

душе, что годамиросло на ней, как «кора», как некое искажение, которое уродует лик подлинника.

3. «Смеющийся» Гоголь выразил в своих повестях представление о том, каким не должен быть человек и в чем заключаются его пороки.

4. Впервые в русской литературе Н. В. Гоголь утверждает принципы реалистического гротеска. С него начинается новый, реалистический этап в развитии русской сатиры.

5. Н. В. Гоголь — писатель комический, его стихия — смех: юмор, ирония, сатира.

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### **THE FRENCH AND THE BRITISH LANDMARKS IN DANIEL BROWN'S NOVEL «THE DA VINCI CODE»: FACT OR FICTION?**

The 2016 year has been proclaimed The Year of Culture in Belarus. Literature has always been an essential part of people's culture. When Daniel Brown's novel «The Da Vinci Code» was first published

in 2003, it swept the world and rapidly became one of the biggest bestselling books of all time. With over 60 million copies sold, the novel has been translated into 44 different languages, creating an international sensation. Fourteen years later it is still in the current Top Ten Thriller Books.

Let me cite the novel: «Shaped like an enormous horseshoe, the Louvre was the longest building in Europe, stretching farther than three Eiffel Towers laid end to end. Not even the million square feet of open plaza between the museum wings could challenge the majesty of the facade's breadth. Langdon had once walked the Louvre's entire perimeter, an astonishing three-mile journey.» [1, c. 34–35]

While reading the novel one can't help noticing the descriptive narrative dedicated to iconic sights in the French and the British capitals, the locations in Scotland, Italy and the USA, where the action of the book takes place. One of the Internet forum reviews goes like this: «I can't fathom someone being able to put this book down. Journey to Paris, London, and back in time with Leonardo da Vinci, Jesus Christ, and Mary Magdalene — read the da Vinci Code!»

The object of our research is the landmarks in France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which are mentioned and described in Daniel Brown's novel «The Da Vinci Code».

We hypothesise that all the landmarks on the territory of France and the UK mentioned and described in the novel really exist and are depicted accurately.

To prove or disprove the hypothesis we had to accomplish the following tasks:

- to read the novel in the original and interview a person who admires it and is a connoisseur;
- to pick out the descriptive passages with the landmarks on the territory of France and the UK from the book;
- to make a list of the sights and range them according to the number of words used in their description;
- to find proof of their existence in reality;
- to make a model of Robert Langdon and Sophie Neveu's approximate itinerary in France and the UK.

While conducting the research we resort to such techniques as purposive sampling, analysing, interviewing, ranging, calculating and modelling.

«I've been to London three times and even spent two weeks there once. Nevertheless, I can't boast of having visited all the sights that

constituted our experimental bulk. Let alone the landmarks in Paris, where I stayed only for two days», it has been a quotation from the interview with my English teacher Tamara Vladimirovna Kulesh, a person who admires the novel and is a connoisseur.

In my English teacher's view, the philosophy of Dan Brown's masterpiece makes the novel alongside our research on the landmarks in France and the UK, described in the novel topical and instructive.

Using purposive sampling we found 60 pieces of descriptive narrative which contained the following 18 landmarks in Paris:

- The Louvre Museum. The Museum's Grand Gallery. The Louvre's Pyramid .The Inverted Pyramid;
- The Ritz Hotel in Paris. The U.S. Embassy in Paris;
- Rue La Bruyere. The Church of Saint-Sulpice;
- The Opera House. Place Vendôme. Ark du Carrousel. Place du Carrousel;
- The Musee d'Orsay. Musee du Jeu de Paume. The Pompidu Centre;
- Tuileries Gardens. Rue de Rivoli;
- Champs-Elysees. The Eiffel Tower. Saint-Lazare Station;
- The Depository Bank of Zurich. The Bois de Boulogne;
- Chateau Villette. Le Bourget Airport.

We ranged the landmarks according to the quantity of words they contained.

By means of purposive sampling we found 38 pieces of descriptive narrative which contained the following 7 landmarks in the UK:

- Biggin Hill Airport in Kent;
- Fleet Street;
- The Temple Church;
- The British Airways London Eye;
- St. James's Park;
- Westminster Abbey and Rosslyn Chapel.

They have been ranged according to the quantity of words they contained.

Westminster Abbey in London (2139 words) and the Louvre Museum in Paris (1220 words) turned out to be at the top of the lists.

We have proved the hypothesis of our research only in its first part that all the landmarks of our experimental bulk exist in reality by means of interviewing a connoisseur and turning to books and Internet resources. Moreover, making use of Google maps, we traced Robert Langdon and Sophie Neveu's approximate itineraries first in France and then in the UK.

We did find some inaccuracies in the descriptions of architecture belonging to our experimental corpus. The first one is about the 666 glass panels of the Louvre's Pyramid: It consists of 603 rhombus-shaped and 70 triangular glass segments [4]. 603 and 70 makes 673, but not 666 as the novel goes.

The second discrepancy concerns the height of the British Airways London Eye. According to the book the wheel is 500 feet high which makes 152m and 40 cm. The info on the in-flight mini guide to the London Eye reads that the height of the structure is 135 metres. [2, c. 2] So in «The Da Vinci Code» the British Airways London Eye is 17 metres and 40 centimetres taller than in reality.

The third inaccuracy discovered in the process of our study is connected with Arc du Carrousel and the orgiastic rituals once held there. We have found out that the term «carrousel» meaning «little war» comes from the custom of staging military shows or exercises mainly for the delight of the royals [5]. In terms of the historical data, mentioned above, the word orgiastic sounds inappropriate, dubious and misleading.

The fourth and the fifth inaccuracies deal with the Inverted Pyramid. In accordance with Source 6 of our bibliography, the tip of the Inverted Pyramid is suspended 4,5 feet (13, 716 metres) above the floor, but not 6 feet (18, 288 metres), as the novel reads. The stone pyramid below The Inverted Pyramid is merely sitting on top of the floor and does not really extend below the floor level (it was indeed so designed that it can be slid aside when the floor is being cleaned) [3].

All the landmarks of our experimental bulk do exist in reality and we didn't reveal any other discrepancies in their descriptions except for the ones, mentioned above. I guess, the inaccuracies might have occurred due to artistic license and the literary usage of hyperbole.

«The Da Vinci Code» by Daniel Brown is a must read. It's a book that broadens our horizons and heightens our senses. The novel has inspired a lot of «The Da Vinci» tours which cost, believe it or not, around nine thousand Euros. So I can say that my research has spared me a great deal of money.

The current research is practically oriented: the 98-piece experimental corpus can help real and potential readers estimate the richness and diversity of the author's outlook and focus on the personages' feelings, as the majority of the sights are described from their personal point of view revealing their mood and state of mind. Besides, we have designed a handbook for tourists wishing to explore the French

and the British sights, mentioned in the novel. The handbook contains my English teacher and supervisor's personal photos.

In terms of the geographical, historical and architectural data, contained in the novel's narrative, Daniel Brown's novel «The Da Vinci Code» may well be considered an educational tour of France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

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