility. Also, metaphor has a rather profound effect on cognitive functions, creating a connection between the structural components of the text and their perception by the reader (Semino, 2008).

Also in this context, lexical choice can be understood as a method of literary expression. Research shows that the choice of vocabulary in relation to the description of a person has a direct effect on the reader's perception of what is being described, including often making the reader draw unwarranted conclusions about social status and other characteristics, even if they have not been specified. Based on this, it can be assumed that lexical choice in the context of this paper is an important literary device because it directly affects the reader's perception of the character (Wang & Culotta, 2019).

Reading is a complex process in terms of brain function, and therefore the choice of specific lexical, grammatical and other linguistic units may determine the reader's perception, the points on which he or she focuses his or her attention, and how the pattern of perception of a phenomenon that has been written about may change after reading.

For example, the choice of certain specific linguistic elements in the process of writing a work by the author allows the reader to understand the author's personal attitude to the subject described by the text, thereby influencing in the short and long term the reader's attitude to what is described. For example, the use of specific verb forms is a way of manipulating the reader's attention, thanks to which the author concentrates attention on the necessary element/character/etc., thus contributing to the effect of the reading and explicating the semantic content of the text. As a result of this explication, the reader is more likely to comprehend his/her own point of view on the events reproduced in the text, comparing his/her attitude with the author's attitude ('the author's attitude' in the framework of the reader's subjective perception), which contributes to a potential change in the reader's perception of the subject of the description (Kudryashov & Turanova, 2021).

In general, literature has a great potential to influence the psyche of a person and his attitude to the world around him or her in particular, because it is a derivative of language, and the language in turn shapes the worldview.

Such manipulation is at the heart of literature, as the final goal of a literary work is for the reader to interpret the meaning and significance embedded in the literary text, which inevitably entails influencing the reader's mind (Yassin, 2023).

The term 'specific linguistic elements' can refer to a wide variety of lexical, grammatical and any other linguistic techniques. Euphemisms, for example, are one of them. Euphemisms have a significant persuasive character, conveying through themselves the attitude towards the author. The special role of euphemisms is largely because they are necessary primarily to replace something initially capable of causing a significant response due to some form of non-acceptance of the described phenomenon in society.

In other words – euphemisms served to hide taboo vocabulary. However, this is their more global and historical purpose, in the modern world the issue of taboo is often not so acute, so euphemisms more often serve as a way for authors to express their position in relation to this or that problem, concept etc. By masking offensive expressions in their works, writers in literature express their own disagreement with the fact that the described phenomenon is something negative, thus influencing the perception of this phenomenon on the part of the reader (Fataliyeva, 2015).

Allegories have the same significant manipulative (influencing) potential. Allegory being an inattentive method of literary expression as well as euphemism can serve to speak about moral

unambiguous topics, but in addition it also has an empathic function. With the help of correctly chosen allegories, the author focuses the reader's attention on specific parts of the text, giving them greater significance, motivating the reader to analyse and think about what is described in the text. The nature of natural languages allows the author with the help of these and other methods of literary expressiveness to influence the reader's attitude to the read, to convey and express his opinion, to manipulate attention (Quilligan, 2018).

Specifics of LGBT+ Representation in Literature

There is an opinion that absolutely any representation is a positive phenomenon and its beginning is a priori good, however sometimes representation can cause more harm than good (Gerbner et al., 2002). Taking this into account, the features of representation also play a role as does the very fact of its existence.

One of the features of the representation of LGBT characters in literature that can be called negative is stereotyping. Often the image of LGBT characters in literature is built around stereotypes about them that already exist in society, which only reinforces these stereotypes. Thus, characters often act in a way that deviates from heteronormative patterns of behaviour (although these role models are not very applicable in homosexual relationships) and are shown as deliberately different in appearance. Such “negative” portrayals reinforce homophobic attitudes among readers, support stereotyping, and separate such characters from “normal” society rather than integrating them (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2024).

In doing so, LGBT characters' stories are often seen as funny or not serious by heterosexual characters in the work, and their relationship problems are portrayed because of their sexual orientation. Such portrayals can lead viewers to treat the problems of LGBT people as their own fault and empathize less with them, which also negatively affects representation as a positive phenomenon (Tresca, 2016).

Another aspect of representation is that LGBT characters are often depicted in works in the process of actively searching for and realizing their identity. Realization of identity is a very popular plot in which LGBT characters often find themselves, and often this realization occurs through the struggle with external negative factors, such as homophobia and rejection in society (Baker, 2013).

Focusing is also one of the features often used in modern literature specifically in relation to LGBT characters. Focusing is a literary device in which the course of the narrative

unexpectedly changes or is completely rewritten to show the point of view of a character who has different moral standards or behavior patterns from the average. Such patterns include a tendency towards same-sex relationships. Authors use focusing to more emphatically show the reader how a character with certain features sees the world, as well as to enhance the reader's immersion, making the work more immersive. Focusing can also be used to demonstrate some form of rejection of the character by the outside world, which in the case of LGBT characters shows the problem of homophobia (Blackburn et al., 2015d).

The disruption of space-time of the narrative or heterochronic effect is also often used in relation to LGBT characters. There is a wide variety of heterochronic devices, such as flashbacks (sudden insertions with the narrative taking place long before the main plot) or foreshadowing, where, on the contrary, there is a temporary transfer of the narrative to the future. Often, such disruptions of time occur to describe the life path of an LGBT character, his experience (often traumatic) (Blackburn et al., 2015d).

Also, descriptions of LGBT characters, like descriptions of any other taboo topics, often have some lexical features. For example, various euphemisms are often used in relation to LGBT persons. Euphemisms are necessary for authors to accurately enough designate the subject of speech, but at the same time not to make their speech too unacceptable for the average reader. The need for extensive use of such vocabulary once again emphasizes the continuing problematic nature of the topic in society and the impossibility of talking about it completely openly (Passa, 2023).

In general, it can be said that the depiction of LGBT characters in literature has its own stylistic features both in terms of narration and the use of lexical units in relation to them, since their representation is more complex in comparison with the representation of average non-LGBT characters. Such features reveal in more detail aspects of the influence of representation on attitudes towards these characters, since each of the elements serves to influence the reader in one way or another and therefore change his attitude towards the phenomena described.

Based on all that has been said above about the influence of the means of literary expression on the perception of the reader, and also taking into account the important role of literature as a significant area of culture that influences the attitude of society as a whole (due to the influence on the reader in particular) towards LGBT characters, the following research questions were formulated:

- What are the main features specific to the means of literary expression (metaphors, allegories, euphemisms) used concerning LGBTQ+ characters?
- How does the representation of LGBT characters affect the reader's attitude towards the social group?
- What key differences are found in the representation of LGBT and non-LGBT characters in the novel “No Ashes in The Fire”?

