

N. N. GLUCHOVA (Joškar-Ola)

LINGUISTIC INTERPRETATION OF A CHEREMIS PRAYER

Folklore of the Cheremis people embraces a variety of genres (folktales, songs, proverbs, prayers, etc.), which have been studied from different angles both in folkloristics and linguistics. Cheremis pagan prayers are considered to represent a rare source of manifold information about the nation: its psychic fund, historical reminiscences, moral values, philosophical ideas about the world, linguistic data about the language of the ancestors. Thus, it is evident that much research needs to be done to get this knowledge. Unfortunately, at present there are only two works on this subject in modern folkloristics and linguistics.

In the book "Studies in Cheremis. The Supernatural" the authors isolated relatively permanent constituents which characterize a Cheremis prayer. They also studied the variations governed by the special circumstances of the moment which lent each text an individuality of its own (Sebeok, Ingemann 1956).

Professor I. Ivanov gave the description of the stylistic features of the texts from the point of view of the development of the Mari literary language. His conclusions were confirmed by many examples (ИВАНОВ 1975).

In this paper the accent is on the linguistic interpretation of the text of the prayer (Porkka 1895). The results of the analysis give a list of the markers of expressiveness and their functions in the text.

A prayer is, on the one hand, a solemn request of something for those who pray, a petition for divine protection from evil. On the other hand, it's a certain formula which contains all those requests used while praying.

When heathen appealed to God (Gods), a process of praying was a practical and reasonable act for him because the worshippers asked the same creatures as they themselves were (in their opinion), but much more powerful.

When a heathen addressed the souls of the deceased (his ancestors, men of the tribe), it was nothing else but an attempt to continue the communication. In both cases it was important to convince the "interlocutor" in the sincerity of the feelings and the urgent necessity of the requests. Thus, the pagan's eloquence, expressivity of his speeches can be found in the texts of all prayers.

Expressiveness may be understood as a kind of an intensification of an utterance. Its aim is an effect to influence the interlocutor's thoughts, feelings, to achieve a certain emotional reaction. Some scholars hold the view that expressivity is created by the mechanism of "foregrounding" (the Prague school) and it is realised in several ways. Among the modes described by the linguists (Galperin 1977; Ладисова 1981; Leech 1981) in the analyzed prayer it is accomplished

by relatively unusual selection of usual language means and their comparatively uncommon array in the text.

Expressive means show interstylistic character, though each genre has its own style and is characterized by a certain totality of the typical expressive means. These expressive means reflect the peculiarities of the style and are classified (Galperin 1977; Leech 1981; Ладисова 1981).

The results of the analysis show that the expressive markers of this prayer are phonological, syntactical, lexical and semantic.

Among the well-known phonological markers of expressiveness (onomatopoeia, rhyme, alliteration, rhythm) in the text of the interpreted prayer the most typical is alliteration: *šóžø žuméñgo, šom indéš,...; čolá túrl'ø osáloŋ túpon póktolon nálon kái...; kúdo-žeš déno kañasén kádor kúrthom kučen...; kuγožán kuγú kupičšo déno paš kónðo!*

Alliteration, as it is known, is aimed at imparting a melodic effect to the utterance. A certain amount of information is contained in the repetition of the consonants (*š, ž, r, s, m, n, k*) and vowels (*i, e, ø*). The vague emotional atmosphere created by the constant repetition of these sounds can be specified by the data — the results of the experiments by the representatives of the sound symbolism. The predominance of high sounds over low ones creates the atmosphere of a festive elevated mood (Лукьянова 1984).

Rhythm in the prayer is perceived by the regular reiteration of similar syntactical patterns repeated after short intervals and following one another: *kormožés perkém pu, koltašát perkém pu, koltá tüškašát perkém pu...; ik užášøžom onžoko pošén, kok užášøžom señgélko pošén...; žolá-balá γoçon sáklo, suás koštán γoçon sáklo, ruš koštán γoçonát sáklo! ... ške tütörátom úlko bóltø, mlándø tütörám kúško kúžokto* (Porkka 1895 : 19—21).

