Moral Code of a Person: Cognitive Approach to Interpretation of R. Kipling's "If"

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Abstract

The paper reveals the moral code, extolled in the renowned Kipling's poem "If" by means of cognitive interpretation. The author's message containing his idea of moral code is unraveled in minimum meaningful spaces of the poem (usually one or two lines), which are analyzed in depth. Each space highlights the trajector features of character and the corresponding reference frames (domains), which serve as background for their understanding. The peculiarity of moral concepts consists in the fact that they are based on the evaluative component and therefore they form binary oppositions. The antagonist for the moral concept within such opposition serves as its benchmark, since the essence of a moral value is revealed only when it is contrasted to its opposite, therefore the paper makes an attempt of alignment trajector domains with the benchmarks. In order to delve into the Kipling's understanding of moral code the distinguished ethical values were arranged in the form of field model. The nucleus of the model comprises most frequently actualized values from the moral code, while periphery includes values with lower rate of actualization. Along with cognitive analyses of Kipling's moral doctrine the paper highlights the peculiarities of poetic narration, which include abstract dictum, use of subjunctive mood and symbolism. Particular attention is also paid to the use of personification and metaphor.

Keywords: R. Kipling, moral code, character feature, ethical value

INTRODUCTION

One of the salient aspects of Kipling's literary heritage along with imperialism and colonialism is his focus on human values that underlie moral principles. Its quintessence is revealed in his effervescent poem "If", published in 1910 in the collection of stories "Rewards and Fairies" in the chapter "Brother Square Toes". Originally meant to be the testament of the writer to his beloved son, it ultimately appeared to become the code of behavior bestowed upon the whole humanity. "*It is in 'If' that his ethical code is most resonantly expressed* (Mathhews, 1971, 338).

Unlike in his many other literary works in "If" Kipling takes the mantle of moral mentor providing the readers with the code of conduct, which highly correlates with Christian norms of behavior. The inspiration for the characteristics of an ideal person, which he describes within the framework of Muscular Christianity, was taken from Leander Starr Jameson, who failed in his raid in 1865-1896 against the South African Republic. As Longford (1982) mentions "*Jameson was later to be the inspiration and hero of Rudyard Kipling's poem If…*". R. Kipling himself acknowledges this fact in his autobiographical work "Something of myself": "*Among the verses in Rewards was one set called "If", which escaped from the book, and for a while ran about the world… They were drawn from Jameson's character, and contained counsels of perfection most easy to give*" (Kipling, 1990, 146).

It's worth mentioning that for the time being there exists a number of studies, dedicated to the analysis of Kipling's "If" from different approaches and with the use of different methodological apparatus. Having analyzed the recent researches, we came to the conclusion that the subjects of investigation were different: stylistic devices and expressive means, which contribute to conveyance of the author's message (Grasso, 2009; Memon, Tunio & Awan, 2021); poet's world outlook (Sharma, 2019); correlation of values extolled in the poem with the religious and philosophic world picture (in particular with the Hindu Bhagavad Gita concept of *sthitapragna*, (Shastry, 2019)); poem's intertextuality (Kemp, 1998). It should be noted that the subject of research sometimes was quite unusual, like in (Graham, 2016), where a hypothetical supplement to Rudyard Kipling's poem "If", scripted by the judge during the Jacob Zuma rape trial in 2006, is analyzed. Particular attention is paid to theoretical and practical peculiarities in translation of "If" (Weissbrod, 2009; Veretelnyk, 2016). There are studies in which Kipling's "If" was not the subject of research by itself but was analyzed for formulating the basic principles of moral psychology of self-belief (Smith, 2006). The value of "If" in the writer's literary legacy is not overestimated, when we say that it became a 'landmark' of his philosophy and outlook. It is proved by the fact, that the name of this poem is included in the heading of a fundamental book "If: The Untold Story of Kipling's American Years"(Jasanoff, 2019), dedicated to the author's life and literary estate.

Considering abundant scope of the multifaced studies of Kipling's "If", we posit that at least one thing remains away from the focus of scientific inquisition: the reconstruction of the moral code, embedded in the poem within the framework of the cognitive paradigm.

The purpose of the given paper is to delve into the moral code of Kipling's ethical doctrine by means of cognitive interpretation of his renowned poem "If" and to unravel the conceptual domains that underlie his understanding of human values.

