LEXICAL MEANS OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION IN THE MARI FOLK OMENS

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Abstract

The Mari people have created and tested by thousand-year practice a numerous and steady complex of folk omens. They are weather forecasts, household observations and superstitious predictions, which contain timescales for conducting all sorts of fatigue duties. They reflected the experience and knowledge acquired by the people in the process of practical perception and subordination of nature. Folk texts of such genre appear as omens-forecasts, omens-interpretations or omens-rules. The lexical means of expressions contribute to preserve and consolidate of pantheistic, social-behavioral, philosophical, instructive-everyday, ethno-pedagogical and other meanings in them. Antonyms, phraseological expressions and various tropes (metaphors, comparisons, metonymies, epithets) most often use in the texts of the Mari omens. We consider in this article the special features of their using, their role in the imaginative recreation of objective reality and in the artistic expression of the people’s worldview.

The internal semantic links between the parts of the omens often have oppositional character, therefore the antonymous relations are very clearly marked in the language of the people’s omens, artistic expression of the national worldview. In such cases, as a rule, we are dealing with complex syntactic constructions: in one text, in fact, there are two signs, which are connected with each other on the principle of opposition. Phraseological established collocations give the omens a high degree of imagery, vivid bright picturesqueness.

In the Mari omens from among the trope’s ways of expressiveness different types of metaphors, including reification, are the most demanded. In some texts there are metaphorical monologues, that form elements of the mise-en-scene. In such cases metaphorical expressions give omens a humorous tone. Metonymy is mainly represented by synecdoche. The figurativeness of language of national omens is also achieved by use of different types of comparisons – direct, developed, etc. Epithets (figurative definitions) strengthen some one feature of a subject, which is the most significant in the omen, as it forms its meaning (forecasting, warning, hortative).

Keywords: Folkloristics, Mari folklore, folk omens, lexical means of expression, antonyms, phraseological expressions, and trope.
1. INTRODUCTION

Each nation has a rich heritage of its ancestors. It is oral poetic creativity in the form of its various genres: fairy tales, songs, legends and tales, riddles and omens, proverbs and sayings. Based on observations, memorizing of various correspondences of the surrounding reality, proven for over than hundred years, the omens keep the status of national predictions about the future to the present day. The omen in national understanding is stable characteristic feature by which it is possible to foresee what will happen in the future. They are divided into positive, indicating some pleasant events, and negative, foretelling sorrow, troubles. The omens and beliefs appeared due to the fact, that our ancestors observed the phenomena of the surrounding reality, noted the regularities and deduced conclusions, which are based on the collective life experience. It is widely accepted that typologically national omens and beliefs are connected with other forms and types of traditional predictions (for example, dreams, boding, etc.). Thematically, they represent the main spheres of interests of the traditional community: weather, economy, family relations, etc.

Folklore texts of this small genre of folklore appear as «omens-forecasts» (Pavlova, 1984) or «signs-vaticinations» (Tonkova, 2007), «signs-interpretations» (Khristoforova, 1998), «signs-rules» (Pavlova, 1984). The lexical means of expressiveness as much as possible redound to the preservation and strengthening of pantheistic, socio-behavioral, philosophical, instructive and household, ethno-pedagogical and other meanings in them. In the texts of the Mari signs, together with common words, the words of limited most often use (dialectisms, professionalism, historicisms and archaisms), as well as antonyms, phraseological expressions and various types of tropes (metaphors, comparisons, metonymy, epithets) are occurred.

In the Mari folkloristics there were researches devoted to the analysis of different groups of the national omens. Classification of the Hill Mari meteorological folk omens was offered by I.V. Trubyanova, T.N. Belyaeva, E.L. Yandakova, M. V. Ryabinina, I.G. Fedotova-Gradobaeva (Trubyanova, Belyaeva, Yandakova, Ryabinina, Fedotova-Gradobaeva, 2017, p. 21). Origin and role of the Hill Mari folk signs with negative prediction were investigated by I.V. Trubyanova, A.L. Kolyago, G.L. Sokolova, A.A. Fokina, A.V. Rychkov (Trubyanova, Kolyago, Sokolova, Fokina, Rychkov, 2017, p. 811-815). This article discloses the peculiar properties of the use of lexical means of expression in the Mari folk omens. It is revealed their role in the imaginative re-creation of surrounding reality and it is covered their poetic possibilities of artistic expression of national world perception and world outlook. Empirical material is taken from the A.E. Kitikov's «Mari folk omens» book (Kitikov, 1977) and from field materials, which are collected by students of the Mari state university during educational practice.

