

GENDER ASPECT OF THE LINGUISTIC PERSONALITY OF A POLITICIAN OF THE 18TH CENTURY (ON THE BASE OF THE TEXT OF THE RUSSIAN EMPRESS CATHERINE THE GREAT)

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the analysis of the gender specificity of the language personality of Catherine the Second through the study of the lexical and grammatical features of her texts. The novelty of the study consists in studying the linguistic personality of a politician in a diachronic aspect and in describing the features of the linguistic personality of Catherine II through the prism of her gender specificity. The reconstruction of the main personality features of Catherine II through comprehensive, multilevel analysis of language tools allows us to identify the psychological, pragmatic, cognitive, gender aspects of the speech behavior of the Russian Empress, the specifics of her linguistic picture of the world due to bio-socio-psychological personality data and ideological and thematic originality of her works of various genres. A study of the texts of Catherine the Second showed that the empress depicts her feelings, feelings, emotions figuratively, trying to emphasize and artistically highlight the meaning of a word depending on her communicative situation. It was proved that the empress's gender also determines the fact that in the works of Catherine II of any genre a large number of lexical and semantic groups of words (nouns, adjectives, verbs) of feelings, perception and mental state are represented. One of the main signs of the author's gender affiliation is the usage of a large number of metaphors, epithets, vivid comparisons and personifications, etc. The study revealed that the most important trend in female speech behavior is "increased emotionality and the desire to evaluate the activities of others".

Keywords: linguistic personality, gender linguistics, linguistic picture of the world, lexical and semantic group.

1. INTRODUCTION

From the end of the 20th – beginning of the 21st centuries in linguistics, there has been a steady increase in interest in the personal aspect of language learning. Researchers focus on the analysis of the process of interaction and mutual influence of a representative of a particular society and language, which he uses both in his professional and everyday activities. In this regard, the general trend of modern linguistics is the transition to anthropological linguistics, including an increased interest in problems of a national or ethnic nature, to the features and characteristics of the worldview of a particular person and people as a whole. So the concept of "linguistic personality" is widely introduced into scientific life.

It should be noted the polysemantic nature of the concept of "linguistic personality", as well as the variety of

approaches to the definition of this term by linguistic scholars, which indicates its fundamental nature and complexity. The question of identifying the essence of the concept of "linguistic personality" and its distinctive features was addressed by well-known Russian linguistic scientists V.V. Vinogradov, Yu.N. Karaulov, G.I. Bogin, V.I. Karasik, V.V. Krasnyh, etc.

In our study, we rely on the concept of a linguistic personality developed by Ju. Karaulov. He defines a linguistic personality as "a set of human abilities and characteristics that condition the creation and perception of speech works (texts) by him, which differ with: a) the degree of structural and linguistic complexity, b) the depth and accuracy of the reflection of reality, c) a certain target orientation" (Karaulov, 1989, p. 3). He identifies 3 levels of studying of a linguistic personality: verbal-semantic, cognitive and motivational (pragmatic). The verbal-semantic level reflects the degree of proficiency in everyday language. At the cognitive level, a hierarchy of meanings and values is being established in the picture of the personality's world. At the pragmatic level the goals, motives, interests, communicative attitudes of the speaker are important, here the focus is on the targeted use of speech acts in social interaction.

The novelty of our study is to describe the features of the linguistic personality of Catherine II through the prism of her gender specificity. In our opinion, the reconstruction of the main personality traits of Catherine II through a comprehensive, multilevel analysis of language tools allows us to identify the psychological, pragmatic, cognitive, gender aspects of the speech behavior of the Russian Empress, the specifics of her linguistic picture of the world, due to bio-socio-psychological personality data and ideological and thematic originality of her works of various genres.

2 RESULTS

The Russian Empress Catherine II is an outstanding person who has left a rich written heritage: these are letters, memoirs, decrees, and comedies etc. The analysis of texts written by Catherine the Great is impossible without studying the personality characteristics of the ruler herself, because "you cannot know the language by itself, without going beyond it, to its creator, carrier, user – to the person, to a specific linguistic personality" (Karaulov, 1989, p. 7), since the personality of the writer or the speaker has a significant influence on the form of speech, on the choice of various linguistic means of expressing thoughts. Therefore, it is important to note that the gender of the empress's texts was greatly influenced by the gender affiliation of their author.