In order to achieve the aim of the study it is necessary to carry out the following objectives:

- to single out the traits of character, which are revealed in the stanzas of the poem;
- to relate them to the corresponding domains (moral concepts);
- to establish the antagonistic reference frames, against which the moral values are understood in the context of the poem;
- to reveal the binary character of values interconnection;
- to create field model of values, actualized in the verse.

The object of research is Kipling's landmark poem "If", while the subject of investigation is the moral code, actualized in its stanzas.

The realization of the research goal is achieved by means of field stratification methodology. It entails determination of the human qualities, embedded in the lines of the poem and their arrangement in the field model. Throughout the whole poem each element of ethical code is revealed in abstracts, consisting out of one or two lines, therefore these fragments will be considered as minimum pieces of textual analysis. Each minimum piece unravels the author's vision of a human moral trait, which is objectified within the space of the verse. From the prerequisites of cognitive approach each trait is actualized in mind in relation to a certain reference frame – domain. Therefore, the steps of cognitive analysis will be the following: distinguishing the actualized moral feature; relating it to the corresponding reference frame (domain); unravelling the antagonistic benchmark trait (which can be expressed in the verse explicitly and implicitly); interpretation of the interconnections among values; arranging the values in the field model according to the principle of nucleus / periphery stratification. We posit that employment of field stratification method is productive for cognitive interpretation of "If", since it enables to determine and stratify R. Kipling's moral code, revealed in the poem, into several layers: the most essential features form the nucleus, while the less essential ones constitute the periphery. The underlying principle of field stratification is based on the quantity of actualization cases of the particular concepts, which will be discussed further in details.

COGNITIVE INTERPRETATION OF KIPLING'S "IF"

Analysis of the minimum pieces presupposes highlighting the target character trait that is emphasized on. We call this trait 'trajector trait', as it occupies salient position in the conceptual space of the verse. The trajector trait on the cognitive level is understood against certain informational background (reference frame), which serves as a conceptual domain. Under the term domain we understand a concept, the knowledge of which is necessary to understand the target concept (idea) – moral trait, brought up by the author in the poem. As the analysis proved the domains for character features are moral values (concepts) that underlie them. Trajector traits and their domains are expressed either explicitly in the poetic space of the verse or on the level of implication and they are contrasted to their opposites – benchmarks. Within the framework of the given paper in sake of avoiding ambiguity we single out the character traits, which have adjectival lexicalization, while the names of conceptual domains have nominal character and are capitalized. To illustrate this thought, consider the following example. For instance, the trajector trait, which is expressed in a poem line can be "good-wishing". It is understood by the reader against the domain KINDNESS, as awareness of kindness is essential for understanding this feature. The benchmark in this example is EVIL as one cannot understand what is good without knowledge of what is bad.

Now we proceed to cognitive interpretation of the poem itself. The opening very first lines reveal the first traits of character, which build up R. Kipling's moral code:

> *If you can keep your head when all about you*
> *Are losing theirs and blaming it on you.*

"Keeping one's head" is defined as the ability to stay calm despite great difficulties. Therefore, the character traits, which are referred to in this case are "calm", "peaceful", "unruffled", "nerveless". The corresponding underlying conceptual domain is COMPOSURE. The benchmark characters, objectified by the antithesis are "nervous", "angry" and "irritable", which all belong to the domain ANGER.

> *If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,*
> *But make allowance for their doubting too*

In the following two lines "being confident", "convinced" and "faithful" is opposed to being "doubtful", "distrustful" and "suspicious". The positive features are understood against the domain FAITH, while the antagonistic domain is DOUBT. Moreover, in these line R. Kipling airs one more important idea that confidence in oneself should not be blind and unsusceptible to criticism from the others,

therefore the other moral characteristic, extolled in these lines is "being conceding", that is being able again and again put at question one's rightness for the sake of verification.

> *If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,*

This line highlights PATIENCE as an integral part of moral code that is contrasted to ANXIETY, which is the benchmark for "being able to wait". It is immediately followed by:

> *Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,*

Since inability to wait for the result often forces a person into achieving it in illegal ways, which in this line are generalized by the word *lie*, poet puts these two traits in the complementary position. In this piece R. Kipling points out to not only being honest in general, not subsiding to lies, but also to the necessity not to lie back if the person becomes lied about, that is not to take revenge. Therefore, the underlying conceptual domains are HONESTY and MERCY. The benchmark traits are "lying", "revengeful", while LIE and VENGEANCE are benchmark domains. The idea of being unrevengeful finds its continuation in the following piece:

> *Or being hated, don't give way to hating*

Here the author asserts the greatest virtue of a person – "being kind" – the trait which is understood against the concept GOOD. But since R. Kipling in the abovementioned line appeals not to the general good, the conceptual domain may be narrowed to BENEVOLENCE. Importantly, this line, like the previous one, also underlines "being kind" and "not doing bad in return" even though the person is treated reversely. This is possible if one doesn't take grudge upon his offender. The benchmark for these traits is "spiteful" within the domain MALEVOLENCE.