2 OPINIONS AND DISCUSSION

Being as a form of presentation and practically significant information transferring and having the pragmatic content, the language of the people’s omens is distinguished by variety of lexical peculiarities. First of all, it is notable for clearly, accessible to the perception of a ordinary person language, where widespread, well-known words take a prevailing position.

In the group of common used vocabulary the verbs denoting labor activity are prevail: ÿдаш (to sow), поген нолыш (to collect), пашым ишшаш (to work), шындаш (to plant), шыкшудым сымлыш (to grub up weeds), etc. In general, there are almost always common words in the omens with agricultural contents and verbal basis, for example: "Шем пындын пындын пудыштын – тыто шем пудыштын" ’If the black mite bursts with noise – there will be high quality buckwheat grain’; "Күүк нур востон мурса – мүй плиеш" ’If the cuckoo sings in the field – there will be honey’; "Лум эркк тумпа Алгүн, кинде шочеш" ’If snow melts slowly, then the grain will grow’; "Кож ушкышш лум кечалтеш ынын, кинде шочеш" ’If snow is sagging down from pine tree branches, so there will be grain yield’; "Телым чот пургыкта – уржа чот шочеш" ’If there is strongly snowstorm in winter, then the rye will grow well’.

Also there are many names of nouns, adjectives and adverbs, nominating and characterizing as well as things of daily use, household, as objects, phenomena of the surrounding reality: кымык-сова (dishes), пий (dog), пырыс (cat), имне (horse), лум (snow), кече (sun), шыдыр (stars), мланде (earth), кайык (birds), кинде (bread), etc. The adjectives which are found in omens indicate signs and properties of man, animal, objects and phenomena: күкү (long), тошто (old), у (new), йүйтө (cold), леве (warm), яра (empty), etc. The adverbs: чот (strongly), яра (constantly), деше (early, soon), etc. are used in the Mari national omens as adverbial modifier of manner, its measure, degree and the purpose.

The important place in omens is taken by the common adverbial word-combinations, which are contained postpositions «годым» ’during, while, when’, «деч оңыч» ’before’ and others, which are designating time, for example: «Кочмо годым ылымет пурлат ынын, чыным ойлен отыл» ’If you bit tongue while eating so
you have told a lie'; «Лудымыда годым книгя камвозеш – тутгарлап але черлан» 'If the book falls while you read, it will be difficult to you or you are taken ill'; «Кочмо годымы кинде падыраш камвозеш ын, уна толеш» ‘If the piece of bread falls, when you are eating, so the guest will come'; «Куку корго ден ончыч выымы мушман огыл – энтек лиын кертеш» ‘Don’t wash your head before the long road it can be a misfortune’.

But together with the common vocabulary, in the omens there are also words, the functioning of which is limited territorially (dialectism), socially (special symbols, professional vocabulary) or by the degree of use (obsoleto words): historicisms or archaisms. Here is an example of the omen with dialectism: «Орашынга чот пурлеш ын, игече йукшемда…» ‘If the flies bite hard, it gets colder’.

