M. M. Bakhtin's Concept of the Word in the Context of Modern Literary Criticism / *Концепция слова М. М. Бахтина в контексте современного литературоведения / A concepção da palavra em Mikhail Bakhtin no contexto da crítica literária contemporânea*

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to one of the central problems of modern philological science – the problem of the artistic word, in the understanding of which we see the fruitful intersection and interaction of literary criticism and linguistics. The work systematizes the concepts relevant for the modern study of the artistic word, revealing its specific nature, and defines the general tendencies characteristic of each of the existing approaches (word as a sign, word as ontological significance, and word as separate aesthetic reality). The author focuses on the word concept by M. M. Bakhtin, which overcomes the extremes, characteristic of the sign and ontological approaches, and clarifies the basic differences between Bakhtin's categories of communion and dialogue. The article substantiates the definition of the artistic word as a two-vector semantic structure (the "sign" and "objective-substantial" components), in which being-communion consists and unfolds.
KEYWORDS: Dialogue; Communication; Being-Communion; Meaning; Utterance

АННОТАЦИЯ

*Статья посвящена одной из центральных проблем современной филологической науки – проблеме художественного слова, в осмыслении которого плодотворно пересекаются и взаимодействуют литературоведение и лингвистика. В работе систематизированы актуальные для современного изучения художественного слова концепции, выявляющие его специфику, и определены общие тенденции, характерные для каждого из существующих подходов (слово как знак, слово как онтологическая значимость, слово как отдельная эстетическая реальность). В центре внимания автора - концепция слова М. М. Бахтина, в которой преодолеваются крайности, характерные для знакового и онтологического подходов, прояснены базовые отличия бахтинских категорий общения и диалога. Обосновано определение художественного слова как двухвекторной смысловой структуры («знаковый» и «предметно–субстанциальный» компоненты), в которой заключается и развертывается бытие-общение.
КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: Диалог; Общение; Бытие-общение; Смысл; Высказывание*

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RESUMO

O artigo é dedicado a um dos problemas centrais da ciência filológica moderna - o problema da palavra artística, no entendimento do qual vemos a interseção e interação frutífera da crítica literária e da linguística. O trabalho sistematiza conceitos relevantes para o estudo moderno da palavra artística, revelando sua natureza específica, bem como define as tendências gerais que são características de cada uma das abordagens existentes (palavra como signo, palavra como significado ontológico e palavra como realidade estética separada). A autora enfoca no conceito de palavra de Mikhail Bakhtin, que supera os extremos, próprios do signo e das abordagens ontológicas, e esclarece as diferenças básicas entre as categorias de comunicação e diálogo presentes em Bakhtin. O artigo corrobora com a definição da palavra artística como uma estrutura semântica de dois vetores (os componentes: "signo" e "sujeito substancial"), na qual a comunicação-existência consiste e se desdobra.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Diálogo; Comunicação; Ser-comunicação; Significado; Enunciado

Introduction

Contemporary literary studies are marked not only by intense self-examination but also by equally intense attempts to understand what the artistic word is. This is explained by the fact that "the reflection over the foundations of culture" typical for transitional periods (ISKRZHITSKAYA, 1997, p.97; our translation)[1] is naturally directed to the word as the element, designed to cement the disintegrating unity. In this regard, the artistic word is seen as a certain aesthetic fixed element and as a specific cultural fact. In comprehending this phenomenon, there is certain ambivalence, as there are some contrasting points of view.

Main Interpretations of the Word in Literary Criticism and Philosophy

First of all, there is the interpretation of the word as a sign presented in V.V. Vinogradov's and V. P. Grigoryev's works, most consistently by Y. M. Lotman ("[...] a word is a sign, constant for a given language, with a strictly fixed designator and a specific semantic content" (LOTMAN, 1977, p.200),[2] and also in the Western European literary criticism by R. Barthes and G. Genette. We can see the following patterns here.

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[1] In the original: "[…] рефлексия над основаниями культуры."

[2] LOTMAN, J. *The Structure of the Artistic Text*. Transl. Ronald Vroon. University of Michigan, 1977.