> *And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise*

The final line of the stanza summarizes the necessary condition for all abovementioned – "being modest and simple" in your ways. Without HUMILITY and SIMPLICITY all the aforementioned virtues would lose sense, since PRIDE and VANITY (the benchmarks) destroy all the spiritual gainings.

The next stanza makes a transition from speculative plane to the action plane. The opening lines are arranged in a way that a proposition is followed by a counter proposition (Sharma, 2019):

> *If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;*
> *If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim*

They unravel the author's idea about not being passive and that mere contemplation is not enough, it should yield real actions. One should not be overwhelmed only with thoughts and stay in servitude of his dreams. The landmark character, preached in these lines is "efficient" and it is understood within the domain DEEDS, while the benchmark trait is "pensive" within the domain CONTEMPLATION. R. Kipling contrasts active life position to passive dreaming. It's worth saying that starting from the next piece there is no longer explicit opposition of landmark virtues with benchmark vices, expressed by antonymic lexical units. This, though, does not mean that the lines do not express such oppositions, but rather hints that the poet leaves their understanding to the background life experience of the readers.

> *If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster*
> *And treat those two impostors just the same*

The target feature articulated in this piece is "phlegmatic" in the positive sense of being not carried away by success, as well as not being frustrated by failures. The even deeper target feature might be "wise", which enables understanding that everything in life is transient. The domains EQUANIMITY and WISDOM do not have explicit benchmarks, like in the first stanza, but they are rather contrasted to the absence of such qualities. It should be noted here Kipling uses metaphorical personification of dreams (which are Masters), and Triumph with Disaster (which are impostors) that contributes to understanding of his message. Metaphorical comparisons operate like 'bridges' on the cognitive level joining two different concepts, which on the associative level have some common features. The poet implores that dream should not be one's master – that is one shouldn't be controlled by his dreams (as masters normally control and rule their servants). Triumph and Disaster are called impostors (on the basis of disguising themselves), as they 'lie' to a person by their inconstancy (Memon & Tunio, 2021). Neither triumph nor disaster can be permanent and absolute in philosophic understanding, but they rather interchange one another, so one shouldn't be carried away by any of them. Moreover, in the long run, triumph can appear to be a disaster and vice versa.

The landmark "being unruffled", expressed in the previous piece, further evolves in the next lines:

> *If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken*
> *Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools*

This message reaches its height in the next piece, which can be understood against the reference frame of STOICISM:

> *Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,*
> *And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools,*

Even when not only words of a person were corrupted but also all the results of his actions were demolished, a person needs to remain calm. To the landmark "being unruffled" Kipling adds features "endurable" and "persistent", which are deedful revelation of stoicism. The actualized ethical values that lie behind these features are domains COMPOSURE, FORTITUDE, STOICISM and PERSEVERANCE. Stoic spirit of the stanza is also maintained by employing metaphor 'worn-out tools' (Memon & Tunio, 2021), which are obviously not the building instruments but the spiritual forces of a person, which like real material tools can have certain durability and capability, therefore they can be worn-out or broken. High moral tension of the end of the second stanza finds it further rise and achieves its climax in the third stanza:

> *If you can make one heap of all your winnings*
> *And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss.*

Using the gambling metaphor (Grasso, 2009) R. Kipling asserts not blind reckless risk but rather the ability not to be too bound to one's achievements and not to be afraid to lose everything for the sake of the higher goal. Therefore, the target feature is "bold" rather than "adventurous", which is objectified against the conceptual domain DARING. Next line:

> *And lose, and start again at your beginnings*

reiterates stoic spirit, ability to take the "second go" (Sharma, 2019), accentuating on the target features "persistent", "endurable" that are the result of FORTITUDE, which is emphasized by NON-COMPLAINING:

> *And never breathe a word about your loss.*

The next piece expresses the climax of spiritual tension

> *If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew*
> *To serve your turn long after they are gone*
> *And so hold on when there is nothing in you*
> *Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'*

Fortitude is amplified by the will-power and author's idea is understood within the domain WILL, since it becomes the kernel of personality, exhorting him to action. Stoicism, which overwhelms the whole verse, emphasizes the ideas of Muscular Christianity, which according to (Shastry, 2019) had a very strong effect on him.