CHAPTER I. LITERARY REPRESENTATION OF LGBT PERSONS AND ITS IMPACT ON THE READER

1.1 Representation as a General Concept and Representation in Literature

Representation is found in various disciplines - political science, sociology, literature and others. However, the concept of representation is complex and multifaceted, there are different approaches to it. First, it is worth mentioning that there are two historical approaches to representation that differ fundamentally - American and European.

The European approach to representation is built around the notion of “mind”, which is presented as a structured set of behaviours peculiar to an individual. At the same time, the notion of “mind”, although individualistic in its essence, is considered in the European approach as a derivative of collective-social aspects and is accompanied by the notion that “mind” in the context of representation has an attributive function, because it is based on the “minds” of individuals belonging to a social group that the common features of the members are traced. The combination of these traits is stereotyped, thus representing the social group by creating a holistic picture unifying the group of individuals in the public consciousness (Harré, 1984).

“Social consciousness”, i.e. the perception by society of those or other stereotyped distinctive features of a social group coming from the individual ‘mind’ of its participants within the framework of the European approach to representation is often called ‘social representation’ and it is also an important constituent element of the concept of representation.

Within the European approach to representation, one of the central ones is the social theory of the French psychologist S. Moscovici (Harré, 1984).

The basis of his theory is the concept of plurality of persons. Within the framework of this theory, a social group in its form perceived by the public (i.e., the representation of this group) arises because each member of the group, despite his individuality, has a set of similar attributes with each other member of the group. At the same time, such a group (called super-individuality) can ultimately be associated with attributes that its members do not have. Thus, social representations of a group (i.e., the representation of a group) are not completely social in their essence but always have a dual social and individual nature (Moscovici, 1994).

The American approach is in some ways the opposite of the European one, postulating ideas of an asocial approach to representation. It is called asocial because individualism (that is, not

social but personal) is considered primary in building relationships in a group of people, and it is this relationship that gives birth to representation and unites people into groups. The work of psychologist G. H. Mead played a significant influence on the development of the American approach to representation (Harré, 1984).

Central to Mead's theory is linguistic meaning - a collective description of language that refers to its ability not simply to convey information itself, but also to influence perceived images, sensory patterns, feelings, and emotions - in other words, all aspects of human qualitative interaction with the world (Booth, 2016).

Based on Mead's work, Mark Johnson's Theory of Embodied Mind also appeared. The basic idea of his theory is the impossibility of separating language and the world. Since a person perceives this world through the mind and the mind is influenced by language, language as a tool influence perception (Johnson & Lakoff, 2002).

Also, an integral part of the approach to representation and its understanding is the theory of symbolic interactionism, which was also developed by G. H. Mead. This theory is based on interpersonal communication (directly related to the above-mentioned linguistic meaning). Within the framework of this theory, communication between people is considered as the root cause of the emergence of special signs (in the broad sense of the word) that can be associated with both an individual and a group of people. Thus, through interpersonal communication, "symbolic worlds" are formed (complexes of signs and symbols responsible for the perception of the subject of speech), and already created symbolic worlds influence human behaviour, forming social expectations. Thus, representation, being a variation of the symbolic world, influences human behavior and forms the attitude towards the subject (Jeon, 2004).

The American and European approaches differ significantly from each other, but there are also many similarities. Both approaches define representation as a specific type of relationship between individuals, when for some reason a stereotypical image of a particular group is formed. Both approaches claim that representation influences the attitude of members of society to the subject.

1.1.1 Representation Theory in the Context of Literature

Linguistic representation is directly related to literature, since literature is an art form that uses language as the primary method of expression.

One of the important theories in the discourse on representation in literature is the theory of cultural semiotics. Cultural semiotics considers culture as a set of conventional symbols, each of which has a consensus (developed due to the perception of subjects) set of meanings. At the same time, since the main sign system is language, language is considered as one of the key ways of forming a particular set of symbols (Jeon, 2004).

For example, textual information carriers (books, mass media, etc.) from a semiotic point of view can influence the attitude of interpretants to groups of people (for example, groups based on age, gender, and sexual orientation). A person perceiving a written text analyzes the symbols in it, correlating them with his subjectively perceived world, thereby sometimes adopting and/or popularizing the specific meaning of a particular symbol. If the symbol had a negative core, the reader's attitude to the subject may become worse, if positive, it may improve. This is due to the transition of information between sign systems (from text to perceived) (Semali, 2002).

Formation, as well as perception of language, is a process affecting the highest levels of human psychological activity, raising the abstract (text) to the sphere of consciousness (perception). When a word is perceived by a person, it can leave a so-called "trace" in his worldview, and in the future, not only this word will cause a corresponding association, but a full-fledged complex system of mutual associations will appear (word, object, subject). Thus, the area of influence of language on a person's worldview (and therefore on representation) is limited only by the area of knowledge of the person himself. Also, within this framework, the division in consciousness between the abstract and the non-abstract is considered. An artistic representation (including literary), being essentially abstract now of perception by the subject, becomes non-abstract because it is comprehended and imagined, and the non-abstract, in turn, is capable of influencing opinion (Bullock, 1979).

Thus, literature offers several tools for representation and this representation influences the reader's attitude towards the subject.

1.1.2 The Influence of Representation on a Social Group

All forms of representation (including literary representation) influence the position of the represented social groups.

For example, LGBT schoolchildren are, on average, more often than other schoolchildren subjected to bullying, victimization, various types of violence, etc. This also affects the quality of their education (on average, LGBT schoolchildren, probably as a result of prolonged

bullying, show worse academic results than the median in their group). At the same time, victimization is not uniform among all communities - in communities where LGBT people are more represented in everyday life, the average level of victimization is lower, and accordingly, the position of LGBT schoolchildren is better (Kosciw et al., 2014).

By increasing the number of LGBT characters in young adult literature, it becomes easier for them to find characters to identify with, which not only improves their desire to read but also has a positive effect on their mental health. The reading community, thanks to broader representation, becomes more accepting and open to LGBT people, reducing discrimination and negative perceptions of LGBT people. Because of this, LGBT people can feel freer, hide their sexual orientation less, and face less aggression (Ascariz, 2024).