Researcher E.N. Kalugina in her work emphasizes that the most important trend in female speech behavior is "increased emotionality and the desire to evaluate the activities of others" (Kalugina, 2013, p. 80). This fact is confirmed by the fact that in the intimate letters of Catherine the Great, addressed primarily to the Earl Potemkin, lexical units, reflecting the sensual, emotional sphere, prevail: this is a lexical-semantic group of words with the meaning of different feelings: love, passion, sadness, boredom, joy. In our opinion, the widespread use of such lexemes is due to the specific of Catherine's character, and that's why the institute of favoritism was greatly developed in Russia during her reign.

A significant part of the vocabulary of letters addressed by the empress to the Earl Potemkin is made up of the lexical units of the semantic field "love" - these are words such as *«любовь, любить, любимый, любушичка, амуришка»*: *«Я вас искренно люблю»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin), *«Прощай, любушичка»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin), *«Только нет, пора перестать тебе дать уверения: ты должен уже быть пре пре преуверен, что я тебя люблю»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

We have noted that the words of this lexical-semantic group are accompanied by special elements – expression enhancers, such as *безмерно, чрезмерно, чрезвычайно, оченочен, (люблю) как душу, (люблю) всем сердцем*, etc. The use of such lexemes is also evidence of Catherine's desire to strengthen the emotionality of her statement, which is typical for the female type of speech in general: *«Кукла милая, я тебя люблю чрезвычайно»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin). *«Галубчик миленькая, прямой наш праздник сегодня и я б его праздновал с великою охотою, но то дурно, что у тебя все балит, а я всею душою желаю тебя видит здоровым, веселым, довольным, ибо люблю чрезмерно милости ваши»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

In the understanding of Catherine II, like in the Russian language picture of the world, the concepts of love, heart and soul become units of the same order, they are closely interconnected and inseparable from each other. In our opinion, this fact is due to the worldview and life circumstances of the empress. From the biographical information, from handwritten notes of Catherine the Great, it is known that she was not happy in family life, she was not loved by her husband Peter III: *«Сердце жмет, но ум поверхность совершенную взял»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin). *«Прощай, душа, грустно, что сегодня со мною, ни завтра не будешь»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

A sad instinctive feature that speaks about the gender affiliation of the author of the texts of Catherine II can be called a big number of emotional love letters of the empress to the Earl G. Potemkin, which are used in letters of an intimatenature: *мое сокровище, павлин, кот заморский, фазан золотой, тигр, лев в тростнике, сердце мое, голубчик, сударушка моя, сердечушко безценное, любезный питомец, батинька, душатка, друг сердечный, Гришенок, душинька моя, милая милюша, Гришенька, милюша милая Гришифушечка*, etc. It should be noted, according to G.P. Knyazkova, that such kinds of affectionate names developed “on the basis of the figurative applications of the words of folk poetry” (Knyazkova, 1974, p. 175): *«Душа милая и безценная, казаки твои знатно что хороши, ибо я от них без ума»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin). *«Милюша, голубчик, пришли ко мне письмо Принца Генриха и Гр[афа] Ал[ексея] Гр[игорьевича] Орлова. Прощай, душародная»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

The analysis of the linguistic material showed that Catherine II actively used the words of the lexical-semantic group “tenderness” (affectionate, gentle), which also indicates the prevalence in the empress’s speech of concepts describing the sensual sphere, which is typical for the female type of writing. It should be noted that in Catherine’s texts the word “tenderness” acquires the qualities of a living being: the inanimate concept of “tenderness” in letters becomes animated: *«Ты скажешь, что просил у меня ласковое письмо и что я вместо того делаю рекапитуляцию брани; но погоди малинко, дай перекипеть оскорбленному сердцу, ласка сама придет везде тут, где ты сам ласке место дашь. Она у меня суетлива, она везде суется, где ее не толкают вон. Да и когда толкаешь ее, и тогда она вертится около тебя, как бес, чтоб найти место, где ей занять пост. Когда ласка видит, что с чистосердечием пройти не может, тот час она облечет ризы лукавства. Видишь, как ласка хитра»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