The sign situation is a conventional connection of the signifier with the signified (F. Saussure), so the emphasis shifts from the word (and, consequently, from the work or text) to the perceiving subject. The perceiving and creative subjects are not isolated or closed. They correlate with the cultural context (V. V. Vinogradov), disperse in social, literary, etc. codes (R. Barthes, G. Genette). The quality of artisticity is derived from the juxtaposition of the interaction mode characteristic of the pragmatic language signs, and the new author's way of their interaction ("transformation of the lexeme" by V.V. Vinogradov), "deautomatization of the ordinary language" by Yu. M. Lotman, "shift" by G. Genette, "integration" by R. Barthes).

Secondly, it is the understanding of the word as ontological significance. It implies two possibilities: seeing the word as a separate aesthetic reality and as a manifestation of being in its philosophical sense. These tendencies are also present in literary criticism. The first one can be found in the works of G. O. Vinokur and his followers in the modern Ukrainian literary criticism, such as B.P. Ivanyuk, A. A. Tkachenko, and others, and also in J.C. Ransom's works in the Western European literary criticism. Here the word is understood as a special reality that embodies individual creative intentions and as a result, it becomes a new name for a new object - as Vinokur writes, "language ... is completely overturned into the theme and idea of an artistic plan" (VINOKUR, 1991, p.390; our translation).[3] The word's special reality has an organized character determined by the interaction of the linguistic and the author's individual meanings of the word, which emphasizes the category of the author whose function is to create a "new modus of linguistic reality" (G. O. Vinokur).

The second trend is represented by A. F. Losev, N. K. Gei, and by the scholars walking in the footsteps but simplifying the basic ideas of the so-called "religious philology" (V. S. Nepomnyashchiy, T.A. Kasatkina, etc.), as well as by M. Heidegger in Western Europe. The word contains reality; it is identical to the object and therefore is perceived as a monad in the Leibnizian sense. The image-bearing nature of the word is made absolute, and the fact that it is "greater than itself" (in the works by A. F. Losev and M. Heidegger, followed by N. K. Gei) is understood as its closed, non-contextual existence.

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[3] In the original: "[…] язык…весь опрокинут в тему и идею художественного замысла."

The idea of equivalence constitutes more or less conscious mythological thinking. A. F. Losev is the most conscious of it, which gives him an opportunity to create a multifaceted and dynamic concept of the word that partially overcomes the monadism noted above ("the name of the object is an arena in which perceiver and perceived meet"; our translation).[4]

In this connection, the fundamental isomorphism of the linguistic and artistic word based on its image-bearing nature is affirmed. According to M. Heidegger, language is "the house of being," the poetic word belongs to language and, consequently, to being; as N. K. Gei puts it, "meta-artisticity" is "that which defines human consciousness."[5] In addition, the creative subject is problematized and is presented as a medium. For M. Heidegger: "[...] the artist remains something indifferent as against the work." (HEIDEGGER, 2006, p.24).[6]

Essentially, here we deal with not so much a scientific, but, rather, a mythological vision of the word. It is associated with the onomatodoxy and the reflection of this experience in the Russian religious philosophy.

The Word as Being and Event

The extremes of both visions of the word considered above are successfully overcome, in our opinion, in M. M. Bakhtin's concept. He understands discourse (word) as "an utterance, which has an author, whom we hear in the very utterance as its creator" (BAKHTIN, 1999, p.174).[7] While studying the word in its artistic being, he understands this being as a moment of encounter of the linguistic word ("language in its concrete living whole") and the word as an aesthetic phenomenon − the manifestation of "expressive and speaking being":

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[4] In the original: "имя предмета – арена встречи воспринимающего и воспринимаемого."
[5] In the original: "то, что определяет человеческое сознание."
[6] HEIDEGGER, M. *The Origin of the Work of Art*. Transl. Roger Berkowitz and Philippe Nonet, 2006. Available at
https://www.academia.edu/2083177/The_Origin_of_the_Work_of_Art_by_Martin_Heidegger. Accessed: 30 March, 2020.
[7] BAKHTIN, M. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Trans. Caryl Emerson. 8 Ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

> Such a being never coincides with itself and therefore is inexhaustible in its meaning and signification. The mask, footlights, stage, ideal space, etc., as different forms of expressing the presence of being (and not of singleness and material nature) and selfless attitude to it (БАХТИН, 2002 b; our translation).[8]

