

The Language of Dmitriy Venevitinov's Poetry: A Linguographic Approach

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Abstract

The dictionary complex of Venevitinov's poetry language created at Kazan Federal University provides valuable materials for studying the features of his language and it is currently being prepared for publication. The dictionary complex includes quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the poet's lexicon. This article presented the results of the study of Dmitriy Venevitinov's poetic language obtained in the process of creating this dictionary complex. The article considered individual-author words, obsolete words, and other units referring to the vocabulary of limited use. The dictionary also provided a wide range of opportunities for a multilateral description of the texts. With the help of the frequency dictionary and concordance, the authors determined the main motives of Venevitinov's poetry (according to Gasparov's approach) and thereby proved the poet's involvement in romantic individualism. The results of the study further showed the significant information potential of language reference books as well as prospects and effectiveness of their use for the description of text materials.

Keywords: Idiostyle; Author's linguography/lexicography; Venevitinov; Dictionary of poetry; Concordance; Frequency dictionary.



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1. Introduction

In recent decades, lexicography has been actively developing and dictionaries of writers' language and concordances are created all over the world. There are also a large number of works devoted to this issue, and specialized conferences are being held (Shestakova, 2007; Shestakova L., 2010; Shestakova, 2013). At Kazan Federal University, a group of linguists from the department of Russian language and applied linguistics created a computer dictionary and text fund of Russian poetry of the 19th century. One of the authors whose works are subjected to a linguographic description is Dimitriy Venevitinov (Kondubaeva and Ongarbaeva, 2018).

The dictionary of Venevitinov's poetry language is currently being prepared for publication. The main source for the creation of text libraries and dictionaries was the publication of poems by Venevitinov in the large series "Literary Monuments" (1980). The text library contained all the poetic texts reflected in this source, and it is necessary to mention that all recorded versions are included. The composition of the dictionary complex consists of concordance, frequency, and reverse word-/wordform indicators, and a dictionary of rhymes (Antúnez, 2001).

As the analysis showed, quantitative (quantitative and statistical) data provided valuable materials for studying the features of the text language for various comparative studies (Gabrakhmanov and Ergunova, 2017).

Concordance also described all cases of all words usage recorded in the Venevitinov's works, i.e. the exact number was 11,136 words. Quantitative data of the frequency dictionary also provided an opportunity to determine the basic motives of the poetry. Those lexemes that were characterized by a limited sphere of use and might not be familiar to the modern reader were also of special interest in Venevitinov's language.

Moreover, the dictionary provided valuable materials for studying the features of the language of the text, including the vocabulary of limited use.

2. Materials and Methods

In the course of the study, the authors used descriptive, diachronic, and quantitative methods. The quantitative method was employed in determining the main motives of the poet's work, as well as in analyzing his quantitative lexicon. With the help of the diachronic method, obsolete words were revealed, as well as words whose meanings had changed since the period of Venevitinov's poetry. The descriptive method was also used to reflect the functioning of concrete lexemes which made the language of Venevitinov's poetry original.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the dictionary data (more precisely, the frequency characteristics of the units used by the poet), it was possible to determine the motivation for the poet's work as a whole. On the basis of Gasparov's definition, three features of the *reasons* were identified (Gasparov, 1994), 1) repeatability; 2) ability to accumulate meanings, i.e. its

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implementation in different contexts; 3) presence of stable attributes. The most frequent lexemes in Venevitinov's poetry were: *soul* (63), *friend* (54), *life* (52), which possessed all the three attributes of the motive.

The first sign - *repeatability* - was present, and this was clearly seen from the data of the poet's frequency dictionary. Frequent repeatability of these lexemes was obvious: if we considered that only 48 poems were represented, then the number of uses of them indicated 3 lexemes which significantly exceeded the number of Venevitinov's poems.