Representation of LGBT in literature, politics, cinema, etc. has a positive effect on a whole range of aspects of the well-being of a social group. Thus, in communities with broad representation, LGBT people have a higher level of representation in political bodies, are less likely to encounter manifestations of homophobia, and, on average, feel safer. Even among religious communities, representation has a positive effect on the level of homophobia - it is often lower than in communities where representation is difficult. However, there is also a reverse reaction - sometimes representation causes public backlash and provokes discontent (Haider-Markel, 2007).

Thus, the representation of LGBT persons has a positive effect on the attitude of society towards them and improves the standard of living of representatives of this social group.

1.2 Specifics of LGBT+ Representation in “No Ashes in The Fire” by Darnell L. Moore

Darnell L. Moore's memoir *No Ashes in the Fire: Coming of Age Black and Free in America* (2018) is a complex linguistic and cultural text whose narrative is organized around black-queer identity using an extensive array of methods of literary expression. Moore makes extensive use of metaphor, euphemism, and allegory, not only as necessary stylistic devices to embellish the text, but also by rendering them functionally to express ideas of resistance, revision, and self-determination. These tropes allow the author to tell the story of his life, and at the same time to subvert established discourses of race, masculinity, religion, and sexuality.

These means of literary expression can be analyzed through the lens of cognitive metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), queer linguistics (Cameron & Kulick, 2003; Bucholtz & Hall, 2004), and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995), allowing for a deconstruction

of language and a closer examination of its role as a tool in the representation of LGBT+ characters.

1.2.1 Metaphor as a Way of Conceptualizing the Queer Experience

According to Lakoff's and Johnson's "Metaphors We Live By", metaphor is not an ornament but a way of thinking (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In *No Ashes in the Fire*, Moore uses metaphor as a means of cognitive and emotional framing to describe queer identity. The central phrase "No more ashes. No more fires. Only love" refers to the attempted arson the lyrical protagonist experienced as a child but is also an important metaphor about the social stigma and violence that members of the LGBT community often face (Moore, 2018, p.131). The rejection of fire and ashes in favour of love symbolizes the transition from trauma to healing, from violence to acceptance.

The expression "I sensed then I had broken a rule that I would later learn is unbreakable, but I wanted more lines to cross" represents queer identity as an act of transgression (Moore, 2018, p. 59). The metaphor of "lines" denotes social boundaries - gender, sexuality, morality - that the author recognizes and consciously transgresses. These metaphors are related to the typical scheme of "Life is a Journey" in cognitive linguistics, where progress means crossing boundaries and obstacles (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Moore also uses the metaphors of thirst and desolation - "The thirst for power leaves the spirit arid" to express how power and oppression drains human dignity, especially in queer people (Moore, 2018, p. 100).

1.2.2 Euphemism and the "Strategic Opacity"

Whereas metaphor within a given work often intensifies image and emotion, euphemism softens and protects. According to Allan and Burrige (1991), euphemisms often serve to circumvent taboo topics and are needed to get around something that may resonate strongly with the reader (Allan & Burrige, 1991). However, in Moore's memoir, the role of euphemism is sometimes redefined, allowing not only for something to be covered up, but in some cases the opposite - to speak louder about trauma with respect and depth. For example, in the phrase "Feeling a body was new; feeling a boy's body was new; feeling this excitement in my body was new." the word "excitement" functions as a euphemism for sexual arousal. It gives the scene delicacy and emotional precision (Moore, 2018, p. 59).

Euphemism thus acts as a form of queer defense. It is what E. Sedgwick (1990) called “strategic opacity”: it is a language that deliberately preserves multiple layers and ambiguity in order to allow the reader to read and interpret it more freely, depending on their position and sensitivity (Sedgwick, 1990).

Phrases like “we served two Gods, our lusts and our shame” are an example of religious discourse being used as a euphemism, being a way of describing the internal moral conflicts inherent in many queer people raised in religious communities (Moore, 2018, p.98).

1.2.3 Allegory as a Critique of Structure and a Search for Liberation

Allegory in Moore's book works primarily for a structural critique of social morality. For example, the phrase “The home is likened to a kingdom black boys are expected to provide for, fight to protect, and lord over” allegorizes the problem of heteronormative expectations of masculinity in traditionalist families (Moore, 2018, p. 94). Here masculinity is portrayed as a socially constructed and forcefully maintained role, according to Judith Butler's performativity theory (Butler, 1990).

The previously mentioned trope - “We served two Gods, our lusts and our shame” - is also an allegory revealing the internal conflicts caused by external pressures and religious morality (Moore, 2018, p. 98). These are more than just the personal experiences of the lyrical hero, for through them is expressed a criticism of the entire system of oppression in which LGBT people are forced to exist. The expression “the unbridled urgency to build a world where the edges are imagined as the starting place for Black liberation now and always” in turn fulfils the function of utopian allegory according to José Esteban Muñoz (2009), turning detachment and isolation from society into a resource for political and spiritual transformation (Moore, 2018, p. 138), (Muñoz, 2009). “Edge” is not only an exile but also a starting point for rethinking life and the world around.

1.2.4 Differences in Representation of LGBT and non-LGBT Characters in “No Ashes in the Fire”

In “No Ashes in the Fire”, Darnell Moore constructs the narrative in such a way that LGBT characters (primarily the author himself) are endowed with a deep inner elaboration and emotional layering, which is expressed through the work's complex poetic system. Their image is shown from within - through feelings, doubts, fears, desires and hopes, conveyed with the help of figurative speech: metaphors, euphemisms, allegories. This approach is necessary to

emphasize the subjectivity and vulnerability of LGBT people, their fragile positions in the society around them, which is often unfriendly, and makes them full-fledged characters rather than functions of the narrative.

Non-LGBT characters—particularly those representing oppressive systems like the family, church, or school—typically appear in the book often as external forces, representatives of traditional attitudes and pressures. Their characters are less often revealed in terms of emotional complexity- they serve more as background, context, or opposition.

This distinction is a deliberate political and literary strategy: Moore places in leading roles, gives voice and space to those whom traditional literature has more often than not deprived of the fullness of character. As a result, his memoir becomes a literature of queer liberation (where liberation is the possibility of living in an accepting society) in which language is not only a means of expression, but also a form of survival, defense, and resistance.

The means of literary expression are used very differently in relation to LGBT and non-LGBT characters. The stories of LGBT characters are often built around the idea of social rejection, so tropes serve to reinforce the sense of antithesis between the protagonist and the world around him, while supporting the protagonist in the eyes of the reader and showing his inner world, while non-LGBT characters are not so vividly described.

CHAPTER II. REPRESENTATION AND USE OF DEVICES TO LGBT+ CHARACTERS IN BOOK “NO ASHES IN THE FIRE” AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON READERS' ATTITUDE

2.1 Research Methodology

In this study, an experimental method of analysis is used to examine the influence of lexical-semantic representation on the perception of LGBT characters and attitudes towards the LGBT community, using case studies (phrases from the book that are appropriate in the context of the study).

