

Guseva Elina (Mari State University): Lexico-semantic Structure of Verbal Portraits in A.Yuzykain's Novel "Elyan"

The aim of this paper is to reveal specific lexico-semantic features of the main protagonists' verbal portraits in the work of a well-known Mari writer A. Yuzykain¹.

The determination of the totality of lexical means and their semantic characteristics in verbal portraits has never been the focus of interest for Mari scholars. Linguostylistic analysis, the main aim of which is to define linguistic units in their stylistic functions, applied to A.Yuzykain's novel "Elyan", can, however, help find new characteristics of the Mari language functional styles. These results can be especially fruitful and important for a more complete description of the belle-lettres style in general, and emotive prose in particular. The outcome of this research can also add some unknown data to the already described facts in the functional style of Mari literature (Ivanov, 1991; Krasnova, 2003; Mustaev, 1995; Uchaev, 1980:96-103).

Style characteristics of different literary genres are usually investigated by descriptive methods. In addition to the description some elements of componential and contextual types of analysis are also used in this paper.

The portrait of a character is one of the basic means in the creation of a literary image. It consists in the description of a hero's/heroine's appearance (clothes included), shows psychological characteristics and records the protagonists' body language.

"Elyan" is a chronicle novel. It was published in 1979. The plot of the novel centers around the depiction of Mari village life during World War II. There are more than 10 main protagonists – collective farmers – in the novel. Their life – love, hatred, sympathy, antipathy – is shown against the background of the hardships of the war years. The novel is written in the form of the memoirs of the author.

Many facts from the protagonists' life remind the reader of the author's experience. Description of nature, characters' dialogues and monologues are amply represented in the novel.

Verbal portraits also take up a great deal of the literary space and time in the novel. According to their structure verbal portraits can be *compact* and *dispersed*. (Maltseva, 1986:6). A *compact verbal portrait* is a portrait description which appears in the novel only once: The protagonists' features described, the author does not refer to this image for a long time. The size of the compact portrait can be different, although very often it is an extensive and detailed description, for example:

Ikana šošym, lum ðeč ernymeke, eljan wokteke šükš≡ βurɣeman, syrym-sorym čijyše üðyramaš tolyn lektesh. (Yuzykain, 1979:.) *In spring, when the thaw had set, a woman in worn-out, old dirty clothes came to a poor shepherd*"

A *dispersed portrait* (description) is a repeated periodical mention of the protagonists' features shown in the process of the author's narration, for example: Šukat yš erte,

¹ Aleksandr Yuzykain made his name as a novelist in the second half of the 20th century. He was born in 1929, in the village of Chormak, Bashkiria. He was educated at the Pedagogical College in Krasnokamsk and the Pedagogical Institute in Yoshkar-Ola. His best well-known works include such novels as: "Maska wynem"(1972), "Tuloto"(1978), "Elyan"(1979). In many cases, he pays great attention to the description of protagonists in his novels.

iktaž šym-kanđaş ijaš kaŋya rweze küđykna tolynat šoγaleš. Jolžo čara, ümbalnyže wyner tuwyr, pulwuj turašte jolaš eŋyrašyže šütlenyt. (Yuzykain,1979:29) *'Not much time passed, when a lean child of some seven or eight years came up to us. He was barefooted, with a canvas shirt on, and trousers full of holes on the knees.'*

Saj rweze. Šuko šužen ilen tuđo. Sanđene čyla šotystat yške ijyotšym ončylten tuđo. (Yuzykain,1979:109) – *'He is a good boy. He starved for a long time. That's why he looks old for his age.'*

A lexico-semantic structure of the verbal portrait consists of several discrete elements. They are: a) a lexico-semantic group, describing features, parts of the body, protagonists' body language; b) a lexico-semantic group, portraying protagonists' clothes; c) a lexico-semantic group of colors.