The text showed that the most observable rhythmical patterns are based on the use of such syntactical devices as repetition, enumeration, antithesis, which are based on antonyms, parallel constructions and on special ways of combining parts of the utterance, such as polysyndeton and asyndeton.

The most obvious rhythmical unit is the structural similarity of the types of word-combinations and the types of the sentences resembling each other in the structural scheme.

The structural similarity of word-combinations may be explained by the fact that among the different types of word-combinations in general only two particular types prevail in the analyzed text: attributive and objective.

The dependent components of the attribute word-combinations are expressed in the text by: 1) the adjective — *o s á l mardéž* 'an evil wind', *k é l γ ø korém* 'a deep ravine', *o s á l šinžá* 'an evil eye', *o s á l káik* 'evil (wild) beasts', *l é β ø žür* 'a warm rain', *k u γ ú kupič* 'great merchants', *š é r e šomák* 'sweet words', *k u γ ú žúmo* 'great God'; 2) the participle — *č ú m ø r m ø kúndo* 'gathered (reaped) bread (grains)', *k í č k ø m ø ínno* 'harnessed horse', *k ú r ø l t - δ ø m ø perke* 'inexhaustible abundance'; 3) the noun — *m l á n δ ø tütörá* 'mist from the earth', *ž u l ošmá* 'the sands of the river Volga', *k u γ ø ž á n pazár* 'the tzar's market'; 4) the numeral — *k o k tütörá* 'two mists', *š ó m l o š ø m tañ* 'seventy seven friends', *š ø m - i n δ é š kórno* 'seven-nine roads', *ik užášøžom* 'one part', *k o k užášøžom* 'two parts'; 5) the pronoun — *š k e tütörá* 'your (own) mist', *t ú δ ø káik* 'those (wild) beasts'.

The subordinate components of the objective word-combinations are represented by: 1) the nouns — *žürétom pu* 'give rain', *perkém pu* 'give abundance', *(kužu) kúromom pu* 'give (long) life', *(ške) tütörátom úlko bóltø* 'lower (your) own

mist', (*mlándø*) *tütorám kúško kúžokto* 'raise the mist from the earth'; 2) the adjectives — *tútom óšto* 'make full', *kojám óšto* 'make fat', *tüžom óšto* 'make cow with calf'.

Asyndetic compound sentences are the most numerous in the text and their clauses, composed on the same model, create the structural similarity. *Ošál mar-déž ýóçon, þüð ýóçon sáklo, kélyø korém ýóçon, laþrá ýóçon arálo, çolá türl'ø osál ýóçon, tušmán ýóçon, osál šingá ýóçon, lóktøø ýóçon, píro ýóçon, maská ýóçon i çolá türl'ø osál káik ýóçon sáklo* 'Protect our cattle from an evil wind, water, guard against deep ravines, against mud, save from any evil, from the enemies, from an evil eye, from the sorcerers, from the wolves, from the bears, from all other wild beasts'. *Tül-þujánom óšto, ísoržom tüžom óšto, kañgážom kojám óšto!* 'Make (the cattle) more numerous, make barren cows / cow with calf, make skinny fat'. *Šóšom-kenéž šuméñgo lébo žürétom pu, šolém ýóçon, kúðorçø þolyénžø ýóçon sáklo, pasú kórýøško nomó osálo it-púrto!* 'When spring comes (after spring coming) give a warm rain, save from hail, from thunder and lightning, don't let any evil onto the field!' (Porkka 1895 : 19)