In order to prove the second sign - "*the ability to accumulate meanings*" - the materials of concordance were used. The image of the *soul* in Venevitinov's poetry appears first of all as a living being, alter ego of a lyrical hero, and sometimes wiser than a lyrical hero himself. That is, the lexeme *soul* was realized in contexts in which there were verbs of movement, thoughts, and feelings - those verbs that were used in relation to a person.

Also *soul* appeared as a vessel having limited volumes.

The *soul* of the lyrical hero was a field of passions, reflections, and feelings. Repeatedly, in the literary works of Venevitinov, it concealed in itself something that was the opposite of what the external appearance of the lyrical hero expressed. This fact was quite understandable: Venevitinov is a poet-romanticist, a poet of the Alexander Pushkin's pleiad. The true feature of romanticism is the discrepancy between the external appearance and the inner; the inner world of the hero is a real life and the earthly existence is a miserable copy of life.

In the poem "K Rozhalynu", there is an opposition between the "presence"/ absence of the soul. For example, the lyrical hero appealed to the addressee: "*seeking consolation / soul rich in self*". These lines also proved that the feelings of romantic individualism were close to Venevitinov. The "*soulless crowd*" was opposed to the person with the soul, and the lyric hero noted: "*When in the desert populous / You have not found the soul of one*". The poet advised to meet this soulless crowd "*with a dush bulatnoj*".

Thus, according to Venevitinov, a person who did not have a soul was not a human being at all, but a creature belonging to "*a world where the eyes and taste are disappointed*". And this world was not capable of warming the "*soul of the young*". Here, as in the poem "To my goddess", the soul was identified with the lyrical hero himself; more precisely, it was the real, wise beginning.

So, the lexeme *soul* in Venevitinov's works was realized in different contexts, thereby forming new shades of lexical meaning:

- a) Contradiction of the lexeme: the soul as an unlimited space and the soul as a limited vessel;
 - b) Identification of the soul with the lyric ego;
 - c) Soul as a measure of the division of world: absence of the soul points to the belonging to an artificial world;
- and
- d) Soul contrasts with the external appearance of the lyric hero.

Consequently, this lexeme was characterized by the second sign of the motive - the ability to accumulate meanings. Of course, the lexeme received many other shades of meaning, but the most common were identified.

At the same time, these four meanings of the lexeme *soul* were the permanent attributes of Venevitinov's poetry, since they were repeatedly realized.

The next word which occurred 54 times in the poetry of Venevitinov was the lexeme *friend*. As in the previous case, the first motivational attribute - repeatability - had already been proved by a frequency dictionary. As for the contexts in which the lexeme was implemented, the most frequent use was addressing - this lexeme was used 29 times out of 54 in this meaning.

For the lyrical hero, the poet and friend had an almost identical important role. Also, this lexeme was used by the poet in the meaning "beloved": "*That her loyal friend lies / In a damp earth, in a silent tomb*".

Venevitinov, as a young romantic poet, appreciated friendship. It is noteworthy that the lyrical hero preferred to share only happiness and admiration with friends. This was perhaps due to the continuing romantic individualism: the lyrical hero preferred to keep everything that worried him within himself.

Thus, the lexeme *friend* was implemented in the following contexts and meanings:

- a) Addressing;
- b) Worship of friendship;
- c) A friend as a beloved.

Consequently, the ability to accumulate meaning was realized. A friend as something grand, a stronghold, and one with a soul - these values accompanied the word as permanent attributes, which were also the third sign of motive.

Lexeme *life* revealed a surprising similarity with the meaning of the lexeme *soul*. As in previous cases, the first sign of motivation - repeatability - was statistically proven.

Life for the lyrical hero was not an abstract concept, but a living creature. In addition, the poet perceived life as a canvas, on which it was possible to create both masterpieces and non-talented creations: "*ut as a creation witness / He unfolded the whole fabric*".

Describing *life*, Venevitinov used a variety of epithets: *spring life*, *fleeting life*, *windy life*, but, nevertheless, a *sweet life*. *Life* for Venevitinov was something beautiful, but impermanent. The epithets were indicative: the poet seemed to have anticipated his death at the dawn of life.