The presence of such means of poetry of speech (tropes) as metaphors, epithets, vivid comparisons and personifications, according to the researchers of the language, is one of the main signs of the author’s gender affiliation. So, men, in contrast to women, prone to the emotional presentation of information, prefer brevity, restraint, saving language effort (Kalugina, 2013, p. 80). So, in the texts of Catherine II an important role in creating the image is played by the most significant parameter of metaphor – its anthropocentricity (“anthropomorphism” by N.D. Arutyunova (1990), “anthropometricity” by V.N. Teliya (1988)): *«Страсть кистью своей делает начертания на лице всякого человека»* (comedy “Siberian Shaman”); *«Ты скажешь, что просил у меня ласковое письмо и что я вместо того делаю рекапитуляцию брани. Но погоди маленько, дай перекипеть оскорбленному сердцу»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

The language skill of Catherine II is in the fact that she depicts her feelings, emotions figuratively, trying to emphasize and artistically highlight the shade of the meaning of a word depending on her communicative situation. According to the researcher V.N. Teliya, “the correlation of the metaphor with the individual level of linguistic ability also explains the role of the human factor in it and its orientation toward the anthropometric construction, operating with analogy” (Teliya, 1988, p. 188).

The empress’s gender also explains the fact that in the texts of Catherine II of any genre a large number of lexical and semantic groups of verbs of feelings, perception and mental state is represented. In our opinion, it is because of the fact that Catherine II is completely open in the manifestation of her feelings and feelings, she seeks to be honest with the reader and with herself, therefore, she is not afraid to demonstrate her emotional state, which is generally characteristic of the female type speech (oral and written). The most important factor in the use of such verbs is also the Empress’s desire to make speech expressive, emotionally rich.

First of all, speaking about the works of Catherine II as a whole, it is necessary to single out the verbs of emotional attitude, among which we distinguish: 1) verbs expressing certain feelings in relation to someone or something; 2) verbs that determine the emotional state associated with a particular feeling or due to it; 3) verbs of emotional experience, indicating a pronounced attitude towards someone or something.

In the texts written by Catherine II there are a lot of verbs expressing certain feelings in relation to someone – with the meaning of ‘to feel, to be attracted, to have a cordial inclination toward a person’. First of all, it is the verb “to love” and its word forms. It is widely used not only in letters addressed to G. Potemkin, but also in dramatic works, where one of the important topics is the theme of love: *«Прощайте, мой друг, я люблю вас всем сердцем»* (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

Among words with the meaning ‘to be attracted, inclined’ there are also verb *to like (like)* with the semantics ‘to win over’ [6], to be friends (to make friends) – ‘to be on friendly terms with someone’ [6]. However, in quantitative terms, these words are presented in the works of Catherine II in a small quantity: *«Я его спросила: разве для того, чтобы ему понравиться, нужно гнуть спину, как рабы турецкого султана?»* (“Handwritten notes of Empress Catherine II”).

The group of verbs that determine the emotional state, associated with a particular feeling or caused by it, is represented in the works of Catherine the Great by predicates expressing different moral states of a person: to be happy, afraid, sad (be sad), to be upset, repent, be sad, despair, to be surprised, etc. In our opinion, the use of lexical units of this lexical-semantic group is not accidental: it is determined by the empress's emotionality, the expressiveness of her writing, the desire to truthfully express not only her joys, but also her feelings: «Я здорово, но не весела, не печальна, а **радовалась** видит тебя в окошки» (Letters to the Earl G. Potemkin).

3 CONCLUSIONS

Linguistic methods of manifestation of the linguistic personality of Catherine II create her unique, individual style of writing and style, which allows us to say that she had her own speech concept, poetics, which is specific only for her as a woman. It is determined by both the gender affiliation of Catherine II and the specifics of the worldview, the empress's thinking, which allows one to judge her linguistic picture of the world and the linguistic-cognitive level as a whole, and also explains the choice of linguistic means of expressing thoughts.

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