> *In many ways, Rudyard Kipling's concept of the Empire is similar to a popular concept in the Victorian Era, i.e. Muscular Christianity. In its purest form, Muscular Christianity emphasized upon humanitarian values, as opposed to a 'might–is–right' policy that some imperialists believed in* (ibid).

It's worth mentioning that Muscular Christianity conception is sustained by the stylistic device of personification, Will in particular. As stated in (Memon & Tunio, 2021) Will acts as an inner force of a person, embedded in his soul by God that governs and gives orders.

The final stanza changes its mood from overcoming deprivation and adversities to being able to stand up to seeming success in life, which sometimes appears to be even more difficult:

> If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,

The target feature here is "being tenacious" and "convinced in one's own beliefs", while the following line suggests "being modest and non-sophisticated":

> Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch

The domains HUMILITY and SIMLICITY, which entail character "being meek" form a certain lining of the poem, since these ideas were expressed in the first stanza, but in the final stanza they are emphasized even more vividly. The next line:

> If all men count with you, but none too much

preserves the implication that seeming success should not dazzle and one should not care about achieving respect and recognition among 'crowds' of people.

The following lines:

> *If you can fill the unforgiving minute*
> *With sixty seconds' worth of distance run*

reiterate the idea of deedful, not merely speculative life, because all the virtues are dead if they do not yield proper actions. And the final piece ultimately brings to the denouement of the diction:

> *Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,*
> *And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son.*

In these lines, which the poet addresses both to his son and all humanity (Sharma, 2019) R. Kipling imparts that having all the above mentioned virtuous attributes, one can become the triumphant 'host' of the Earth, which is though not the ultimate goal. What really matters is that one will become a Human from the capital letter as an embodiment of humanity and morality, which is higher than all the worldly material pursuits and achievements. Therefore, the final lines infer the paramount target feature of the whole poem – "humane", which is projected upon the domain HUMANIZM that is understood as a repository of virtues, image and likeness of God. The generalized results of cognitive interpretation are given in the Table 1.

Table 1: Constituents of ethical code in Kipling's "If"

Poem lines	Trajector character	Domain (reference frame)
If you can keep your head when all about you Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,	calm unruffled	COMPOSURE
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, But make allowance for their doubting too	convinced faithful open-minded	FAITH CONCEDING
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,	patient	PATIENCE
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,	honest unrevengeful	HONESTY MERCY
Or being hated, don't give way to hating	kind unrevengeful	BENEVOLENCE MERCY
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise	modest unsophisticated	HUMILITY SIMPLICITY
If you can dream—and not make dreams your master; If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim	efficient	ACTING
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster And treat those two impostors just the same	phlegmatic wise	EQUANIMITY WISDOM
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools	unruffled calm	STOICISM COMPOSURE
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken, And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools	unruffled endurable resilient	COMPOSURE FORTITUDE RESILIENCE
If you can make one heap of all your winnings And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss	bold	DARING
And lose, and start again at your beginnings	persistent	PERSEVERANCE
And never breathe a word about your loss	resilient	NON-COMPLAINING

Poem lines	Trajector character	Domain (reference frame)
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew *To serve your turn long after they are gone* *And so hold on when there is nothing in you* *Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'*	strong-willed endurable, persistent tenacious	WILLPOWER FORTITUDE PERSEVERANCE TENACITY
*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtu*e	convinced	CONVICTION
*Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touc*h	humble unsophisticated	HUMILITY SIMPLICITY
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you	forgiving not vulnerable	MERCY FORTITUDE
*If all men count with you, but none too muc*h	humble	HUMILITY
If you can fill the unforgiving minute *With sixty seconds' worth of distance r*un	appreciating efficient	APPRECIATION ACTING
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, *And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son*	mighty humane	MIGHT HUMANISM

Particular attention should be paid to poetic diction in general, in which we can highlight three peculiarities. Firstly, the diction itself is abstract, that is the reader does not have a particular image that underlies the poetic narration. It contributes to the fact that the ideas, expressed in the poem bear the most general character and refer not to anything concrete, but make up an edifice of moral conduct. Every reader, delving into it can find his own associations, projecting the tenets upon the reference frame of his life, which makes the poem universal.