Special (professional) designations from different spheres of human activity are brightly presented in the consisting of omens. The peculiarity of their functioning in the text of the national omen is that «the majority of such names have gone out of the limits of their terminological field long ago and are accessible to all native speakers, i.e. they have a despecialized character» (Pavlова, 1984). For example, the professional activity of the beekeeper, which is widespread in the Mari national environment since ancient times, is reflected in omens. Accordingly, we find in them the vocabulary, which is typical for this kind of activity: «Каравышты итылк иырыре-йырыре ульт ын, мuction ава ревезе, тыштеш-тушто веле ын – шошто але тюо» ‘If on the beeswax foundation the propagation blocks set side by side, so the queen-bee is young, if they are scattered and there are few of them she is old or sick’; «Лекше мюшк игым шыңдаш күртньо йыкым лукман» ‘To make the bee swarm to sit down, it is necessary to strike the iron subject'; «Телым камгарашым мүшк йүк памаш вўд гай шырыг юкъымо семым шокта ын, мўкк-влак таза ульт, кукуш выъыньк йүк гай шокта ын – шушен але кылым ульт» ‘If in winter the noise in the hive brood chamber is as a murmur of the well spring, the bees are healthy, but if it reminds the rustling of a dry bath broom, they are hungry and sick’.

The processes of historical development of society also are reflected in vocabulary of omens. From this point of view, we are interested in the lexical units, which are included in the passive vocabulary, namely, these are obsolete words that come out of active use and perform a stylistic function in modern language. Here are some examples: «Пасу капка мүгир ын – йурлан» ‘If the field gate scream, it will be rain’; «Шолапыште первый ий куку – шулым олжада улыман» ‘The fir firsticles are long under the grooves it is necessary to sow oats early’; «Кенешым идым чараошке вўдым кышкет – йур толеш ‘If in the summer you pour out water on the barn floor, it will be rain’.

The internal semantic links between the parts of the omens are often have an oppositional character, so in the language of national omens the antonymous relations are very clearly marked. In such cases, as a rule, we are dealing with complex syntactic constructions: in one text, in fact, there are two omens, which are connected with each other by the principle of opposition.

We will give examples of such omens with antonyms: the omen-interpretation of «Пурала висок шуркедьшеш ын, тыйым моктат, шоллай шуркедьлеш – йылгылтыт» ‘If the right temple is pricked, then you are praised, if the left tingles is pricked, they mock you; the omen-forecast «Куруге эрдешен эн первый уна пёръен толеш ын, пилалан ий лише, удырамаш толеш ын, нелым вуучым» ‘If the man comes first in Easter, then it will be a happy year, if the woman comes, then it will be difficult to you’; the omen-diagnosis «Шошым первый гана кок шырчыым ужат ын, йоратымашым валишлят, иктым ын – шектак лият» ‘If in the spring you see two starlings for the first time, you will meet love, if you see one starlings, then you will be alone’; «Пурала кид кормых лүшкышта ын, окса толеш, шоллай лүшкышта ын, окса каяя ‘If the right palm is itched, then money will come, if it itches left palm, then the money will lay out’; «Шыкым камыккомбо-шамым кыкырылён каят ын, шык кукун лиеш, шык каят ын, шык куўкым лиеш ‘If the swans fly in the autumn with a cry, then the autumn will be long, if they fly silently, the autumn will be short’. Words with the opposite meaning (right and left temple, praise and prick, man and woman, happy and difficult, love and loneliness, right and left palm, come and lay out (money), with a cry and silently, long and short) develop stable semantic links, forming pairs and microsystems of lexical units.

The phraseological give omens the combinations greatest degree of figurativeness, bright picturesqueness: «Вараш менгым шололта ын – йурлан» ‘If the hawk has stiffened as a column in the sky, it will be rain’; «Самбар ишырым шокта – поранан кылынашан ‘if the samovar has played on the bagpipe it will be blizzard’; «Лепене шошо лаъышаш шучыпышым шололта – мўкк игымлай айват лиеш ‘If the butterfly cooks porridge in spring mud, it will be good for honey-bee colony’.

Among the tropes, which are used as the artistic ways of expressiveness in the Mari omens, various types of metaphors are most demanded: «Пембе сей кылынаш вўдым доктара» ‘If the cheerful breaks into a
merry song, it will be good weather’ [literally - pours water]; ‘Пүгүльмо ушшам кара – оярым вуча’ ‘If strobilus dry up [literally, they opened their mouths], it will be clear weather’; ‘Шүлэө онунгычым рүзальт гын, түлдөн пүшшермат чашке гыч ваашешта’ ‘If the oats ring with with bells [literally - oats shake with handbells] hazels will answer from the thicket’ [that is, oats and nuts ripe at the same time]; ‘Самбар шыйшка – йыштө төше’ ‘If the samovar whistles it will be cold weather’.