The methodology of this study is based on an interdisciplinary approach that combines methods from sociolinguistics, cognitive psychology, social sciences, literary studies and linguistics. It relies on the principles of experimental research aimed at identifying the influence of linguistic means on the perception of LGBT characters and attitudes towards the LGBT community.

The purpose of this study is to analyze how different forms of lexico-semantic representation (metaphors, allegories, euphemisms) affect readers' emotional and cognitive perception of LGBT characters. An important hypothesis of the study is the assumption that changing linguistic framing (using certain methods of literary expressiveness) can lead to a change in readers' attitudes towards the LGBT community.

The study, and the experimental design in particular, draws on several key linguistic-cognitive approaches that describe the relationship between perception and language.

One of the theories on which the study is based is Minsky's Framing Theory, which was created in 1975 and is still one of the foundational theories in issues related to the influence of language on perception (Minsky, 1975). Thus, framing theory states that language structures the perception of reality using conceptual schemas that determine the interpretation of information. According to Lakoff, people perceive information (including language in all its manifestations) through cognitive frames - mental structures that shape the understanding of events and phenomena. In this context, the study suggests that the way LGBT characters are represented through language constructs can significantly influence how they are perceived by readers (Lakoff, 2004).

Also relevant in this context is the hypothesis of linguistic relativity, also known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. It is assumed that the structure of language itself influences thinking and cognitive processes, which has an impact on the perception of objective reality and attitudes

towards it, including the perception of social groups. The hypothesis is based on the idea that the structure of language determines the ways of thinking and perception of the surrounding reality. In the context of this study, this means that the use of certain lexical constructions in the description of LGBT characters may contribute to the formation of certain cognitive attitudes and stereotypes in readers (Whorf, 1956).

The theory of social constructivism is also important in the context of the paper. Although this theory fundamentally addresses social and psychological processes derived from social and cultural construction, it also views language as a tool that shapes social perceptions and norms. This theory argues that reality is created and maintained through language and social interactions, among other things. Thus, the ways in which LGBT characters are represented in literature can contribute to either the normalization or marginalization of this social group by shaping appropriate social attitudes (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Cognitive models of perception and cognitive distortion theory are in turn used within the framework of the paper to explain how the framing of information (framing) can influence decision making and attitudes towards different objects. According to Tversky and Kahneman, people tend to interpret information depending on how it is presented, which means that the choice of specific lexical items when describing a character has the potential to influence readers' perceptions and attitudes, which is important in the context of LGBT characters' perceptions because positive or negative language constructions can form biased or, on the contrary, favorable attitudes in readers (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981).

2.2 Selection of Respondents

To ensure high validity and reliability of the research results, prior to the main survey, a selection of participants was carried out, in which potential respondents underwent a questionnaire aimed at determining their general attitudes towards members of the LGBT community. This made it possible to exclude from the sample people with strongly positive or negative attitudes that could distort the results of the experiment.

The questionnaire was adapted from Herek's Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men (ATLG) scale (Herek, 1988), which has been used in different research studies as an instrument to measure attitudes toward LGBT persons. The adapted added clarifying language to improve the accuracy of question interpretation and reduced the total number of questions to facilitate validation of the results.

The questionnaire also included a reading attentiveness indicator (question 4) to minimize the risk that the final sample included participants whose responses could not be considered fully reliable due to insufficient reading attentiveness.

The questionnaire included the following questions, with answer options from 1 to 10 (where 1 - radically disagree, 10 - absolutely agree)

- 1) I believe that there are different views on sexual orientation in society.
- 2) Everyone has the right to choose their lifestyle.
- 3) I can understand why people might have different attitudes towards the LGBT community.
- 4) Please select “6” as your answer to this question
- 5) It is important to respect the personal boundaries of others, regardless of their orientation.
- 6) Discussing LGBT-related topics requires tact and respect for all parties' opinions.
- 7) It is difficult for me to unequivocally assess the impact of LGBT culture on society.
- 8) I believe that a person's personal life is only an individual matter.
- 9) I never make conclusions about people based on their orientation.
- 10) I am not sure how important the topic of LGBT is to me personally.

Only those participants whose answers corresponded to a fairly neutral zone of the scale (the arithmetic mean of all answers ranged from 3.5 to 7.5) were allowed to participate in the experiment, which reduced the risk of having strongly biased positive or negative attitudes. This was done to avoid, to the extent possible, the effect of distortion of the data caused by personal bias or stereotypes.

In total, the final sample consisted of 30 respondents (10 for each of the three experimental groups), which corresponds to the minimum size to ensure statistical power according to the Altman nomogram, allowing for an $\alpha=0.5$ value sufficient for low-fidelity studies. The age of the participants was not considered as a selection criterion, nor was the level of education restricted, thus contributing to a more complete representativeness of the data. Sufficient English language proficiency was a necessary parameter, but due to limited screening resources it was decided that the ability to pass the pre-test on LGBT attitudes meant sufficient language proficiency.

Allocation of participants between groups was done by random sampling, using a random number generator (each selected participant was assigned a number from 1 to 30, then the random number generator was used to allocate participants into three groups). This ensured that the groups were statistically even and avoided systematic distortions associated with manual selection. The research methodology was based on Field (2018) and Bryman (2016) recommendations for social experiments (Field, 2018), (Bryman, 2016).

2.3 Experimental Design

To conduct the study, respondents were randomly distributed into three experimental groups, each of which received a different textual description of the same character identified as a representative of the LGBT community. The main goal of the experiment was to identify the influence of methods of literary expression (metaphors, euphemisms, allegories) on the perception of social identity, in particular, on attitudes towards LGBT characters. Text construction was based on theoretical approaches to framing (Lakoff, 2004) and the hypothesis of linguistic relativity (Whorf, 1956), according to which the form of information presentation, choice of vocabulary and stylistic means can significantly influence the interpretation of reality and the formation of social attitudes.

Group 1 - Control (neutral representation)

Participants in this group received a character describing phrases in the most neutral tone possible. The text avoided the use of strong emotional language, evaluative judgments and stylistically marked expressions. The character was described dryly, focusing on the basic facts of biography: age, occupation, hobbies, without mentioning any character traits or assessments of his/her actions. This approach allowed to fix the “basic” level of perception, not distorted by the influence of linguistic means of emotional coloring.