Secondly, the diction in carried out not conventionally – in the Indicative Mood, like in most of prosaic and poetic works, but in the Subjunctive Mood, making it sound hypothetical, although attainable as R. Kipling uses Conditional I in anaphoric reiteration (*If…; If you can…*). Such type of diction helps the author to achieve the ultimate goal – convey the message that the moral code, encompassed within the lines is not something given to a person or taken for granted, but it is something that can be achieved only through ardent fight of human spirit.

Thirdly, the diction is symbolic. R. Kipling uses symbols to carry away his genuine message from the literal meaning of the words he uses. To such symbolic lexical units belong: "knaves" (symbolize all the enemies and ill-wishers of a person along with the bad circumstances, which might corrupt the real state of affairs), crowds (symbolize masses of average philistine people), kings (symbolize current authorities, who are in power), common touch (symbolizes unsophistication and simplicity).

FIELD MODEL OF KIPLING'S ETHICAL CODE

Creation of the field model of the ethical code, revealed in Kipling's "If", presupposes employment of field methodology, which is extensively used in cognitive studies. The principle of field model is based on the actualization quantity of a concept within a certain textual space. In our paper the model includes the conceptual domains (see Table 1 3ᵈ column), which are actualized in the stanzas of the poem, constituting the moral code. The field organization of ethical code consists of nucleus, which includes the most frequently actualized ethical concepts and periphery, to which belong concepts with lower rate of actualization.

The nucleus of moral code comprises ethical concepts, which are actualized most frequently in the poem and they include: COMPOSURE, MERCY, HUMILITY, FORTITUDE. All of them are actualized three times, which can be seen from the Table 1. We argue that affiliation of these particular concepts to the nucleus is not random, because these concepts are interconnected on the cognitive level. Composure presupposes being calm and unruffled. Calmness means that a person doesn't fly into anger, even if there is a reason for it, so that means that he is able to forgive, i.e. to express mercy. A forgiving person does not normally think high of himself, since he sees his own flaws, and this enables him to forgive faults of others. Therefore, in order to forgive one has to be humble. All the three above-mentioned characteristics are impossible for a weak person, since a weak person easily flies into temper, he is impatient and revengeful out of fear and at last for the same reason he is afraid to seem less important than he is. Therefore, fortitude is the integral feature of the moral code.

The periphery of moral code field comprises close periphery, which includes moral concepts, which are actualized twice – SIMPLICITY, ACTING, PERSEVERANCE and distant periphery, which contains moral concept, actualized only once – BENEVOLENCE, FAITH, CONCEDING, PATIENCE, HONESTY, EQUANIMITY, WISDOM, STOICISM, RESILIENCE, DARING, NON-COMPLAINING, WILLPOWER, TENACITY, CONVICTION, APPRECIATION, MIGHT. It should be mentioned, though, that peripheral status of moral concepts in the field stratification model does not indicate their general unimportance in the moral code but rather shows that for the author these values bear secondary character in his message. Moreover, if to look closer, all the peripheral concepts are directly connected with the nucleus ones. For example, RESILIENCE, STOICISM and WILLPOWER are closely related to FORTITUDE and PATIENCE, NON-COMPLAINING to COMPOSURE etc., therefore these values are located on the periphery, since they relate to the ones from the nucleus with the broader semantic scope.

BINARISM OF MORAL CODE IN KIPLING'S "IF"

Ethical code is a system, which is highly based on evaluation, which is polar by its nature. Therefore, ethical concepts, having positive or negative evaluative basis form binary oppositions. The essence of a binary opposition consists in the fact that its members serve as reference frames for each other. As it was stated above, the use of antithesis on the stylistic level triggers binarism on the conceptual level. This means that every trajector trait along with the corresponding trajector conceptual domain is a part of a binary opposition. The antagonistic member of opposition is also a character trait, which relates to the corresponding background (domain). The antagonistic traits and domains are called benchmark traits / domains as they serve as a certain standard or point of reference, against which the target traits / domains are compared. For instance, a person is bold when he compares himself to a coward, or a person can be called strong only in relation to a weak one. Thus "weak" is a benchmark for "strong", or "coward" is a benchmark for "bold".