In some texts there are metaphorical monologues that form the elements of the mise-en-scene: «Пембе йүр толшааплан “Ой, шыккыкем, ой, шыккыкем!” манын эншыра” ‘If the chaffinch whispers quietly “Oh, my waist, my waist!” it will be rain’; ‘Пормо, тинга йүр толмо дөң очычы ойыраш шынқыт: Шылыш алы-мо, порсын шөвөрна нөрө вөт’ Gadflies, horse botflies before rain sit down and grieve: ‘Let’s hide, maybe, because our silk dresses will get wet!’}. Such metaphorical expressions add a humorous connotation to the omens, and this equates to mark out its characteristic features in the phenomenon, to make them noticeable.

A special type of a metaphor, that is also typical for the Mari omens, is the reification: ‘Кӱдырчы йүкным көлүн, понгат шинчажым почьеш’ ‘Even mushrooms will open eyes, when they hear the thunder blast’; ‘Шоңанпыл туран шогалеш – оярлан’ ‘If the rainbow rises sharply, it will be clear weather’; ‘Шыкым көракат мокта’ ‘Crow boasts in the autumn’; ‘Кӱдырчы пел йолжо төгөш’ ‘On the Baptism of Christ [literally – on the Day of the stove] frost breaks one leg’.

There is metonymy in the omens: ‘Лум чоңыра вуеш кергәлтыв-сакалтыв шога гын, көңгөчым кинде шөчеш’ ‘If there is snow on the tops of trees in winter, there will be bread in summer’; ‘Пүшеҥге вүй гүжка гын, йүрлан’ ‘If the tops of trees are buzzing, it will be rain’.

The figurativeness of the language of national omens is also achieved by using comparisons of different types - direct, unfolded, etc. ‘Ноллө лыштшак көк көмүрваш окса гай лиеш – паренте шындыш йөрә’ ‘If an alder leaf is like a two-cheap coin, it will be time to plant potatoes’; ‘Ужууур пырыс магырымыла кечкыкшен – йүрлан’ ‘If the oriole makes sounds like a cat’s cry, it will be rain’. In these examples the comparisons are directs. The represented phenomenon, subject is compared with another, which is similar to it. Comparison is given in a direct affirmative form. There are often cases of use unfolded comparisons: ‘Шӱр шонг гай түўыра кӱшкө лүңгөн күза – йүр лиеш’ ‘If the fog like milk froth rises up, it will be rain’.

The Mari omen also doesn’t be without epithets. Here are examples of such omens: ‘Умыр мардәж кечкыксың йүр очычылан пүлеәш’ ‘Medium wind during the daytime will be on the day before rain’; ‘Ночылан лоптыра тызы шөчеш’ ‘The shaggy new moon will be to wet weather’. Epithets (figurative definitions) reinforce some one feature of the subject, which forms the meaning of the omen and therefore it is the most significant in it semantically. This is a special, specific purpose of the epithet in the national omens.

3. CONCLUSIONS

So, the dominant role in the Mari folk omens is occupied by common words these make the text understandable, accessible for the perception of the ordinary person. But together with the common lexis, the vocabulary of limited use (dialectisms, professionalisms, historicisms and archaisms) and figurative lexical means (antonyms, phraseological combinations and various tropes, especially metaphors) are also used in omens. They help to express extremely accurately the idea, to present the meaning of the texts figuratively, more flexibly and expressively.

The characteristics of the words, which are used in the Mari national omens and a part of them are submitted in this work, lexical peculiarities of the omen’s language aren’t exhausted in this paper. The originality of lexical structure of the omen is determined by a set of linguistic and extralinguistic factors – time and the place of the omen’s appearance, the character of the reflected information, thematic orientation of contents, etc, that should be the subject of another special study.

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