

The North and Its People in B. Shergin's Works

Olga Vorobyova, Elena Zotova

Northern State Medical University, Arkhangelsk, Russian Federation

The language of B. Shergin, a XXth century writer from the North, has not been studied by specialists. The writer sought to preserve the amazing culture and beauty of people who lived in the North near the White Sea. He understood the destructive nature of the emerging culture that combined linguistic aspects with other aspects of social relations, so he wanted to show the difficult life of the Pomors that was based on professional and moral relationships. The language of the writer is rich in emotionally evaluative vocabulary and has developed synonymy, it preserves a lively folk flavour.

Keywords: vocabulary, discourse, communication, generalization, context, culture

Introduction

Modern linguistic methods of language analysis allow us to determine the optimal ways of verbal influence on the audience, to study the literary text from the standpoint of studying the relationship between the language and the recipient's consciousness, the role of language in the generalization of human experience, the author's position in the representation of the artistic picture of the world.

The northern writer Boris Shergin wanted to show the phenomenon of living life to future generations in his works. The modal dominants of Shergin's works are the cultural values of outgoing knowledge that has original Russian roots and traditions, the loss of which the writer so painfully expressed. By analyzing the events of a bygone time, the writer creates a prototype of an ideal understanding of the norms of the social way of life of people living in the harsh northern region. Maybe this was the reason why the North has been the sole guardian of the Russian national epic for such a long time?

Most text scholars suppose that the prototype has a mental nature and typicality. Thus, Nikolai Boldyrev considers the prototype a tool for categorizing reality. Emphasizing the variety of prototypes, the scientist names social prototypes, typical examples, ideals, samples, images, stereotypes. Social prototypes are the most recognizable ones, the scope of their application often has clear chronological and spatial boundaries. Prototypes help a person navigate in reality, classify new information, evaluate new objects—things and phenomena (Boldyrev, 2002, pp. 81-82).

Shergin's works, which depict the life of sailors, fishermen, masters of the North of Russia, should be considered primarily as a dynamic unit with extra—and intralinguistic parameters. The text analysis reveals a

Olga Vorobyova, doctor of philological sciences, Professor, Head of the Department of Foreign Languages and the Russian Language as a foreign, Northern State Medical University.

Elena Zotova, degree, academic title, Department of Foreign Languages and the Russian Language as a foreign, Northern State Medical University.

semantic strategy for the discourse of the artistic picture of the writer's world. It is characterized by social rules, ritual forms of functioning, certain communicative attitudes. The analysis of Shergin's works allows us to understand how the text "works".

Information

Boris Viktorovich Shergin was born at the turn of the XXth century, in the north of Russia. A philosopher, artist and writer, Shergin foresaw the moral loss from the destruction of the millennial lifestyle of Pomor culture. In his works, the author turns to the Pomor culture and folk memory: on the basis of oral folk art, the Russian literary language and Pomors' way of speaking (as a part of the Pomor culture) and the lofty style of church books, he created the phenomenon of the unique northern Russian text: "There's something to be sad and envious about: in the middle of the past century, experts in collecting epic poems, experts in collecting fairy tales and songs, experts in folk arts and crafts went to the North. In the 20s, experts went to the North to collect and describe tin dishes: they did not look at anything but tin spoons and dishes. But, unfortunately, the North has never, ever seen those who would persistently, purposefully ask, search, and compile marine vocabulary in particular. No one ever told the Pomors that all 'ustavtsy' (mandates), 'uryadniki' (village policemen), and 'lotsii' (sailing directions) are important for science and have historical significance. No one recorded oral traditions, stories about great sailors and famous shipbuilders. But life doesn't stand still. Not only the old and worthless is forgotten, but also things that are interesting for history, for living science" (Shergin, 1990, p. 28)

The meaning of an artistic image is revealed in a certain communicative situation, and the result depends on a reader's mood, as well as on the specific culture to which he or she belongs. Therefore, after a century or two, a work of art can't be perceived in the exact same way as its contemporaries and even the author himself perceived it. In the stories of B. Shergin, knowledge is imparted from father to son, from helmsmen to young Pomors, the names of these stories are indicative in this sense: "Novaya Zemlya's knowledge". "Immortalized glory", "The concept of courtesy", "Markel Ushakov's words", "Question and answer", "Russian word". All this, according to the author, should be remembered by the youth so they could determine the correct norms and assessments.