Thus, *life* was realized in the following lexical meanings:

- 1) A canvas for creativity;
- 2) A living being;
- 3) Something fleeting, elusive.

The language of Venevitinov's poetry was characterized by the use of words with a positive connotation. The frequency dictionary also showed that the most common word with a negative connotation ("grave") was repeated only 21 times.

The poetry of Venevitinov was similarly interesting because it was characterized by a limited sphere of use that might not be familiar to the contemporary reader.

The lexicon of the Russian national language was usually divided into the commonly used vocabulary and the vocabulary of limited use. Since Venevitinov lived and worked at the beginning of the 19th century, the meanings of these vocabularies would differ.

During the linguographic processing and description of units, the authors worked with the dictionaries modern to the poet (The Dictionary of the Church Slavonic and Russian Language in 1847) and with the language references of the present time (the Great Explanatory Dictionary edited by Kuznetsov). The availability of these dictionaries made it possible to deeply study the lexemes characterized by a limited sphere of use.

The vocabulary in Venevitinov's work was connected with the themes of his works, their genre, the worldview of the poet, and his relation to the aesthetic functions of the language. First of all, the poet used a lot of units related to the traditional poetic in the Great Explanatory Dictionary: *vezhdy*, *bagryanica*, *dennica*, *tihostrujnyj*, etc.

The writers' dictionaries also attract interests of linguists because they contain rare words, which reflect the individual author's style features to a considerable extent (Mardanova *et al.*, 2017). In the poetic language of Venevitinov, there were units that were absent in language reference books and in other sources. For example: *polubeshenyj* ("How do I get up loved"), the form of the word *Skeleton* ("But I'm not a murderer, O King Scandinavian! "Ande" But the bards, performing the Scandinavian rite"). The potential initial form was the unit *Skeleton* (by analogy with the unit *kievlyanin*), which was absent in modern language reference books, in dictionaries of modern poets, and also on the Internet.

The poetry of Venevitinov also included a lot of obsolete words divided into two groups: 1) words which were obsolete for the modern reader; 2) words which were obsolete for the language of the poet's epoch (according to the Dictionary of the Church Slavonic and Russian Language).

The first group was comprised of the following units: *Aria*, *Olive*, *Ulst*, *Tate*, *Chelo*, *ugly*, and *kitchen*. It is noteworthy that the last unit was completely absent in modern explanatory dictionaries. In the dictionaries of the poet's period, the following interpretation was identified: *citation* "high opinion of their own merits, arrogance, pride" (Karpova, 2011).

The second group of obsolete words included the following lexemes: *veche*, *slashing*, and *mug*. In the Dictionary of the Church Slavonic and Russian Language in 1847, the word *rozha* had no special litter and it was stylistically neutral. However, in modern dictionaries, in particular - in the Great Explanatory Dictionary, the word had a note *tag*, and its lexical meaning had limited the scope of its use.

4. Summary

Thus, the dictionary provided many opportunities for a multilateral description of the texts. With the help of the frequency dictionary and concordance, it became possible to determine the main motives of Venevitinov's poetry; and thereby to prove the poet's involvement in romantic individualism.

The absence of certain units used by the poet in the 19th century dictionaries and modern dictionaries also made it possible to reveal a circle of lexemes characterized by a limited sphere of use; namely, archaisms, historisms, and individual-author words.

5. Conclusion

Inventory dictionaries lay the foundation for the further development of philology (Galeev and Solovyev, 2016; Mardanova *et al.*, 2017; Martiyanov and Galiullin, 2015; Martyanov *et al.*, 2017), and also provide linguists and literary scholars with a set of corpora and statistical tools for studying poetics of a particular author, for comparative studies from different points of view.

The results of the conducted studies showed the significant information potential of the inventory of language reference books as well as the prospects and effectiveness of their use for the polyaspectsual description of the text materials.

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