Table 1. Selected samples for Group 1

<p>"I sensed then I had broken a rule that I would later learn is unbreakable, but I wanted more lines to cross" (Moore, 2018, p. 59).</p>	<p>Metaphor: "lines to cross" symbolizes societal boundaries and personal exploration.</p>
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"Feeling a body was new; feeling a boy's body was new; feeling this excitement in my body was new" (Moore, 2018, p. 59).	Euphemism: "feeling this excitement" refers to sexual arousal in a subtle manner.
"I would break that silently understood rule again and again" (Moore, 2018, p. 59).	Metaphor: "electricity" conveys the thrill and danger of forbidden experiences.
"Our naked bodies... touched as we drifted between ... " (Moore, 2018, p. 59).	Euphemism: "drifted between fantasy and reality" subtly describes a sexual encounter.)
"I would have died had I not ... " (Moore, 2018, p. 59).	Allegory: Imagination as a sanctuary from societal oppression.

Group 2 - Positive Representation

For this group the phrases were prepared, rich in positively colored methods of literary expression, aimed at forming a favorable attitude to the character. The text emphasized personal virtues such as determination, benevolence, empathy, and social and professional success. The character's LGBT identity was woven into the narrative as an organic and positively valued part of their identity. For example, a character could be presented as an inspirational leader with charisma, courage and the ability to overcome stereotypes for the common good.

Table 2. Selected samples for Group 2

"No more ashes. No more fires. Only love" (Moore, 2018, p. 131).	Metaphor: Transition from destruction to love signifies personal growth.
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<p>"The unbridled urgency to build a world where the edges are imagined as the starting place for black liberation now and always" (Moore, 2018, p. 131).</p>	<p>Allegory: "Edges" symbolize marginalized communities leading the way to liberation.</p>
<p>"Loving oneself and being loved... is a survival tactic that requires work" (Moore, 2018, p. 89).</p>	<p>Euphemism: "Survival tactic" refers to the necessity of self-love in oppressive environments.</p>
<p>"Dreams are the destinations we arrive at as we chase our wishes and our callings" (Moore, 2018, p. 48).</p>	<p>Metaphor: Dreams as destinations represent aspirations and achievements.</p>
<p>"I might have begun to understand why so many... seemed to carry the weight of hopelessness alongside profound, unrelenting courage" (Moore, 2018, p. 23).</p>	<p>Euphemism: "Weight of hopelessness" subtly addresses the burden of systemic oppression.</p>
<p>"These forms of repression are the hands that do their best work unseen" (Moore, 2018, p. 25).</p>	<p>Allegory: "Hands" symbolize invisible forces of societal repression.</p>

Group 3 - Negative representation

The description intended for the third group contained lexical and stylistic elements with negative connotations where LGBT people are stigmatized. The text included words and expressions with connotations of disapproval, suspicion or social judgment. The image of the character was painted negatively through references to “deviance,” “incomprehensible behavior,” “unconventionality,” and associations with conflict, isolation, or personal difficulties. This presentation allowed us to test how negative frame structure influences stereotyping and emotional reactions in respondents.

Table 3. Selected samples for Group 3

"We served two Gods, our lusts and our shame" (Moore, 2018, p. 98).	Allegory: Internal conflict between desire and societal guilt.
"The thirst for power leaves the spirit arid" (Moore, 2018, p. 100).	Metaphor: Desire for power depletes one's spirit.
"I decided I could either leap off the stage and whoop his ass or love the black man who had been taught to hate his reflection" (Moore, 2018, p. 123).	Euphemism: "Whoop his ass" refers to confronting internalized racism.
"Writing about it now feels too theoretical, too poetic, but self-destruction is material, overwhelmingly felt, and embodied" (Moore, 2018, p. 90).	Metaphor: "Self-destruction is material" emphasizes the tangible impact of internalized oppression.
"If Camden is a ghetto, it is because some force, comprised of many hands, made it so" (Moore, 2018, p. 10).	Allegory: "Many hands" represent systemic forces contributing to urban decay.
"The home is likened to a kingdom black boys are expected to provide for, fight to protect, and lord over" (Moore, 2018, p. 94).	Euphemism: "Lord over" subtly critiques patriarchal expectations.

Thus, the experimental design allowed us to compare the three types of language effects on the audience and to identify how different forms of speech representation of an LGBT character affect the perception of his or her identity, the emotions evoked, and potential social distance.

Each group received a questionnaire that consisted of 2 parts. In the first part, the subjects were asked to read text passages describing the character. In the second part, they were asked to answer questions after reading (on a scale from 1 to 10). The questions were the same for all three groups, aimed at measuring the change of attitude towards the character and the social group.

The list of questions answered by each participant of the experiment:

- 1) The character aroused positive feelings in me.
- 2) I sympathized with the character.
- 3) The character's behavior seemed understandable to me.
- 4) I would like to communicate with such a person in real life.
- 5) I felt trust in this character.
- 6) The character seemed like a respectable person to me.
- 7) The lives of LGBT persons are often more difficult because of their sexual orientation
- 8) We need to talk more about the acceptance of different people in society, as today's society is still often not tolerant enough.

2.4 Survey Results

Group 1:

This group was given expressions and phrases that neutrally described the character. This group was the control group and was needed to determine that the selected candidates did not have a pronounced bias towards the subject.

