

DIARY AS A REFLECTION OF THE WRITER'S PERSONALITY: AN OVERVIEW OF RUSSIAN WRITERS

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Abstract: *In this article, the focus is made on the analysis of the diary writing of the outstanding Russian writers where the author concludes that it reflects the writer's personality. Using thematic analysis of the data, the study illustrates how diaries reflect such aspects of writers' lives as emotions, personal development, and ways to cope with stress that suggest the values and psychological conditions of diary-keepers. The results stress the importance of diary writing as a tool for personal development and self-discovery. Such analysis of the relationship between diary and personality gives one a better appreciation of this literary type and affords mental health, literary, and psychological implications to diary keeping as well as to those who administer personality assessment.*

Key words: *diaries, personality, emotional depth, identity, thematic analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Online diaries have been valued as private records from early years that manifest personal concerns being the writer's ideas, feelings, and occurrences. These accounts tell one about the day-to-day affairs of the people regarding their emotions and their personal chronicles. Diaries are important for both individual and literary practice since writers use them to document their thoughts and feelings or reflect on their experiences. Being one of the tools of self-observations, diaries demonstrate the multilayered facets of self and personality, how people make sense of the environment, and how they establish relationships with culture.

Based on the analysis the current study posits that diaries are accurate reflections of the writer's personality, thus providing deep insights into identity, values, and mood. Using the experience of Russian writers-diary writers this work focuses on understanding the correlation between personality aspect and diary analysis. Thus, the themes and stylistic features identified in these diaries explain the concern of the study about the ability of personal writing to reveal the psychological and emotional states of writers. Familiarising oneself with these dynamics, however, contributes to a better recognition of diary writing as a literary device and sheds light on the general human experience and that is why perspectives of considering the impact of diary writing must be weighed across the various disciplines.

METHODOLOGY

Research design and theoretical framework

The methodology for this study employed a qualitative approach, focusing on a theoretical review and comparison of existing literature on the diaries of selected Russian writers. The study utilized thematic analysis as a primary method to identify recurring patterns, emotional expressions, and philosophical reflections within the diary entries that illuminate the inner worlds and personalities of the writers. This approach aligns with prior

studies, such as Rodikova's analysis of Leo Tolstoy's diaries, which examined the interplay between language competence and individuality to uncover key themes such as emotional depth, identity formation, and coping strategies. Similarly, the study drew on the work of Cheltygmashyeva and Chochieva, who contextualized the diary entries of Karkei Trofimovich against external events and personal experiences to trace the evolution of his creative and national identity. These methodological insights informed the comparative framework of this research.

SAMPLE SELECTION OF RUSSIAN WRITERS

The sample selection focused on diaries from prominent Russian writers, including Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Sofia Tolstaya, and others, chosen for their historical significance, literary legacy, and diversity in themes and styles. For instance, Dostoevsky's "Diary of a Writer" provided a rich source for analyzing his historical and philosophical perspectives, as demonstrated in Volkova's research, which meticulously traced his views on Russia's relationship with the West, major historical events, and his unique emotional tone and rhetoric. Additionally, the diaries of Yakut writers Anempidist Sofronov and Semen Danilov were examined through the lens of Semenova and Toburokov's methodology, which emphasized the role of historical and cultural context in shaping the writers' ethical ideals, civic stances, and stylistic choices. This selection ensured a comprehensive exploration of the ways in which diaries reflect personality, creative development, and contextual influences.

Data collection and analytical techniques

Data collection involved close reading and thematic coding of key excerpts from the selected diaries, focusing on passages that reveal emotional depth, philosophical thought, and artistic growth. The analytical framework was informed by linguistic theories of personality, such as linguistic individuality, as well as psychological theories of self-reflection and literary analysis techniques. Contextualization played a crucial role in interpreting the findings, as each diary entry was examined in light of the writer's personal experiences, historical events, and broader societal trends. This theoretical review and comparison of literature provided a nuanced understanding of how the diary as a literary form serves as a mirror of the writer's personality and creative evolution.