Through the attributes of art ("mask, footlights"), the being manifests itself in the reality of life. In M. M. Bakhtin, despite all the ambiguity and complexity of the notion of "being," there is a different sphere, the one outside it, in which it must be manifested through the word. In fact, human personality is probably a connection point of being and life, the transformation of being into event of being: "Only from within my participation, being can be understood as event" (BAKHTIN, 1993, p.18).[9] "To affirm definitively the fact of my unique and irreplaceable participation in being is to enter being precisely where it does not coincide with itself: to enter the ongoing event of being" (BAKHTIN, 1993, p.42).[10]

The verbal art emerges as a kind of analogue of this event of being, because "the content of a work is, as it were, a segment of a unitary open event of being that has been isolated and freed by form from the responsibility to the future event, and therefore, it is as a whole self-sufficiently calm, consummated [...]" (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.306).[11] Consummation is such an extraction of a segment from the event of being, its presentation as a whole, and then its transition into the newly created being, into the being of an aesthetic object, in which, of course, the eventivity does not disappear: "In verbal artistic creation, it is particularly evident that the aesthetic object has the character of an event –

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[8] Editors' Note. The entire quote cannot be found in BAKHTIN, M. Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences. *In*: *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*. Translated by Vern W. McGee and Edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986. pp.159-177. We clarify that the source of the English translation was the collection *Estetika Slovesnogo Tvorchestva* [Aesthetcs of Verbal Creativity], edited by Sergey Averintsev and Sergey Bocharov, in Moscow: Iskússtvo, 1979 and it was already published with some missing parts, such as the quoted paragraph. In Russian, the full text can be found in БАХТИН, М.М. Рабочие записи 60-х – начала 70-х годов. В кн.: Бахтин М. М. Собрание сочинений в 7 томах. Том 6. Москва: Русские словари – Языки славянских культур, 2002b. с.371 – 432.
[9] BAKHTIN, M. *Toward a Philosophy of the Act.* Trans. Vadim Liapunov. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1993.
[10] For reference, see footnote 9.
[11] BAKHTIN, M. The problem of Content, Material and Form in Verbal Art. *In*: Bakhtin M. *Art and Answerability*. Trans. Vadim Liapunov and Kenneth Brostrom. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1990. pp.257-325.

here the interrelation of form and content has an almost dramatic character..." (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.317).[12]

Word's Structural Properties

This universal eventivity of life and being is embodied in the word. This eventivity is manifested based on the multi-component structure of the word quoted in the work "The problem of form, content and material in verbal artistic work":

> We distinguish in the word as material the following constituents: 1) the phonic side of the word, the musical constituent proper; 2) the referential meaning of the word (with all its nuances and variations); 3) the constituent of verbal connection (all the relations and interrelations that are purely verbal); 4) the intonational (on the psychological plane – the emotional-volitional) constituent of the word, the axiological directedness of the word that expresses the diversity of the speaker's axiological relations; 5) the feeling of verbal activeness, the feeling of the active generation of signifying sound (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.308).[13]

Before continuing our discussion, let us note two specific aspects of this list. First, "the constituent of verbal connection": considering that the connections of the word with other words are embedded in it and at the same time asserting in the next paragraph that these connections are more important than the "referential meaning of the word," M. M. Bakhtin thus postulates the balance and mutual determinability of the word semantics and the interverbal connections. Secondly, intonation is a manifestation of the work's axiological orientation. This is despite the fact that, as Ye. A. Bogatyryeva writes in the book *The Dramas of Dialogism,* "...According to Bakhtin, the utterance (word) becomes a material embodiment of value, turning language into a sphere of value-based being" (BOGATYRYEVA, 1996, p.61; our translation).[14] It turns out that value is embodied just in the least material and the most elusive constituent of the word. This explains why the value system of this or that creative subject is the most complicated thing in a work of art for both the reader and the interpreter.

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[12] For reference, see footnote 11.
[13] For reference, see footnote 11.
[14] In the original: "[…] высказывание (слово) у Бахтина становится материальным воплощением ценности, превращая язык в сферу ценностного бытия."

But let us continue. All the above-mentioned elements of the word are united in "the feeling of the active generation of signifying sound," and this union becomes the basis of the event of being in the word, thanks to which the word transitions into the aesthetic being. At the same time, M. M. Bakhtin stresses:

> We are talking about a feeling of generating both meaning and evaluation, that is, a feeling of moving and assuming a position as a whole human being – of a movement into which both the organism and meaning-directed activity are drawn, because both the flesh and the spirit of the word are generated together in their concrete unity (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.309).[15]

This is the feeling of a subject – not only a speaking subject, but in speaking, assuming his only position in the event of being.