Simple sentences with participial constructions are also numerous, and they give another rhythmical pattern. *Šóšom šuméñgo þütá kórýø ýóçon þóløkø lukton koltoméñgo, nur-séromžom kumdam óšto!* 'After spring comes (on spring coming) and the cattle will be let out of the cattle-shed, make the meadows wide!' *Šóžø šuméñgo, šom indés kórno déno púrtomø çolá türl'ø þóløk-perké ýóçon nemnám žøþor-tokto!* 'When autumn comes make us glad by the increase of the different cattle (which) we pen by 7-9 roads!' *Kuyožán pazároško mién šoyalméñgo, kuyožán kuyú kupičšo déno þaš kóndø!* 'When we come to the tzar's market let us meet tzar's great merchants!' (Porkka 1895 : 19—20)

One exclamatory vocative simple sentence — *Póro kugu žúmo!* — is repeated three times.

The examples of the compound polysyndetic sentences are: *Sóžø šuméñgo, kúðo-žéš déno kañášén kádor kúrtnóm kuçén türeðáš šoyalméñgo, kormøžéš perkém pu, koltašát perkém pu, koltá tüškašát perkém pu, kopnašát perkém pu; kopnám orþáško óptomø ýóðom orþašát perkém pu, kaþanešát perkém pu!* (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'When autumn comes having consulted with the family, having taken a piece of crooked iron, having come to the field to reap, give profusion to the handful and to the sheafs, give abundance to the heaps of sheafs, give profusion to the stooks, while loading stooks on the cart and give profusion to the cart, give abundance to the stacks!' *Kaþán ýóçon rønžén nálmø ýóðomát perkém pu, aþún šíýš koklašát perkém pu, sapóndø koklašát idømešát perkém pu, žul ošmá ýájo kuén čümormø kíndø perkém pu, þákš-kü koklašát, klát-purašát perkém pu, sókto-tayanašát perkém pu!* (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'On taking the stacks to pieces give (them) profusion, give abundance to the barn smoke, give profusion between the flail and the threshing-floor, like the sand of the Volga river give abundance to the collected grain, and give profusion between the millstones in the barn and between the sieve and the flat trough!'

The role of the conjunction belongs to the particle (coordinator) *-at*, which shows intense coordination. The repetition of the *-at* makes the utterance more rhythmical, unites the petitions into the whole unity. At the same time this particle helps to make each request prominent.

The stylistic effect of repetition points at logical importance, necessary to fix attention on the key-word of the request. The repeated units of the prayer are at the end of sentences and clauses. For example, epiphoric repetition of 1) verbs: *ísoržom tüžom ó š t ø, kañgážom kojám ó š t ø* 'make cow with calf, make skinny fat'; *kor-*

možeš perkém pu, koltašát perkém pu, koltá tüškašát perkém pu, kopnašát perkém pu, kopnám orbáške óptomə yódem orbašát perkém pu, kařanešát perkém pu! (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'give profusion to the handfuls and sheafs, give abundance to the heaps of sheafs, give profusion to the stooks, while loading stooks on the cart, give profusion to the loads of the cart, give abundance to the stacks!'; 2) verbs and postpositions: *žolá-balá y ó č ə n, suás koštán y ó č ə n s á k l ə, ruš koštán y ó č ə n á t s á k l ə!* (Porkka 1895 : 20) 'save from all the calamities, save from the wicked Tatars, and from the wicked Russians!'; 3) participles: *ik užá(k)šožom ónžokə p ə š t é n, kok užá(k)šožom šeňgəkə p ə š t é n* (Porkka 1895 : 20) 'having put one part (of the receipts) in front, two parts (for the future) behind (back)'; 4) similar roots and possessive suffixes (having the meaning of the category of definiteness): *M ü k š -perkė yóčən, m ü -perkė yóčən nemnám žóbertoktə!* (Porkka 1895 : 21); *Š ó mlə -š ə m taň; β ü δ βoktén léktən kaiméňə, β ü δ -kol e t úlə,... β ü δ -šašk e t úlə* (Porkka 1895 : 20) 'make us happy by the plenty of bees, by the profusion of honey!' 'Seventy seven friends'; '...there is some fish, there are otters, there are minks.'