Binarism of the moral code extolled in the poem "If" is revealed explicitly and implicitly. Explicit binarism is aired by R. Kipling himself by means of antithesis, which is observed throughout the first stanza and in the first two lines of the second one. In the rest of the poem the benchmark traits are implicit and the reader can understand them only based on his own moral experience. The results of the benchmark analysis are represented in Table 2. Explicit benchmarks are typed in bold.

Table 2: Benchmarks of the ethical code in Kipling's "If"

Target Domain (reference frame)	Benchmark trait	Benchmark domain
COMPOSURE	**Angry irritable**	**ANGER**
FAITH CONCEDING	**distrustful suspicious**	**DOUBT**
PATIENCE	**impatient**	**ANXIETY**
HONESTY MERCY	**lying revengeful**	**LIE VENGEANCE**
BENEVOLENCE MERCY	**spiteful**	**MALEVOLENCE**
HUMILITY SIMPLICITY	**sophisticated**	**SOPHISTICATION**
ACTING	**pensive**	**CONTEMPLATION**

Target Domain (reference frame)	Benchmark trait	Benchmark domain
EQUANIMITY WISDOM	exulted	EXULTATION
STOICISM COMPOSURE	Weak agitated	WEAKNESS DISTURBANCE
COMPOSURE FORTITUDE RESILIENCE	weak	APATHY
DARING	Faint-hearted	COWARDICE
PERSEVERANCE	idle	APATHY
NON-COMPLAINING	complaining	PITY
WILLPOWER FORTITUDE PERSEVERANCE TENACITY	Weak idle	WEAKNESS APATHY COWARDICE
CONVICTION	hesitating	DOUBT
HUMILITY SIMPLICITY	Vain arrogant	VANITY ARROGANCE
MERCY FORTITUDE	sensitive	VENGEANCE VULNERABILITY
HUMILITY	proud	PRIDE
APPRECIATION ACTING	Neglecting idle	NEGLECT APATHY
MIGHT HUMANISM	poverty inhumane	NEED INHUMANITY

CONCLUSIONS

In his everlasting poem "If" R. Kipling managed to create an edifice of moral mettle, which provides the tenets of virtue and worth irrespective of the epoch or geographical location, making it the legacy of the whole humanity. The peculiarities of poetic narration include abstract dictum, use of the subjunctive mood and symbolism. Sometimes R. Kipling also uses metonimical personifications (Triumph, Disaster, Will) and metaphors (like 'worn-out tools'). The latter operate like 'bridge' on the cognitive level, joining two different concepts that on the associative level have some common features. The interpretation through the prism of cognitive methodology enabled to distinguish trajector (target) human features, which constitute R. Kipling's moral code. From the cognitive perspective every character trait is understood against referential background – conceptual domain, for instance feature "forgiving" is understood against the reference frame (domain) MERCY etc. The use of field stratification methodology made it possible to distinguish concepts that form the nucleus of Kipling's moral

code, to which belong COMPOSURE, MERCY, HUMILITY and FORTI-TUDE. The peripheral values, revealed in the poem, are closely connected to the nucleus ones and their remoteness from the nucleus is explained by their lower frequency of actualization in the analyzed text. Such stratification in revealing of the moral code in "If" makes it an outstanding piece of poetry, compared with the other ones, attempting at unravelling ethical values. It should also be emphasized that moral values bear salient evaluative mark, therefore they form binary oppositions, for example: FAITH / DOUBT; STOICISM / WEAKNESS. The antagonistic member of the opposition – the benchmark serves as a conceptual verification for the target value with positive evaluative mark. For instance, 'doubting' is the benchmark for the trajector quality 'faithful'; benchmark vulnerable – for the trajector trait 'strong" etc. The benchmarks of the moral code in "If" are expressed both explicitly and implicitly, depending on the level of their relevance. Explicit benchmarks are expressed by means of antithesis, like *or being lied about – don't deal in lies; or being hated – don't give way to hating,* while implicit ones are not named by the author and are left for the reader's individual decoding, which is based on his background experience. The perspective of the further studies can be combination of cognitive approach with the deconstructive analysis.

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Osebni moralni kod: kognitivni pristop pri interpretaciji Kiplingove pesmi "If"

Članek odkriva moralni kod, ki ga slavi Kiplingova pesem "If" s pomočjo kognitivne interpretacije. Avtorjevo sporočilo, ki vsebuje njegov pogled na moralni kod, se pokaže v minimalnih smiselnih enotah pesmi (često enega ali dveh verzov), ki so natančno analizirani.

Ključne besede: R. Kipling, moralni kod, značajska podoba, etična vrednost