All material elements of the word are involved in this movement of assuming the position. Actually, this is what we mean by overcoming the material nature of the word M. M. Bakhtin addresses in his work Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity.

> The word must cease to be felt as the word. The poet is not a creator in the linguistic world; he is only a user of language... The artist's attitude to the word – as to the word – is an auxiliary production process conditioned by his primary attitude to the content. One could say that the artist fashions the world by means of words, and to this end, words must be immanently surmounted as words and must become an expression of the world of others and of the author's relationship to that world. (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.195).[16]

It is necessary to notice the following peculiarity of Bakhtin's statement: this surmounting is "immanent," that is it goes on inside the word, it is not a distraction from the material nature of the word for the sake of its content, but the view of all material aspects of the word as fully permeated by this spiritual content. This means that "the artist fashions the world by means of words," which is possible only when the word first becomes a world imbued with the author's intentions, and then enters reality participating in dialogue.

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[15] For reference, see footnote 11.
[16] BAKHTIN, M. Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity. *In*: BAKHTIN M. *Art and Answerability*. Trans. Vadim Liapunov and Kenneth Brostrom. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1990. pp.04-256.

Categories of Communion and Dialogue

The specificity of Bakhtin's statement is in the manifestation of a person's participation in the event of being, in the dialogue. Communion and dialogue are Bakhtin's main categories defining both the real and the artistic world. Is there a difference between these two notions? Apparently, there is. First of all, communion is an attribute of man's being, both intrapersonal and interpersonal: "The very being of man is the deepest communion. To be means to communicate... To be means to be for another and through the other to be for oneself. A person has no internal sovereign territory; he looks into the eyes of another or with the eyes of another." (BAKHTIN, 1999, p.262).[17]

Dialogue takes place in the reality of life:

> Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue, a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life. He invests his entire self in discourse (word), and this discourse (word) enters into the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium (BAKHTIN, 1999, p.266).[18]

Moreover, it can be seen from the above-mentioned statements that "communion" and "dialogue" are not even attributes, but hypostases, they completely cover, so to speak, both being and life. According to M. M. Bakhtin, there is no being outside communication, in the same way as there is no life outside dialogue, because both cannot exist outside an individual and his word. Communion is the orientation of being to "the other"; it is a way for an individual to perceive himself as "the other"; it is the energy of interaction of everything with everything, inside and outside the creative subject. This element inspires the word: "The word, the living word inseparably linked with dialogic communion, by its very nature wants to be heard and answered" (BAKHTIN, 1999, p.270).[19] The word that "wants to be heard and answered" is only "linked with dialogic communion," but is not dialogue. Dialogue, on the other hand, is the embodiment of this spiritualizing desire, its arrangement, its acquisition of a subject, and its transformation into "an utterance which has an author." Communion seems to be a more comprehensive

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[17] For reference, see footnote 7.
[18] For reference, see footnote 7.
[19] For reference, see footnote 7.

characteristic; it is a precondition for dialogue. Having distinguished these concepts in this manner, it is possible to explain why, in Bakhtin's logic, there is no dialogue in lyrics, symbols and metaphors are non-dialogic: it is being-communion that is manifested in these categories, while dialogue presupposes subject-subject relations embodied in the word ("double-voiced word," "word about word").

The dialogic embodiment of the word makes it mobile and fickle:

> For the word is not a material thing but rather the eternally mobile, eternally fickle medium of dialogic interaction. It never gravitates toward a single consciousness or a single voice. The life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another generation. In this process, the word does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the power of these concrete contexts into which it has entered (BAKHTIN, 1999, p.187).[20]

That is, the word represents, first of all, temporal dynamics, and in the process of dialogic interaction, its semantics becomes variable and manifold, its augmentations become practically unpredictable. However, the word is not only a process of becoming, but also the result of communication: "...discourse (word) does not reflect an extraverbal situation in the way that a mirror reflects an object. In this case, discourse (word) rather resolves a situation, brings it to an evaluative conclusion" (BAKHTIN, 1976, p.100).[21]

Word as a Semantic Structure

M. M. Bakhtin clearly considers meaning to be the most important component of the word. After all, even if there is meaning outside the word, there is hardly a word without meaning (works such as "dis tur nul..." are rather a confirmation of this principle: a meaningless combination of sounds, designed as a word, shocks by its very "unreadability" in the existing system of semantics and requires another system – for example, the semantization of sounds).