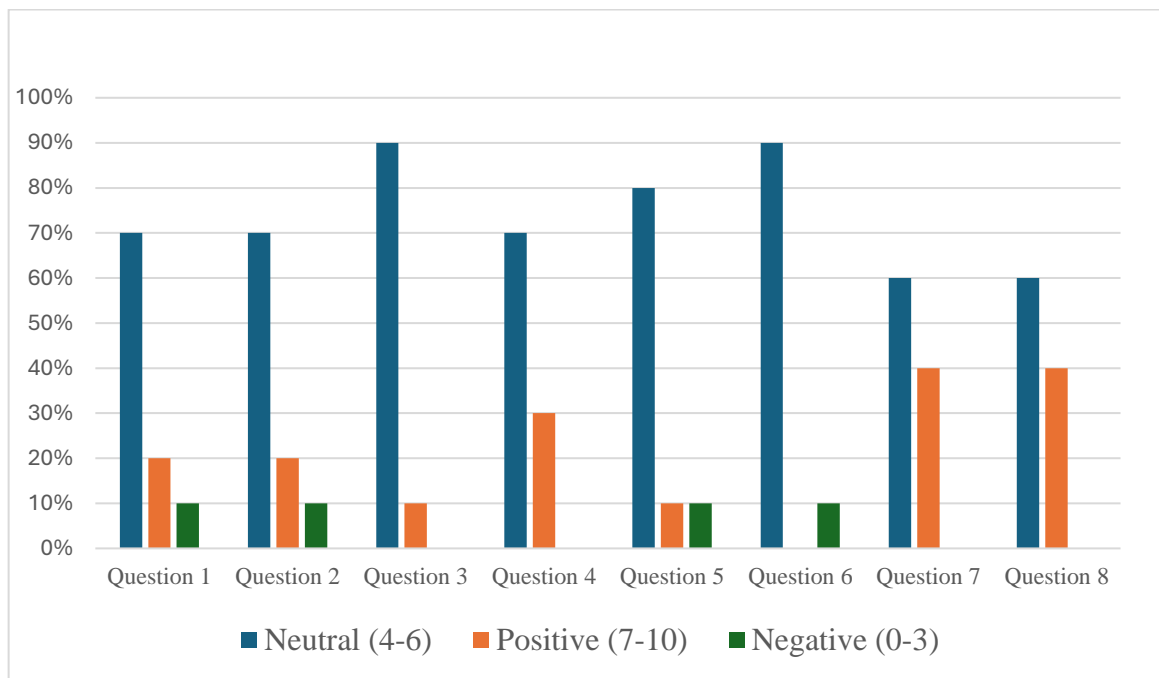


Chart 1. Distribution of answers in Group 1 (Neutral Representation)

This graph shows the distribution of Group 1 participants' responses to the 8 questions they were asked. The answers are grouped into 3 categories: neutral attitude (range 4-6), positive attitude (range 7-10) and negative attitude (range 1-3).

As can be seen, on average, the control group participants' opinion of the character remained neutral with minor positive or negative changes within a particular statement, indicating that the selected candidates did not have a pronounced bias on the topic.

In all questions, both those assessing the interviewee's personal attitude to the character described and those related to LGBT persons in general (about their role in society, about tolerance in society), the interviewees showed neutrality with a slight bias to the positive spectrum in the latter two. It is worth noting that this slight positive bias was not pronounced and most of the answers that fell into the “positive” category were not in the radical part of the scale.

Because most of the participants in the control group remained neutral on all questions we can conclude that they have no initial bias towards the phenomenon under study, which means that further results of the experiment will demonstrate the influence of the selected means of literary expression on the reader.

Group 2:

This group received descriptions (in the form of metaphors, allegories and euphemisms) positively presenting the character.

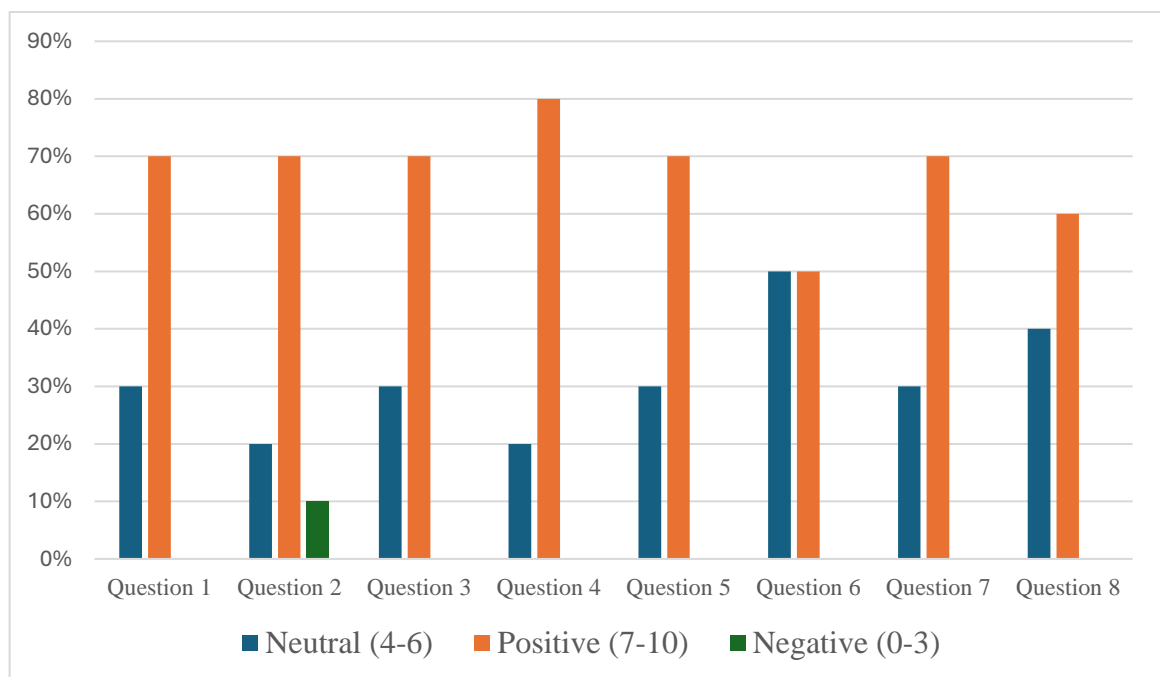


Chart 2. Distribution of answers in Group 2 (Positive Representation)

The results of the survey in the group that received positive representation show that many of the respondents expressed positive attitudes towards the character and LGBT people. In most of the questions, there was not a single response that would have fallen into the “negative attitude” group, and in most cases (except for questions 6 and 8), positive responses were significantly more frequent than neutral ones.

Only in question 6 did the result show parity between neutral and positive attitudes, but the increase in positive attitudes is pronounced, compared to the results of the control group, where no positive responses were received to this question.

In general, pronounced changes in responses and a shift of the graphs to the positive spectrum are noticeable. On average, people began to perceive the character more positively, empathized

with him more and better understood the motives of his actions. At the same time, people also empathized more with LGBT people in general, indicating that society should be more open.

Group 3:

This group received descriptions (in the form of metaphors, allegories, and euphemisms) negatively representative of the character.