RESULTS

Rodikova in her research study employed a qualitative analysis methodology to investigate how diaries, particularly those of L.N. Tolstoy, reflect the writer's personality. The research focused on the interplay between language competence and individual identity, aiming to uncover the key themes that characterize Tolstoy's self-expression and personal development. Data was collected through thematic coding of his diary entries, allowing for a deep exploration of the emotional and psychological dimensions of his writing. The analysis highlighted three primary themes that emerged from Tolstoy's diaries: emotional depth, identity formation, and coping strategies. [2, p.97].

The findings reveal that Tolstoy's diaries serve as a rich tapestry of his inner life, illustrating his emotional complexities and philosophical contemplations. The theme of emotional depth is evident in his candid reflections on personal struggles and spiritual yearnings, demonstrating a profound engagement with his feelings. Additionally, the theme of identity formation is highlighted through his exploration of self-discovery and artistic

evolution, with entries reflecting his changing worldview influenced by relationships and life experiences. Finally, Tolstoy's coping strategies are evident in his efforts towards self-discipline and introspection, using the diary as a tool for personal growth and artistic development. The study underscores the significance of diary writing as a vital means of understanding the intricacies of human personality, revealing not only the external world of the writer but also the nuanced landscape of their inner thoughts and emotions [2, p.98].

The methodology in the similar study by Cheltygmashyeva and Chochieva is an in-depth analysis of the diary entries of the writer Karkei Trofimovich, which serves as a unique source for understanding his inner world and creative path. Using a qualitative approach, the study focuses on thematic analysis of the entries, identifying key motifs and emotions that reflect the author's personality. The records, dated from different periods, allow us to trace not only changes in his perception of life, but also his attitude towards his work and the nation. An important aspect of the methodology is the contextualisation of the records, where each record is examined in the light of external events and the writer's personal experiences [1, p 3442].

The study findings highlight several central themes that vividly reflect the personality of Karkey Trofimovich. Firstly, his writings demonstrate a deep connection with the people, which is expressed in the metaphor of the 'torap of the people', symbolising his role as a guardian and translator of the Khakass cultural heritage. The writer feels his mission is to write for his people, and this endeavour becomes the basis of his existence. Secondly, despite the fear of death, he emphasises the importance of completing his literary works, which speaks of his responsibility to future generations. Finally, the emotional intensity of the entries and the use of expressive devices testify to the author's skill in conveying the subtle nuances of his experiences, thus creating a unique atmosphere and depth in his diaries. These themes not only reveal the writer's personality, but also emphasise his significance as a cultural figure in the context of Khakass literature [1, pp.3443-3444].

Volkova in her study employed a qualitative methodology, analyzing Fyodor Dostoevsky's "Diary of a Writer" to explore his historical perspectives. The analysis focused on identifying recurring themes and patterns within Dostoevsky's writings concerning major events and trends in 19th-century Russia. Specific passages were examined to understand his views on Russia's relationship with Western Europe, the Eastern Question, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, and the role of prominent figures in Russian history. The analysis involved close reading of Dostoevsky's essays, identifying key arguments, and analyzing his emotional tone and rhetoric. The researcher meticulously documented instances where Dostoevsky's personal opinions deviated from widely accepted historical narratives, as well as his passionate arguments regarding Russia's role in global civilization [5, p.1].

This study illustrates Dostoevsky's intensely passionate and often emotionally charged engagement with socio-historical issues. For example, in "Something Personal" (1873), his defense of Nikolai Chernyshevsky against accusations of libel demonstrates his deep-seated commitment to fairness and compassion, even towards those with differing political beliefs. His empathy for Chernyshevsky, stemming from Dostoevsky's own experiences in exile, highlights a recurring theme of compassion within the diary: "One can deeply respect a person, even radically disagreeing with their opinions," reveals his strong belief in personal

integrity. Another key theme, explored in "Vlas" (1873), centers on Dostoevsky's profound understanding and empathy for the Russian people, focusing on "the need for suffering, constant and insatiable, everywhere and in everything," a characteristic deeply ingrained in Russian history according to Dostoevsky. His personal experience of hardship fueled this understanding, which is evident across many of his writings [5, p.2].