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[20] For reference, see footnote 7.
[21] BAKHTIN, M. VOLOSHINOV, V. Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art. Concerning Sociological Poetics. *In: Freudianism:* A Marxist Critique. Transl. by Irwin R. Titunik, New York: Academic Press, 1976.

By meaning, M. M. Bakhtin implies first of all the response: "Meanings always respond to particular questions [...] Actual contextual meaning inheres not in one (single) meaning, but in two meanings that meet and accompany each other" (BAKHTIN, 1986, p.146).[22] Here, M. M. Bakhtin most likely proceeds from the concept of meaning put forward by Ye. N. Trubetskoy. In his work "The meaning of life," he defines meaning[23] as something universally true and extra-subjective: "Meaning understood this way is a logically necessary hypothesis and the sought-for of any thought [...] In other words, "meaning" is the universally true mental content, or, which is the same, the generally significant thought that constitutes the sought-for of any thought" (TRUBETSKOY, 1995, p.10; our translation).[24]

For M. M. Bakhtin, this removal of the subject, establishing the meaning as a fixed element and existing before the subject and the content found by him was unacceptable. For the scholar, the meaning is not only dialogic, but also personalistic: "Contextual meaning is personalistic; it always includes a question, an address, and the anticipation of a response, it always includes two (as a dialogic minimum). This personalism is not psychological, but semantic" (BAKHTIN, 1986, p.169).[25]

According to M. M. Bakhtin, there is no meaning outside the subject and his word, meaning is actualized primarily in a dialogue (i.e. the connection between "I" and "the other") embodied in the word. At the same time, meaning is also a temporal connection: "All being that is already present on hand in the past and in the present is only a mortal incarnation of the yet-to-be meaning of the event of being." (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.133).[26] In this case, we imply that everything happening in the past and present is meaningless outside the link with the future event experienced by the individual consciousness. We can say that essentially meaning is a way to go beyond the object, it is a search for its link with something beyond it, first of all with a person. On the one hand, it is a link between "I" and "not-I," and on the other hand, taking into account that meaning is the answer – between "I" and "the other."

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[22] BAKHTIN, M. From Notes Made in 1970-71. *In*: BAKHTIN, M. *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Trans. Vern W. McGee. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1986. pp.132-158.
[23] In Russian, с-мысл *"s-mysl"* (meaning) – "s" – with, together, "mysl'" – thought.
[24] In the original: "Так понимаемый «с-мысл» есть логически необходимое предположение и искомое всякой мысли… Иначе говоря, «смысл» есть общезначимое мысленное содержание, или, что то же самое, общезначимая мысль, которая составляет обязательное для всякой мысли искомое".
[25] For reference, see footnote 8.
[26] For reference, see footnote 16.

After all, what does it actually mean – to comprehend some phenomenon? Comprehend (as the language shows)[27] is grasping an object as a whole, embracing it with the eye as something unified and singular. This is why A. F. Losev in his book *The Problem of Symbol and the Realistic Art,* defining the symbol's semantic aspect, believes that in order for meaning to emerge, "noematic act" is necessary (Greek: noĕma – "thought," more precisely, "thought of an object," "thought processing an object in order to include it in the system of thought or in the process of thought")" (LOSEV, 1976, p.49; our translation).[28] To carry out this act, as can be seen from the above exposition, we should perceive the object as a whole, singling out its essential feature. This is the phenomenological interpretation of meaning, detecting an object's meaning. In the same way, V. N. Toporov perceives meaning

> ...as "some integral whole..." When people say, "it would make sense to...," the word "sense" (meaning) includes the idea of a good, true, reliable foundation, high expediency. Moreover, sense (meaning) contains being whose very phenomenon is good, and a reference to the whole composed of different parts, and such a whole is immeasurably above the "natural," i.e. the generated (and not created whole as the monolith existing since ancient times) (TOPOROV, 1983, p.28; our translation).[29]

Thus, the meaning of the word is the connection of the signified object with something external (firstly, with the subject, secondly, with other objects) and, besides, the view of the object as a whole, as some distinct reality. It is hardly possible to say precisely which of these two constituents of meaning is the designating one. After all, on the one hand, it is possible to include a phenomenon in the system of relations only by perceiving it as a whole, delineating its boundaries. On the other hand, attributing wholeness and defining a phenomenon (in the sense of outlining its limits) is possible

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[27] In Russian, "osmysleniye" (comprehension) – "o" – embrace, grasp, "mysleniye" – thinking. Compare to English: comprehension: "com-"together +"prehendere"– grasp.