There is another compositional pattern of repetition — chain repetition: *k ə l t a š á t perkém pu, k ə l t á tüškašát perkém pu; k o p n a š á t perkém pu, k o p n á m o r b á š k ə óptomə yódem o r β a š á t perkém pu!* (Porkka 1895 : 19)

Another syntactical expressive marker in the prayer is enumeration. The enumerated nouns create a chain: *čolá türl'ə osál yóčən, tušmán yóčən, osál šinžá yóčən, lóktəzə yóčən, píro yóčən, maská yóčən i čolá türl'ə osál káik yóčən (sáklə)* (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'from any evil from the enemies, from an evil eye, from the sorcerers, from the wolves, from the bears, from all other (wild) beasts'; *kíndə perkém pu, bákš-kü koklašát, klat-purašát perkém pu, šóktə — tayanašát perkém pu!* (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'give abundance to the grain, and give profusion between the millstones in the barn, and between the sieve and the flat through!'

Antithesis is usually moulded in parallel constructions. Different, even antagonistic, features of the described objects are better observed: *ísoržom tüžom óšto, kaňgažom kojám óžtə!* (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'make cow with calf, make thin fat!' *nalšášlokə sulšeštáro, uzalošášlokə seryeštáro!* (Porkka 1895 : 20) 'reduce the price of the goods we are going to buy, rise the price of the things we are going to sell!'

In the stylistic opposition there is an idiom: *Čolá türl'ə osáləm túpon póktələn nálən kai, pórožom mélon sařerén kóndə!* (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'All different evil turn away (with its back to us) from us, everything good bring to us!'

Parallel construction in the prayer is generally used in enumeration, antithesis and gradation, and may be supported by lexical repetition. It strengthens the general effect of these syntactical markers.

There are some passages in the text where the array of the clauses and parts of the sentences gives a gradual increase in importance, which is maintained in a logical way but with the touch of some quantitative meaning: *Šóžə šuméňə, kúdožéš déno kaňaşén, kádər kürtňəm kučén türedáš šořalméňə, k o r m ə ž é š perkém pu, koltaš á t perkém pu, koltá tüš kaš á t perkém pu, k o p n a š á t perkém pu; k o p n á m orbaškə óptomə yódem o r β a š á t perkém pu, k a - β a n e š á t perkém pu!* (Porkka 1895 : 19) 'When autumn comes having consulted with the family, having taken a piece of crooked iron, having come to the field to reap, give profusion to the handfuls and to the sheafs, give abundance to the heaps of sheafs, give profusion to the stooks, while loading stooks on the cart and give profusion to the cart, give abundance to the stacks!'

Repeated nouns — things the worshippers asked to give or to protect from — create several sporadic semantic fields connected with the household duties, the work in the field, the hunt, etc. Enumeration and repetition occur both in compound and simple sentences of the prayer.

Lexical expressive markers of the prayer are: 1) repetition of notional words; 2) form-words which is due to the selection only of some groups of nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives (*tül-βujánom ó š t o, ísoržom tüžom ó š t o, kaňgážom kojám ó š t o! osal mardéž γ ó č o n, βüð yóčon...*).

A general survey of lexis shows that the words are both descriptive and evaluative. Componential analysis, which helped to analyse the semantic structure of the notional words, showed not only major semes of each word (which facilitated dividing all the lexical units into large groups) but also differentiating semes (showing the division within groups).

Semantic classification of the verbs revealed 3 groups of the verbs in the text of the prayer (finite forms only).

Group 1 includes the verbs denoting different kinds of activity: *oštáš* 'to do', *araláš* 'to guard, to save', *puaš* 'to give', *türedáš* 'to reap', *konďáš* 'to bring', *kalasáš* 'to speak', *polšáš* 'to help', *sakláš* 'to guard'.