Analyzing the author's discourse, it is important to note the close relationship between the author and the addressee. Shergin considers the totality of spiritual and material values as people's activity in the totality of the norms and rules of life. Shergin presents a certain scheme of normative parameters, which are based on the character presentation of the characters, their action, social prerequisites and arguments proving the objectivity of the result. The verbal fixation of a social norm, the justification of its objectivity, is addressed to the reader.

The choice of words is a universal tool that helps to establish the hierarchy of values of people living in the Russian North. In the series of stories "The great helmsmen" B. Shergin cites such statements: "*Let those people with whom you live do not like you, but you'll know them and you'll learn how to behave with everyone. And with good people, will it not be a hundred times harder for you?*" Repetition of the word "people" focuses the reader's mind on the norm of behavior enshrined in the collective consciousness of sailors (the old helmsman Ivan Ryadnik was an experienced sailor from the Peter I era), finally, the semantics of the words "behavior", "custom", "disposition" express the strategy of institutional moral norm. "*Whoever you're anchored to, stay with them, even if it seems easier for you in another place and people seem better there*"—the word "anchored" is semantically marked in the text, it is associated with the reliability of the sailors, hardened by the harsh northern climate and

difficult fishing. Contextual antonymy «*more profitable, easier, better—more difficult*» emphasizes the author's attitude to moral choice. The strategy of suggestion and motivation is implemented in the form of the imperative mood and in the interrogative form of the final sentence. Stylistically, neutral words in the text acquire a textual connotation with a meliorative assessment, which contributes to the realization of the goal of speech exposure, it is addressed to the feelings of a person. Choosing a well-defined vocabulary, the author forms a speech strategy and tactics, actively influencing the readers. As a result, the text represents the process and products of speech activity as values that translate the author's social assessment, which has a strong emotional impact, actualizes the reader's attention on what has been historically recognized as good and bad.

The interaction of the linguistic unit and context actualizes the background knowledge and context, which makes it possible to identify the author's intentions. The main social and intellectual intention of B. Shergin is to transfer the moral standards and professional knowledge to the readers. It is in language that the experience of mankind and its way of thinking are expressed. Language is a cognitive mechanism, a system of signs that is used specifically to codify and transform information. In the artistic depiction of the Pomors' life, Shergin focuses the reader's attention on the highly professional activities of people living in the harsh conditions of the Russian North, which is revealed in the author's picture of the world through the following components: (1) presentation of traditional occupations, crafts that have long been developed in the Russian North; (2) Pomors as subjects of description: seafarers, helmsmen, hunters, shipbuilders, craftsmen, demonstrating their "art", their way of life; (3) "Pomors' way of speaking" and surprisingly melodious, "beautiful" northern words as an element of idiostyle form a linguistic model of the picture of the world of communicants.

The stories of the series "The great helmsmen" show the images of the Pomors that remained in the legends, their life, professional skills, moral qualities became an example for the next generations, not only for Pomors, these are Russian people, national characters: master Molchan, Markel Ushakov, Ustyan Borodatiy, Ivan Ryadnik.

B. Shergin creates stereotypes of the Pomor culture. Scientists agree that stereotypes are the basis of culture, they provide mutual understanding of people. The main reason for the appearance of a stereotype is the desire for simplification, which saves effort and simplifies communication. The stereotype of the assessment is not in doubt, and at the same time combines the individual and the typical.