[28] In the original: "[…] ноэматический акт (греч. noĕma – "мысль", точнее, "мысль о предмете","мысль, обрабатывающая предмет в целях включения его в систему мысли или в процесс мысли)."

[29] In the original: […] как "некое интегральное целое […] Когда говорят: "есть смысл, чтобы…", в слово "смысл" вкладывают идею благого, истинного, надежного основания, высокой целесообразности, более того, смыслу приписывается бытие, само явление которого благо, и отсылка к соединенному из разных частей целому, а такое целое безмерно выше "природного", т.е. порожденного (а не сотворенного целого как искони существующего монолита)."

only by looking at it from the outside, from some already established system of connections.

From this we can conclude that the two processes in meaning, despite being opposite, turn out to be interconditioned. Meaning as embracing and delimiting a particular whole, and meaning as going beyond, as a link and an answer, exist in the word in mutual necessity but do not merge. Meaning thus becomes the boundary where these two intents intersect, where they interact.

Therefore, the word can be presented as both a mutual necessity and at the same time, non-merging of the two components: 1) objective-substance – internal, manifesting the identity of word and object and postulating the word as a distinct reality; 2) sign – external, referring to the reality behind the word.

In the structure of primary relations, the whole range of elements the word contains as a complex multilevel formation is essentially defined. The phonic side, signification (a particular case of meaning formation – the ability of one phenomenon to point at another one), image, intonation, etc., correlate in the word in this very way. Each of these categories is thought to be linked to another and, in the end, to all the other categories, while at the same time retaining its autonomy, and being necessary in this autonomy, as well as in the links. The word is, in fact, a whole universe, whose components are each viewed only through the connection with the other, external elements, and through this connection and necessity, the word finds its place in the universe. In this logic, phone (sound), signification, image, intonation are the inner forms of each other: signification is thought to be related to phone (sound) and necessary for this combination of sounds to become a word. On the one hand, considering the word, it is impossible to think of the phonic side without signification, of signification without image, that is, to imagine them as something closed and delineated, segmented. On the other hand, if they merge completely, if there is no boundary between them, there will be no word; their existence in the word is "indivisible and unmerged."

Word as the Primary Element of Being-Communion

All the above makes it possible to present the word as being-communion. This term is actualized in M. M. Girshman's works: "We analyze and interpret literary work

as the aesthetic being-communion, realized in the artistic text, but irreducible to it [...] (GIRSHMAN, 2002, p.503; our translation). "[30] The article "The word in the artistic wholeness of the literary work" states that the word acquires the quality of being-communion when the individual artistic world is realized in it.

In our opinion, this term emerges from the Bakhtin's statement we already quoted: "The very being of man is the deepest communion. To be means to communicate... To be means to be for another and through the other to be for oneself" (BAKHTIN, 1999, p.262).[31] The definition of the literary work as being-communion essentially means that it is through its artistic world, through the primary link of communion in the triad of "author-hero-reader," that this nature of being, indivisibility and unmerging of everything in it, becomes available to direct sensation.

However, we believe that it is the word that serves as a primary element of being-communion: it is in the word, as pointed out already, that the mutual directedness of phonic side and signification, signification and image, image and intonation, etc. is primarily carried out. Being-communion contained in the word, as in a molecule, further unfolds in the utterance, and "utterance which has an author" is actually built as a process of finding balance and correspondence between these different but mutually necessary components of the word, it exists as a dynamics of development and preservation of this intent. The semantic intent, embedded in the objective-substantial component of the word as some uncertainty, is clarified in its sign component and is carried out in the flow of the artistic utterance, at seams and transitions (the metaphor of fabric is often applied to the text).

This feature may explain the ability of the utterance to "fold" (be reduced to one word) and to unfold (to become text) as stated by M. M. Bakhtin. In addition, the utterance's flow also combines the processes of finding meaning and generating meaning in the same "indivisible and unmerged" manner, which brings to life the feature of its perception Leo Tolstoy pointed out: "I have known it all, but just could not express it."