Only a few verbs express the idea of motion (Group 2): *purtáš* 'to come in', *kaiáš* 'to go', *küžoktáš* 'to lift something or somebody', *βoltaš* 'to lower down'.

Two verbs — *iláš* ('to live') and *uláš* ('to be') — constitute the group of the verbs expressing existence (Group 3).

Common nouns of the prayer include abstract and concrete names. Concrete nouns are divided into 4 relatively numerous groups. The most representative is Group I which consists of the names of different objects, geographic realities, nature phenomena, unique or irreal subjects and objects, parts of the body: *klat* 'a barn', *šóktø* 'a sieve', *kaβán* 'a stack', *sortá* 'a candle', *satü* 'goods', *βütá* 'a cattle-shed', *sapóndø* 'a flail', *orβá* 'a cart', *küðøřø* 'thunder', *βolyénžø* 'lightning', *mardéž* 'a wind', *tütorá* 'a mist', *póltoš* 'a button', *pazár* 'a market', *óto* 'a cop-pice', *kúruk* 'a mountain', *kórno* 'a road', *žólmo* 'a tongue', *kórmøž* 'a handful', *šinžá* 'an eye'.

Group II of concrete nouns includes the names given to separate persons characterising a) biological or anthropological qualities: *orβézo* 'a youngster', *ruš* 'a Russian', *suás* 'a Tatar'; b) social relations, words of kinship: *róðø-šamoč* 'relatives', *tañ* 'a friend', *kuγožá* 'a tzar', *kupič* 'a merchant', *kočá* 'a grandfather', *lóktøzo* 'a sorcerer'.

Group III comprises nouns denoting a) wild animals and birds: *píro* 'a wolf', *maská* 'a bear', *meráñ* 'a hare', *šurmákš* 'a lynx', *múzo* 'a hazel-grouse', *βaraséñgo* 'a swallow', *küðøř* 'a heath-cock'; b) a domestic animal: *ímno* 'a horse'.

Group IV consists of names of food, agricultural products, metals, liquids, sticky plastic substances: *ošmá* 'sand', *kürtño* 'iron', *poršøn* 'silk', *mü* 'honey', *βa-šákšø* 'leftovers', *súkor* 'a round loaf', *kúndø* 'bread', *póřčø* 'a grain', *kóčkos* 'food', *βüð* 'water', *šóštø* 'wax'.

Abstract nouns of the prayer show some psychic, psychological, moral categories: *perké* 'profusion, abundance', *tazálok* 'health', *kúrøm* 'life, age', *ümøř* 'life, age', *póro* 'good', *osal* 'evil', *uš-ákøl* 'mind', *laskálok* 'politeness', *tónøsløk* 'tranquility'.

In the text of the prayer all the qualitative adjectives are divided into two large groups: 1) the words denoting the quality of the objects received by the organs of feeling and 2) the words denoting the quality of the objects deduced after some conclusions, rationally.

There are three subgroups of adjectives in Group I: a) adjectives which show

the quality if the objects are perceived by sight: *kuyú* 'big, great', *kumdá* 'wide', *kužú* 'long', *šem* 'black', *čubar* 'motley', *kélyo* 'deep', *kojá* 'fat', *kañgá* 'thin, bonny', *kádor* 'crooked' (colour, size, shape); b) adjectives which characterize taste: *šókšo* 'hot', *támle* 'tasty', *šére* 'sweet'; c) adjectives denoting the quality of the objects perceived by touch: *péñgodo* 'hard, tough', *šókšo* 'hot', *léβo* 'warm'.

The adjectives of Group II are not numerous. They characterize different qualities of man (*tóšto* 'old', *orβézo* 'young'), various features of animals and objects (*ísor* 'barren', *lóβoryo* 'flexible', *šoldóryo* 'winged').

The adverbs of the analyzed prayer show the time (*adák* 'again', *žüđšo-ké-čožo* 'day and night'), place of actions (*ülko* 'down', *küško* 'up', *onžokó* 'in front', *šeñgéko* 'behind', *tuzéčon* 'from there').