The author reveals simple and, at the same time, high moral and ethical concepts that were associated by northern people with work. Their work was often very difficult, but the author's assessment is always positive. To understand the life of Pomors, the author actively uses prototypical images, like, for example, in the story "Master Molchan": "The master's heavy hand gently stroked Markel's rebellious curls"; the old man said:

-Not from words, but from deeds and my example, you should learn our art. Our axes speak for us. Wipe the tears, kid. You're an artist. Your planks are like swan feathers. If you run your hand over them, it feels like velvet.

"At last, Markel caught the eye of the master: he saw the morning dawns shining from beneath the beetling brows of the old man." (Shergin, 1990, p. 98)

B. Shergin loves to portray ordinary people in his works, their images emphasize the high moral qualities of the northerners: veneration of ancestors, professional experience, modesty and obedience, good attitude to wife and children. Some researchers believe that the everyday descriptions from his works are somewhat idealized, but

it should be borne in mind that the moral principles the author is trying to draw attention to are national wealth, the spiritual foundation that makes up Russian culture, which forms the idea of the world around us through language as an “intermediate world” .

In the story “Matvey’s Joy”: “I never had a rest on holidays, on weekdays, or in winter, or in summer. Worked a lot... The horse is beaten, but still carries the load – no matter where”. It was very hard for Matryoshka. She collapses, can’t straighten her back, falls to the floor:

-Kids, walk on my back, please...

Vanya, a younger one, walks on her back barefoot, ‘cause the older ones don’t want to:

-Mom, we can break you ... The work’s hard, so your spine falls apart. You need to put pressure on it.

Matryona was corpulent, stout-build, when she was younger, now she’s knackered. I felt so sorry for her.

-Matryoshichko, you’d rather die!

-Nonsense, Matvey! I’ll even wash your shirt after this! (Shergin, 1990, p. 212)

Highlighting vivid fragments of reality, the author determines the dominant, which is expressed grammatically, lexically and is realized in the characterization of people Shergin portrayed.

The beauty and spontaneity of the narrative is the main theme of B. Shergin’s artistic world—“Not on the land we walk, but on the depth of the sea. And a common fate we share”, here are more of those simple, but very touching words: «The sea feeds us, and the sea buries us», «For us, Pomors, the sea is a drinker, a breadwinner. But the sea gives only what you can take.” “The sea makes a man a man.” “For Pomors, both joy and grief are carried from the sea.” “For Pomors, it is a pleasure to see the White Sea. They walked into it for centuries, lived in it, they know every stone, they sailed their ships whatever way the wind blew, they have seen every wave possible”. “The sea is our life—these words say everything. We settle by the sea, on the seashores. But we work in the open sea, it feeds us.” “Pomors cannot live without The Sea. Our whole life is here, in it, it gives us joy and grief. “

B. Shergin’s works represent the habitat of Pomors as a system that characterizes high moral and cultural standards. It allows to openly evaluate what is good or bad.

The story of B. Shergin “Danish Vanya” is quite interesting—it actualizes everyday parallels even now, revealing important character traits of Russian people. The plot of the story is simple: the widow Agrafena Ivanovna worked from daylight till dark and raised her son Vanya, who dreamed to be a sailor. At fourteen, Ivan escaped on a Danish ship and disappeared.

A positive modality as a communicative strategy is stated from the very beginning of the story: “A long, long time ago, at the Arkhangelsk city, at the ship’s haven...”—the epic beginning creates a certain atmosphere, gives the impression of datelessness of the story’s events, but the following phrase gives a social coloring—“[a woman] was selling loafs”. The author uses a humorous form of presentation of his characters “Honest widow Agrafena Ivanovna among “tradeswomen—piewomen, roisterers, kvass vendors”. The writer gives the following characterization to Agrafena Ivanovna: “She speaks and quarrels with the whole market”, “Agrafena could praise and badmouth any Mister.”