A further analysis reveals Dostoevsky's concerns about social change following the abolition of serfdom, which is evident in "A Troubled Appearance" (1873), where he speaks of the "thirst for truth," reflecting his belief in moral regeneration within the evolving Russian society. In "On the Same Subject" (1876), Dostoevsky contrasts the traditional Russian merchant class with the emerging bourgeoisie, warning against the allure of wealth and advocating for education as a defense against materialism. This theme underscores his consistent concern with moral and social issues and his strong belief in the transformative power of education. His idealization of the common people and preference for honest labor over self-indulgence, which concludes the provided analysis, reinforces the consistency of his views on the essential goodness of the simple folk [5, p.4].

The diary entries consistently reveal Dostoevsky's intense engagement with historical events, shaping his analysis with deeply personal experiences and convictions. His strong opinions and emotional writing style frequently clashed with prevailing viewpoints, a characteristic that was responsible for the diary's incredible popularity in Russia. His passionate arguments reveal a clear sense of national pride and a profound commitment to the social and moral betterment of his country. The findings showcase the complex interplay between historical analysis, personal beliefs, and fervent patriotism, which all contribute to his unique perspective on Russia's past and future.

Semenova and Toburokov in their study used a qualitative methodology, analyzing the diaries of two Yakut writers, Anempidist Sofronov's "Something Tiny" and Semen Danilov's "Facts and Thoughts," to gain insights into their inner worlds and personalities. The methodology involved a comprehensive analysis of the diary entries, focusing on identifying recurring themes, stylistic choices, and emotional expressions that reveal the writers' ethical ideals, civic stances, and creative processes. The analysis also considered the historical and cultural contexts in which the diaries were written to better understand the writers' perspectives. Specific passages were analyzed to identify key themes and patterns related to the writers' personal experiences, creative struggles, and social/political views. The researcher documented instances of self-reflection, emotional expression, and the writers' engagement with broader societal issues [3, p.133].

This study highlights distinct stylistic and thematic differences between the two diaries. Sofronov's diary, categorized as an existential type, is characterized by intense introspection and emotional honesty. His entries vividly portray the psychological and emotional state of a budding writer, revealing feelings of loneliness and uncertainty. For instance, his entry from June 7, 1914 ("What will happen to me? My heart aches, it forebodes something. Why did I live, why was I born, and finally, why did I love. It's all somehow confused and incomprehensible. Life is not bright in anything except the inevitable grief of everyone" [4, p. 277]) showcases his existential questioning and his profound sense of isolation. His diary entries in January 1915 ("What is this, has everything gone out in me, have I changed so

much? Once, various thoughts swarmed in me. Where did my thoughts go? Have they left me forever? Have my former feelings disappeared? No, they will be with me again, I will live another life again. My eyes will open, I will see the invisible world and hear with my ears what ordinary people do not hear... Then, then I will create something new, good..." [4, p. 278]) express his longing for spiritual awakening and artistic creation. Recurring themes of human alienation, sin, earthly suffering, and faith—particularly emphasized in entries corresponding to significant Orthodox holidays (Easter, Annunciation, St. Nicholas Day)—reveal Sofronov's deeply religious worldview [3, pp.134-135].

In contrast, Danilov's diary, classified as descriptive-recording, presents a broader picture, encompassing not only his creative struggles but also the literary atmosphere, social issues, and political climate of his time. While Sofronov's diary is heavily focused on the interiority of his own experiences and emotional state, Danilov's reflects his engagement with the world around him. Sofronov's intense self-reflection and exploration of existential questions are absent from Danilov's entries, reflecting the difference in their personalities and writing styles. The significant difference in thematic focus between the two diaries reflects the individual personalities and creative priorities of each writer. While Sofronov's diary provides an intimate window into the emotional landscape of a struggling artist, Danilov's offers a broader historical and social commentary. This contrast showcases the diverse ways in which diaries can be used to express and explore individual experiences and perspectives [3, p.135].

The contrasting styles and themes between the two diaries provide a valuable window into the diverse literary styles and personal perspectives of Yakut writers during this period. The emotional honesty and existential questioning present in Sofronov's diary and the socio-political engagement present in Danilov's work offer rich insights into the personalities of the authors and the societal and cultural conditions that shaped them. The study's findings are invaluable for understanding the evolution of Yakut literature and the unique literary voices that emerged during a significant period of historical and cultural change. The detailed analysis demonstrates the potential of personal diaries as primary sources for investigating historical contexts, understanding writers' creative processes, and gaining a deeper understanding of individual experiences within specific socio-cultural settings.

