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**PHONETIC MOTIVATION AS A FOUNDATION
FOR LITERARY NEOLOGISMS
(BASED ON R. DAHL'S FAIRY TALE "THE BFG")**

Abstract

Inventing a literary character's language entails a task of creating new words that may be understood by the reader without explaining or defining them. To correctly perceive the content of the text full of new words, the reader has only the motivated sound shape of the words to rely on, and the connotative associations the sound shapes may have. The phonetic motivation of a new word should involve both (English) language specific word formation strategies and (English) language specific sound – meaning relations, as well as universally understandable sound symbolism. The analysis of the sound form and the contextual meaning of neologisms in R. Dahl's fairy tale show the assumption to be true, especially in respect to depicting size, iteration and emotional attitude, as well as to imitating sounds. Iconicity of the literary neologisms is further established in a series of psycholinguistic perceptual experiments with speakers of English and Russian as informants.

Keywords: literary neologisms, phonetic motivation, sound symbolism, sound imitation, perceptual experiment.