Characteristically, in his article Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry, M. M. Bakhtin interprets word as a primary element of being-communion. This work was published under the name of V. N. Voloshinov, a Russian linguist, philosopher,

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[30] In the original: "Мы анализируем и интерпретируем литературное произведение как эстетическое бытие-общение, осуществляемое в художественном тексте, но к тексту несводимое […]."
[31] For reference, see footnote 7.

musicologist, belonging to the so-called "Bakhtin Circle." However, as for the real authorship of this work, the Russian scholars are not unanimous; at least, significant participation of M. M. Bakhtin in its writing is obvious, if we compare the main principles of this work with Bakhtin's own text "The problem of speech genres."

In this definition, the researcher's thought moves from the linguistic word to the artistic one. Speaking about different possibilities of understanding the word "well," M. M. Bakhtin writes:

> What is it we lack, then? We lack the "extraverbal context" that made the word "well" a meaningful locution for the listener. This extraverbal context of the utterance is comprised of three factors: (1) the common spatial purview of the interlocutors (the unity of the visible—in this case, the room, a window, and so on), (2) the interlocutors' common knowledge and understanding of the situation, and (3) their common evaluation of that situation (BAKHTIN, 1976, 2002, p.106).[32]

All the points listed by M. M. Bakhtin contain an affirmation of an unspoken, but implied commonality established between the speakers by the spoken word. Thus, this commonality exists on the border between the extraverbal reality and the word, between something thought of and verbalized, which makes the word dynamic, turns it into an "event," as M. M. Bakhtin writes, in which the relationship of the speakers is concentrated:

> Verbal discourse, then, is the means by which actual life situations structure themselves. They do so as scenarios dramatizing specific events. Any account of utterance must reproduce this event of the mutual [simultaneous] relationships between speakers, must, as it were, restructure it, with the person wishing to understand taking upon himself the role of listener. But in order to carry out that role, he must distinctly understand the position of the other as well. (BAKHTIN,1976, p.20).[33]

And when M. M. Bakhtin compares the poetic word with the word in speech, he points out this very significance, not only of what has been said, but also of what has not been said, as well as the eventivity of the word, where the community of speakers is realized:

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[32] For reference, see footnote 21.
[33] For reference, see footnote 27.

> Verbal discourse in poetry is a "scenario" of a certain event that competent artistic perception reenacts, sensitively surmising from the words and the forms of their organization the specific, living inter-relations of the author with the world he depicts and entering into those inter-relations as a third participant – (the listener role). Where linguistic analysis sees only words and interactions between their abstract elements (phonetic, morphological, syntactical and so on), artistic perception and concrete sociological analysis reveal the relations between people which are merely reflected and fixed in the verbal material (BAKHTIN,1976, p.106).[34]

In M. M. Bakhtin's works, there are always people behind the word: speakers and listeners in speech, author, hero, and reader in the artistic work:

> Evaluations first of all determine the author's selection of words and the listener's feeling for this selection (co-selection)... Besides, evaluation is also active regarding the subject of utterance – the hero. The simple selection of an epithet or a metaphor is already an active evaluating act oriented in two directions: towards the listener and towards the hero. The listener and the hero are the constant participants in the creative event, which does not for a single instant cease to be an event of living communication involving all three (BAKHTIN, 1976, p.97).[35]

As we see from the article Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry, the word in speech actualizes itself in the already pre-existing situation of communication, when the extra-textual life situation is ready (see Bakhtin's analysis of the word "well"). But in poetry, the word, even though many elements have been already created before, nevertheless, the word itself creates the situation of communication, being the border between non-textual reality and the artistic world of the work. It is this borderline nature of the poetic word that is most intensely understood in the Silver Age. During this period, poets feel the inadequacy of only poetic works to embody certain meanings; many poets, as we have seen, recreate them in an extra-artistic reality. Such recreation cannot be identical, so in this manner, being-communion is truly realized in the poetic word.