Let us consider these groups in detail:

a) a lexico-semantic group, denoting features, parts of the body, protagonists' body language: Poro er, yštale tuđo (Sakela). Tyγođym küjyš= m=rym ušeštaryše türwyžat lyštašla šymarŋen, lyp-lyp mođylđale. (Yuzykain, 1979:106) *'Good-morning,-he said (Sakela) 'That time her lips, reminding one of ripe strawberries, quivered (Literally: trembled like leaves)'* Üđyryn kanđywuj peleđyš šinčaž đene wašlijmeke, šümžylan ala-možo joč wele čučo. (Yuzykain,1979:106) *'Meeting with a girl's eyes, reminding me of a corn-flower, my heart sank'*

Tewe wakš ambar ončylno čal ponđaşan izirak pörjeŋ koyjlaltyš. (Yuzykain,1979:151) *'A small man with a gray beard appeared near the mill warehouse'* Joča pört γyč tolmeke, u ilyšys kusnymeke, tuđlan jöršyn wes syn puren. Küčyk žapyšte pütynek waštaltyn. Topkata kap-kylan, čumyraš šürγwylyšan motor γyna ikšywys sawyrnen. (Yuzykain,1979:321) *'Having left a children's home, she began a new life, she became a girl with a shapely figure'; In a short time she changed completely. Slim-bodied, round-faced, she turned into a comely child.*

b) a lexico-semantic group, showing protagonists' clothes:

Koktynat wuješyšt (Sanja den Manja) peleđyš wūrŋenčkym upšalynyt. Čatkan γyna šeryn punymo lojyjšo porsyn tasman jyγyr üppunemyšt wičkyž kyđalyštymat erten, a jolyštyšt – oš yštyr ümbač piđme inđeš nijan jyđal.Tuwyr melyšt den urwaltyšt deč posna šoβyr jyryštät turlymy. (Yuzykain, 1979:-353) *'Garlands of wild flowers are on the girls' heads, heavy tresses, braided with pink ribbons hang down to their waists.'* *'Bast shoes, made from 9 basts are on her feet'* *'The hems of clothes are embroidered with beautiful needle-work'* Manja šūžarže semynak, tuđo (Sanja) pajrem wurŋem đene tolyn. Koktyn süan üđyrlak kojyt. Tošty šij oksa γyč yštyme činčy-wunčym sakalašat monđen oγytyl. (Yuzykain,1979:265) *'Like her sister, Manya was in her holiday attire. Both are like matchmakers. They even hadn't forgotten to put on the ornaments made of silver coins'*

Čijđme wurŋememžat uđa oγyl. Wujyštem-meraŋ upš, ške urŋenam. Ümbalnem - užya. Jolešem jyđalym mežyštyr đene pütyren piđynam. Jyđalemžy u. Peču semynak, punđaşyžym imne šar đene keryštynam. (Yuzykain,1979:293) *'The clothes on me are not bad. A hare hat is on my head, I made it myself. A sheepskin-coat is on me. Woolen onuchas are on my feet. My bast shoes are new, I pressed their soles with horse's hair';*

c) a lexico-semantic group of colour: A šinčašt nunyn moγaj. Kanđe-kanđe! Ojar iyečyn južo γođym wolγyđo kawat tyγaj ok lij. Ončaltyšyštak šümetym yrykta. (Yuzykain, 1979:353) *'But their eyes! Blue-blue! Like the sky in clear weather. Their glances warm the heart.'* Erkanaj ađak wulno šinčažym üstel lukyš wiktyš (Yuzykain,1979:173) *'Erkanaj directs his lead- coloured eyes to the corner of the*

table once again.' Wolyyδo šinčaštyže ončyč jören šušo weselalykat ylyžyn (Yuzykain, 1979:321) 'Lights of joy, which earlier had died out from her light-blue eyes, appeared again'.

Research material on the basis of one novel has shown that A.Yuzykain mainly describes the protagonists' actions and behavior. In such cases the verbs with the meaning of action and change of condition coordinating with the components of a descriptive character attach an additional significant dynamism to the protagonists' portrayal. Of no small importance is the fact that the author pays much attention to a detailed description of the heroines of this novel.

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