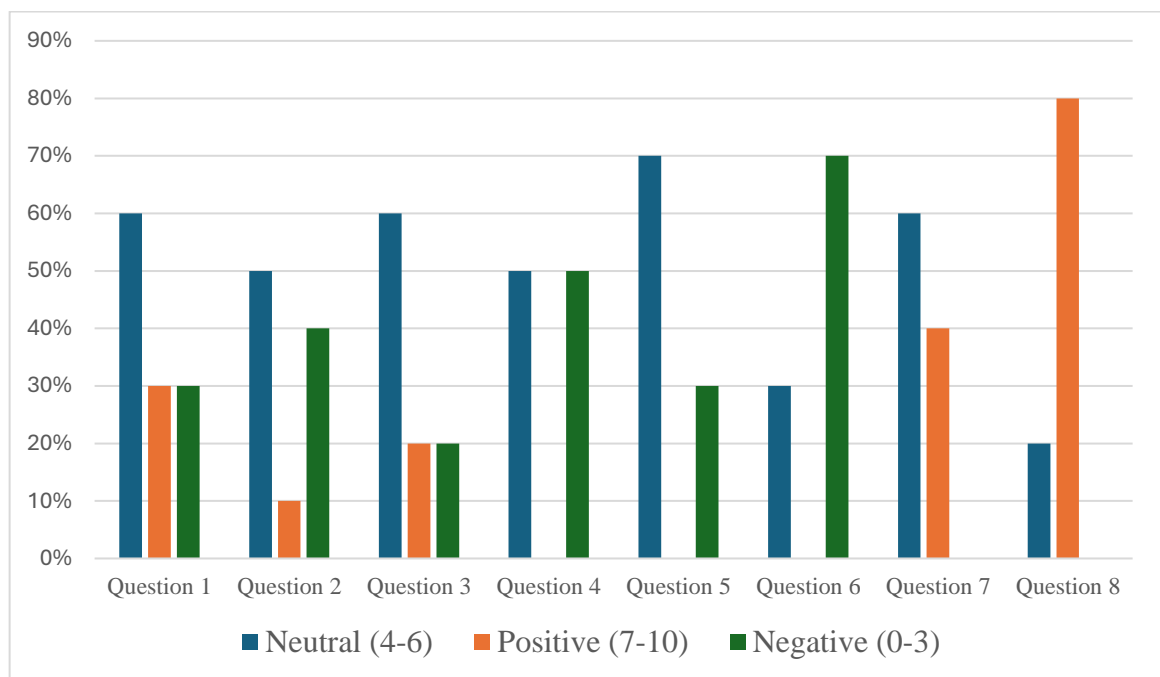


Chart 3. Distribution of answers in Group 3 (Negative Representation)

This survey showed results that were not as pronounced and more complex to understand as the positive representation group. We can see a shift of the graph to the neutral-negative part of the spectrum (except for the last two questions), but the negative reaction was not as pronounced as the positive one.

In most questions, the neutral opinion was more popular than the negative one, but it is important to note that the majority of “neutral” answers were assigned to option 4, which is the lower boundary of the neutral range.

At the same time, there is a general tendency of a pronounced decrease in the frequency of positive answers. Such results may be related to the fact that having an initially neutral opinion (i.e. not negative attitude to the character), the negative representation made the reader empathize more, thus amortizing the chosen answer options, which made the interviewees more often find themselves in the neutral spectrum. They did not express a desire to

communicate with such a person in person, but at the same time they did not condemn, choosing neutral options.

The increase in positive responses to the last two questions, which were needed to measure opinions about LGBT people and society, may also be related to the emergence of a sense of empathy. The image of the character built on negative representation exposed the problems he or she faced in life, making survey participants think about the role of LGBT people in society and choose options that show the need for greater tolerance

It is important to note the pronounced influence of negative representation on the perception of the character's social status. The majority of respondents did not consider him to be a socially respected person, although it was not directly stated anywhere

Based on the results of this survey, it can be concluded that negative representation worsened the reader's attitude towards the character, especially in the issues of empathy and social status. At the same time, issues related to the role of LGBT persons in society remained in the positive part of the scale (although they also changed in a negative direction). This is probably due to the fact that the selected candidates, initially having a neutral opinion about LGBT persons and having read the text in which such characters are shown negatively, decided that the character's appearance is the result of social problems, thus concluding that society is not open enough to LGBT persons.

Overall, the survey demonstrated how the author's choice of certain literary expression methods can influence readers' perception of characters and the social group they represent. In this survey, attitudes were assessed in various ways - both in terms of empathy for the character on the part of the reader and the reader's projection of the character's image in real life (willingness to communicate with such a person, the emergence of a feeling of trust). Both emotional-sensory perception (questions related to subjective feelings about the character) and conscious perception (questions related to expressing an opinion about the role of LGBT in society) were also assessed.

The survey also showed that metaphors, allegories and euphemisms have a clear potential to influence readers' perception of both the subject of speech in particular and to scale the findings to the entire group to which the subject belongs. The group that was shown examples of positive representation demonstrated an increase in empathy for the character and a generally better attitude towards him on the part of the reader, as well as an increase in the idea that LGBT people are often discriminated against and that society needs to be more tolerant.

At the same time, in the group with negative representation, instead of increasing support, there was a pronounced downward trend. On average, survey participants showed less empathy towards the character, trusted him less, and also considered the character less socially successful, although social success was not directly described. It is important to note that both groups (both the group with negative and positive representation) had similar growth trends in questions of conscious perception of the problems of LGBT people in society. In the group with negative representation, as in the group with positive representation, there is a pronounced change in attitude towards the problems of LGBT people in society in a positive direction. This may probably be caused by the peculiarity of the experiment - since only people with a neutral position were selected, who did not have negative (as well as positive) predispositions towards LGBT people, the negative representation made the image of the character evoke pity, which forced this to connect his fate with sexual orientation and draw a conclusion about the presence of problems in society. At the same time, this demonstrates the pronounced influence of the chosen means of literary expression on emotional and sensory perception.

CONCLUSION

The analysis showed that metaphors, allegories and euphemisms are not just decorative linguistic elements necessary to make speech more literary, but also include, first of all, the functions of powerful cognitive and emotional tools that evoke tools for describing LGBT experiences, being effective methods of revealing the inner characters of the world. In Moore's memoir, these techniques are used to convey internal conflict (which is almost an integral part of any LGBT character's story), to describe and demonstrate social marginalization, and to guide the reader along the path of the lyrical hero's resilience and identity development, ultimately allowing for a more profound and subtle portrayal of LGBTQ+ people. The role of positive tropes was to humanize and demarginalize the LGBT character, creating an image of him as a full-fledged and full-fledged hero of a literary work, as well as an image of a full-fledged part of society. Negative tropes, in turn, could reinforce alienation or stigmatization depending on the context in which they were used.

A comparative analysis of LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ characters revealed that LGBTQ+ characters in the novel are often depicted with greater emotional depth and complexity than non-LGBTQ characters. Literary devices are used significantly more actively in relation to them, contributing to an immersive reading experience and encouraging the reader to empathize with the characters more, delving deeper into both their inner world and their story. At the same time, the use of literary expressive means in relation to them often supports the development of the hero's duality, exacerbating both the internal conflict and emphasizing the external conflict with society. Non-LGBTQ+ characters are often presented as external forces, being representatives of systemic oppression and are described using fewer stylistic devices, which further emphasizes the memoir's focus on the subjectivity and role of LGBTQ people.