The analyzed groups and subgroups of the verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs cause lexical repetition which stresses the uniform, unvaried reiteration of the same actions, requests, qualities of the objects, and thus intensifies the utterance, making it more expressive.

The semantic markers of expressivity (metaphor, metonymy, similes, epithets, periphrasis, etc.) in the text of the prayer include similes, epithets and periphrasis.

The prayer is very rich in similes which have a formal element in their structure — the connective word *ýájo*-like: (*parčážom*) *ši póltos ýájo* 'seeds like river buttons', *žül-ošmá ýájo* 'like the sand from the Volga', *óto ýájo koišlanén* 'showing off like a coppice', *kúruk ýájo kuanén* 'rejoicing like a hill', *súkor ýájo karáš-sámoč* 'honeycomb like a round loaf of bread' (Porkka 1895 : 19—21).

After the analysis of only one prayer it is difficult to conclude whether these similes are genuine or simply belong to this genre.

In the attributive word-combinations of the text there are several epithets and logical attributes which directly characterize the things described: *osál mar-déž* 'evil wind', *osál šinžá* 'an evil eye', *šoldóryo šere(támle) šomák* 'winged sweet words', *lóβoryo žólmo* 'a flexible tongue' (epithets); *kélyo korém* 'a deep ravine', *lé-βo žür* 'a warm rain', *šókšo, küšo kóčkoš* 'hot prepared food' (logical attributes, though the further analysis of some more texts may show that they are traditional folk epithets typical of this genre, the so-called fixed epithets).

Periphrasis is a roundabout way of speaking, the renaming of an object. This device identifies one of the barely insignificant features of the given objects, it can be understood only in context: *lapká* — *žolán* (Porkka 1895 : 20) lit. 'with short legs' = 'a hare'; *kádor kúrtío* (Porkka 1895 : 19) lit. 'a piece of crooked iron' = 'a sickle'.

So we may say that the expressive markers of the text are: alliterations, rhythmic models, based on the usage of the syntactical expressive means; the identical types of word-combinations, sentences throughout the text; enumeration with polysyndeton and asyndeton; lexico-syntactical epiphoric repetition, the preference of certain groups of lexis (within the ranges of the whole vocabulary) shown by the semantic classifications, sporadic semantic fields, antithesis, similes, epithets, periphrasis.

Among the numerous functions of the expressive markers shown by different scholars (Galperin 1977; Leech 1983; Ладисова 1981), in the analyzed text they fulfil the following functions:

- 1) emphasize, emotionally and logically intensify the requests of the worshipper (epiphoric repetition, contact and distant reiteration);
- 2) describe the actions, the things the pagans asked for and the quality of the objects (epithets, similes, enumerations);

- 3) make the text rhythmical (epiphora, enumeration, asyndeton, polysyndeton, lexical repetition);
- 4) show different believers' emotions (epithets, abstract lexis, logical attributes, lexical repetition).
- 5) create linguistic expressivity (epithets, similes, periphrasis).

These are the preliminary remarks about the nature of expressivity of the Mari prayers.

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Н. Н. ГЛУХОВА (Йошкар-Ола)

ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКАЯ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ ОДНОЙ МАРИЙСКОЙ МОЛИТВЫ

Основная задача статьи — дать перечень маркеров экспрессивности и классификацию функций выразительных средств всех уровней языковой структуры. По ходу классификации рассматриваются также лингвистические и экстралингвистические факторы, обуславливающие использование тех или иных средств выразительности в тексте марийской молитвы. Кроме того, предлагается вариант семантической классификации знаменательной лексики текста как решение избирательности фольклорного жанра молитвы.

Лингвостилистический подход к фольклорным текстам позволяет получить новые лингвистические данные не только о жанровом своеобразии фольклорного материала, но и о специфике проявления марийского языка на уровне функциональных стилей.