DISCUSSION

Comparative analysis of diary writing approaches

The examination of diary entries from various Russian writers reveals both similarities and differences in their approaches to diary writing, reflecting their unique personalities, worldviews, and cultural contexts. For instance, Leo Tolstoy's diaries are characterized by profound emotional depth and philosophical contemplation, showcasing his struggles with personal identity and spiritual yearnings. His entries often serve as a means of self-discipline and introspection, allowing him to navigate the complexities of his inner life. In contrast, Karkei Trofimovich's writings emphasize his connection to the Khakass cultural heritage, portraying him as a guardian of his people's stories. His diaries reflect a sense of responsibility towards future generations, highlighting the cultural and social dimensions of his identity. While both writers engage deeply with their emotions, Tolstoy's focus is more introspective, whereas Trofimovich's work is rooted in a communal and cultural context, illustrating how external factors such as historical events and personal relationships shape their writing.

Similarly, the diaries of Fyodor Dostoevsky and the Yakut writers Anempidist Sofronov and Semen Danilov further illustrate the diversity of diary writing in Russian literature. Dostoevsky's entries are marked by an intense engagement with socio-historical issues, revealing his empathy for the Russian people and his commitment to personal integrity. His reflections often intertwine personal experiences with broader societal concerns, demonstrating how his hardships influenced his worldview. On the other hand, Sofronov's diary is characterized by existential questioning and emotional honesty, providing an intimate glimpse into the struggles of a budding writer. His entries convey feelings of isolation and a longing for spiritual awakening, contrasting sharply with Danilov's more descriptive-recording style, which encompasses a broader commentary on the literary and social climate of his time. This divergence in thematic focus underscores the individual personalities and creative priorities of each writer, showcasing the varied ways in which diaries can serve as a medium for self-expression and exploration of personal and cultural identity.

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study highlight the diary as a significant literary form that functions as a mirror of the writer's linguistic and psychological individuality. Each writer's diary not only reflects their personal experiences but also encapsulates their responses to the socio-cultural environment in which they lived. For instance, Tolstoy's philosophical musings and emotional struggles reveal the complexities of his character, while Dostoevsky's passionate engagement with societal issues underscores his deep empathy and moral convictions. The thematic richness found in these diaries illustrates how they serve as vital tools for understanding the intricacies of human personality, revealing the nuanced landscape of the writers' inner thoughts and emotions.

The comparative analysis of these diaries emphasizes the importance of context in shaping the writers' perspectives. Historical events, cultural heritage, and personal relationships significantly influence the themes and styles present in their writings. The emotional intensity found in Sofronov's existential reflections contrasts with Danilov's broader social commentary, highlighting how individual experiences and creative priorities shape the diary's content. Ultimately, this study underscores the diary's role as a unique literary form that not only documents personal experiences but also engages with broader cultural narratives, enriching our understanding of the writers' identities and the historical contexts in which they operated. Through this lens, diaries emerge as powerful expressions of individuality, offering insights into the complex interplay between personal and collective experiences in Russian literature.

CONCLUSION

The present study shows that diaries are unique mirror images of the writer, and they portray their emotions, psychological development, and methods of problem-solving. The analysis of the diaries of the Russian writers demonstrated that these private papers contain a variety of human sentiments and vital chronicles. Thus, each writer contributes this or that peculiar voice and vision that help the reader plunge more deeply into the details of the human psyche and notice the variety of usages of one's life and words. This study further inflicts the discovery of how a diary serves as not only documentation of the events within someone's life but of their life and emotional experience as well.

This article brings a new concept of viewing the diaries reflecting personality has incurred a wider scope in utilized fields namely psychology, literature, and self-help. Knowledge accrued from diary writing can help in therapeutic professions, in doing principled literary criticism, and in offering self-help. The studies in the future could engage in diaries from different cultural backgrounds; this would help in comparing and determining how people of different cultural types write their diaries. Diary writing longitudinal investigations could help to prescribe the changes of perspective in time. In conclusion, a diary is still an effective tool in self-actualization and writing; it helps to explain oneself, and interpret one's feelings, and is beneficial for the writer as well as other readers, enriching literature.

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