В данном тексте эмоциональная оценка вербальных действий и продуктов выражается лексическими и словообразовательными средствами: частотны существительные с уменьшительно-ласкательными суффиксами: булочки-хваленочки, пожил у бабушки, русское гнездышко, дитяtko мое роженое, сбежавшего в Данию сына Аграфены автор называет Иванушко. (Shergin, 1990, pp. 170-173)

In the text, the emotional assessment of verbal actions and products is expressed by lexical and word-forming means. Nouns with diminutive suffixes are used frequently: bulochki-hvalyonochki (wonderful loafs), lived with his grandmother, russkoe gnyozdyshko (a small Russian nest), dityatko (my little child), the author calls Agrafena's son Ivanushko.

The narrative does not condemn the actions of the hero: there is no negative sems either at the denotative or connotative levels. The positive modality can be traced throughout the story: "Vanya's heart raced: "I need to see my mom! Is she alive?.." And then he decided to sail as a quarter master to Russia and back."

Vanya was in Arkhangelsk several times, but he was afraid to admit to his mother that it was him. Vanya was afraid that he might stay with her, he didn't want to leave his wife and children in Denmark.

B. Shergin reveals the peculiarities of the Russian national character, depicting the protagonist's suffering: "Again, Ivanushko goes out of his mind with worry: "I need to get back to Russia, I need to see my mother". The text shows the best character traits of a northern seaman:

love for the motherland ("Summer winds blow, a loon screams across the sea, tells Ivanushko to go to Russia, to see his mother");

love for mother ("The ship was in the haven for a week, every day the son bought loafs from his mother, but did not admit. Only on the last day, he put fifty rubles into her box and left for Denmark");

loyalty ("His wife cried: Oh, John! In Russia, it is strict: if your mother knows, she won't let you go. - She won't know. I won't show myself to her, I'll just take a look from afar...");

sense of duty ("- Mama, I'm your son! Have mercy on me, let me go! I have a wife and three sons in Denmark. Here's all my money, five hundred rubles. Take it, just let me go!");

honesty, unselfishness ("She made a noise all over the pier: - Hey, wifeys-traders! Someone dropped twenty-five rubles into my box!.. Agrafena banged her fist on the table: "Take away your money! I don't need it - I need my son. I mourned my son for twenty-three years...").

Concluding the story, the author logically brings the addressee to the understanding that the Russian person cannot betray the most important values of his life: "Vanya cried, too:

-Mom, take pity on your grandchildren! They are gone without a father ... Tradeswomen started sobbing. (Shergin, 1990, pp. 170-173)

Indeed, the next year he brought his eldest son to her. He spent a winter with Agrafena... Vanya brought his middle son... Then Vanya's wife arrived with her youngest son. And that gentle woman from Denmark grew fond of her husband's mother."

True feelings, the emotional state of the characters go into subtext, forming a generalized perception of the text. "Agrafena's grandchildren and great-grandchildren still live in the North. By the name of Vanya, who fled to Denmark, they were given a surname «Danish».

Conclusions

The process of generalization and exchange of knowledge involves the objectification of knowledge in the form of objects and texts. In the works of B. Shergin, knowledge is imparted from the eldest to the youngest, from father to son, from helmsmen to young Pomors. Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote: "People understand each other

not because they send the signs of objects... but because they mutually affect the same link in the chain of sensory representations and the rudiments of internal concepts... this makes corresponding, but not identical meanings flash through their minds" (Humboldt, 1977, p. 165). The implementation of the epistemological goal set by the author carries information about the linguistic era, typical personalities, is a means of ensuring two-way communication between generations and forming the social norm of the nation verbally. It is defined as a system of layered cultural eras, traditions, literary and aesthetic stereotypes.

References

- Болдырев, Н. Н. (2002). Прототипическая семантика как направление и метод лингвистических исследований // Проблемы современной филологии. Вып. 2. – Мичуринск: МГПИ, – С. 3-12.
- Гумбольдт фон, В. О. (1984). различии строения человеческих языков и его влиянии на духовное развитие человечества // Избранные труды по языкознанию. М.
- Шергин, Б. В. (1990). Изыщные мастера : поморские были и сказания / Б. В. Шергин; сост., предисл. и сопроводит. тексты Ю. Галкина. - М. : Молодая гвардия.