The experimental part of the study, conducted in the form of a survey experiment, confirmed the influence of representation on the attitude of readers both to the character and to the social group. Participants who were presented with texts with positive representation using allegories, metaphors and euphemisms, expressed on average significantly greater empathy, understanding and openness towards the character and the LGBTQ+ community as a whole, while negatively representing texts correlated with reduced empathy and trust, but even in these cases the presented image prompted reflection on social inequality and intolerance in general.

These results confirm that representation in literature, especially through the use of literary devices with high manipulative potential (metaphors, allegories, euphemisms), plays an

important role in shaping both the perception of literary and other characters and the public perception of marginalized groups in general. Literature not only reflects social norms, but also can influence them, so the approach to the depiction of LGBTQ+ characters is important for developing empathy and promoting social inclusion.

In conclusion, it should also be noted that the study confirms the initial idea of the influence of lexical and stylistic means of literary expression (representation in literature) on the perception of LGBT identities in literature and the attitude of the reader towards them. Thus, the use of metaphor, allegory and euphemism measurably affects the opinion of readers, demonstrating the potential of literature as a tool for social change.

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Kirjandus mängib tänapäeva ühiskonnas olulist rolli, eriti tegelaskujude esituse kujundamisel, kuivõrd hinnanguliselt 30% inimestest puutub kirjandusega kokku igapäevaselt (NielsenIQ, 2017). Selle kaudu avaldub kirjanduse tähtsus ka avaliku arvamuse kujundajana, eriti haavatavate rühmade, nagu LGBTQ+ kogukonna käsitlemisel (Ekmekçi, 2016). Leksikaalsete ja semantiliste kirjanduslike vahendite kasutamine võib oluliselt mõjutada lugeja hoiakuid käsitletava teema suhtes, mistõttu on nende kasutamise spetsiifika käsitlemine oluline.

Esiteks on määrava tähtsusega representatsioon ise – selle olemasolu, ulatus ja adekvaatsuse konkreetses teoses (Guskos & Nordmann, 2023). Kirjanduses on LGBTQ+ tegelaskujud sageli esitatud stereotüüpselt, mis võib tugevdada eelarvamusi ja kujundada negatiivseid hoiakuid selle sotsiaalse grupi suhtes lugejaskonnas (Guskos & Nordmann, 2023).

Käesolevas töös “LGBTQ+ Tegelaste Leksikaalne Stiililine Representatsioon (metafoorid, allegooria, eufemismid) tänapäeva Inglise Kirjanduses Darnell L. Moore'i „No Ashes in the Fire“ põhjal” analüüsitakse allegooriate, metafooride ja eufemismide spetsiifilist kasutust – ning nende rolli LGBTQ+ isikute kujutamisel kaasaegses ingliskeelses kirjanduses. Uurimist toetab juhtumiuuringuna Darnell L. Moore'i mälestusteraamat "No Ashes in the Fire".

Uurimistöö eesmärk on määratleda leksikaalse ja stilistilise esituse aspekte, mida kasutatakse tegelaskujude kujutamisel kirjanduses, ning hinnata nende võimalikku mõju lugejale. Keskseks fookuseks on leksikaalsete ja stilistiliste võtetena kasutatavad metafoorid, allegooriad ja eufemismid, mille kaudu püütakse esile tuua LGBTQ+ tegelaste kujutamise eripärasid ja probleeme kaasaegses kirjanduses Darnell L. Moore'i teose „No Ashes in the Fire“ näitel.

Uurimuse raames viiakse läbi võrdlev analüüs nimetatud keeleliste vahendite kasutuse kohta LGBTQ+ ja mitte-LGBT+ tegelaste kujutamisel, keskendudes sellele, kuidas kujutusviisid võivad mõjutada lugejate suhtumist nii üksiktegelastesse kui ka laiemalt neid esindavasse sotsiaalsesse gruppi, eeskätt noortesse, keda ilukirjandus käsitleb.

Töö koosneb sissejuhatusest ja kahest põhipeatükist. Sissejuhatuses antakse ülevaade representatsiooni mõistest ja selle tähtsusest meedias ja kirjanduses. Esimene peatükk on teoreetiline ning käsitleb LGBTQ+ esindatuse arengulugu kirjanduses. Lisaks uuritakse allegooriate, metafooride ja eufemismide tähtsust lugeja hoiakute kujundamise kontekstis. Erilist tähelepanu pööratakse nende troopide kasutamise spetsiifikat raamatus „No Ashes in the Fire“, analüüsides nii LGBTQ+ kui ka mitte-LGBT+ tegelaste kujutamist.

Teine peatükk on praktiline ning keskendub empiirilisele uurimusele, mille eesmärk on mõõta allegooriate, metafooride ja eufemismide mõju lugejate hoiakutele.

Uurimistulemused näitavad, et metafoorid, allegooriad ja eufemismid kirjanduses ei ole pelgalt stiilivõtted, vaid toimivad oluliste kognitiivsete ja emotsionaalsete tööriistadena, eriti LGBTQ+ kogemuse vahendamisel. Moore'i mälestusteraamatus aitavad need keelelised vahendid esile tuua tegelaste sisemisi konflikte, sotsiaalset marginaliseerumist ja identiteedi kujunemist, pakkudes sügavat ja empaatilist kujutust. Olulised järeldused on ka metafoori roll isikliku kogemuse kontseptualiseerimise viisina ning eriline suhe eufemismi ja strateegilise läbipaistmatuse vahel (Allan & Burrige, 1991). LGBT-tegelaste kujutamise puhul oli eriline ka allegooria kui struktuurikriitika ja vabanemise otsimise vahend.

Võrreldes mitte-LGBTQ+ tegelastega on LGBTQ+ tegelaskujud esitatud suurema emotsionaalse sügavuse ja keerukusega, kasutades enam kirjanduslikke vahendeid, mis rõhutavad nii sisemisi võitlusi kui ka ühiskondlikke pingeid. Eksperimentaalse uuringu tulemused kinnitavad, et positiivsed kirjanduslikud kujutised võivad soodustada empaatiat ja avatust LGBTQ+ inimeste suhtes, samas kui negatiivsed kujutised võivad vähendada empaatiat, kuid kutsuda esile refleksiooni sotsiaalse ebaõigluse üle. Kokkuvõttes kinnitavad leiud, et kirjandus suudab stililiste vahendite kaudu kujundada sotsiaalseid hoiakuid ning edendada kaasavat ja teadlikumat ühiskonda.

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