This being-communion, created in the process of poetic utterance, is presented not only as mutual directedness and mutual necessity of the subjects of this communication (author, hero, reader), but also as mutual directedness and mutual reversibility of all the

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[34] For reference, see footnote, 21.
[35] For reference, see footnote 21.

elements of the word, and first of all its semantic and phonic sides. Let us note that modern interpretations of the poetic word reveal, among other things, opposite understandings of the minimal material unit of word – phone (sound), its relation to semantics. In interpreting a word as a sign, semantics clearly prevails over phone, in the "ontological" approach, on the contrary, phone prevails over semantics, and phone, in fact, becomes word. M. M. Bakhtin speaks about the "the feeling of generating signifying sound," but does not specify this signification. This problem derives from a more general problem of fragmentation and generalization of the word: on the one hand, the word appears as a number of mutually intersecting codes, on the other hand, as the unity of the beingful meaning.

In any work of art as it unfolds, we can probably clarify the way of organizing the interrelations between the components of the word and the patterns of revealing being-communion in the word. After all, the situation of the birth of meaning suggests that this meaning is some unified source, manifested in all the multiplicity of the elements of the artistic work; however, as we know, this multiplicity is not reduced back to a single source, because in each element it is manifested in a singular way. But it is not just that: the unified source – meaning – exists not so much within the word as at the joints, at the transition between words. Here, we see the basis of the metaphor of fabric applied to the poetic word: meaning does not only penetrate words, but "sews" them together, turns them face to face. That is why the word does not abide in being, does not exist as something fixed once and for all, but it is becoming reality, it is being-communion that is being realized.

This communion takes place in a directed and coordinated manner, which is the difference between the word in literature and a word in language. The linguistic word is not transformed, but changes immanently (as evidenced by the M. M. Bakhtin's statements quoted earlier on surmounting the word). This immanent tendency, i.e. the tendency connecting the linguistic reality of the word and its meaning with the author's individual meaning is manifested at different levels of the work, but not in their autonomy, but in their interactions and mutual transitions. Hence, the possibility of the immanent analysis of the literary work, an analysis revealing its unified semantic intention that organizes the being-communion realized by it.

For example, let us analyze A. S. Pushkin's poem Pod nebom golubym strany svoyey rodnoy [Under the blue skies of her native land [...].[36] In his work On the horizons of knowledge and the depths of compassion, V. S. Nepomnyashchiy writes about this poem:

> At this moment, as I wrote in the article, he (Pushkin – V.N) remembers his love for the heroine of the elegy "Under the blue skies ..." as solely carnal, utterly sensual, devoid of spiritual connection. And when her flesh died, everything died. The poem, in fact, is about what bewilderment, confusion, and shudder this discovery caused him. After all, he is not indifferent to a stone or, in fact, to a corpse, but to a living soul, which "was already flying" over him... It is an "uncrossable line" (NEPOMNYACHSHIY, 2001, p.540; our translation).[37]

Let us note that here we can clearly see how the reality "dropped out" from the word begins to be "built into" it by the researcher, based probably on some other logic, not the logic of the text itself. How, really, does V. Nepomnyachshiy know that the love Pushkin speaks about is "utterly sensual"?

However, even if it is so, the semantic focus of the word is quite different: it is the attempt to keep life in the face of the accomplished death. This attempt can be heard already in the first quatrain – in the duration of the very message about death: it is as if it is being postponed all the time, at first from line to line ("Under the blue skies of her native land / She languished and began to fade..."), then from sentence to sentence ("She languished and began to fade... / And finally faded..."), and in a slowing repetition ("began to fade ... faded"), and in the ellipsis at the end of the second line. The deceased is said to be "a young shade", a "poor credulous shade" (more literally – "shade easily deceived, light of belief"). The unusual nature of the last word combination was noticed by L.Y. Ginzburg. She also writes that the epithet "light-winged" would be more expected in the context of elegy as a genre. Consequently, Pushkin transforms the lexical repertoire of elegy, creating an intermediate situation between life and death (for him, the shade is

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[36] The poem is translated by Babette Deutsch: https://www.cordula.ws/poems/blueskies.html. Accessed: 26 March, 2020.

[37] In the original: "Любовь к героине элегии «Под небом голубым…», писал я в статье, вспоминается ему (Пушкину – В.Н.) сейчас как исключительно плотская, исчерпывающе чувственная, лишенная духовной связи. И когда умерла ее плоть – умерло все. Стихотворение, собственно, о том, в какое недоумение, растерянность, содрогание привело его это открытие. Ведь он равнодушен не к камню или, в самом деле, к трупу – к живой душе, которая «уже летала» над ним… Это есть "недоступная черта."

alive, but he is not distracted from the fact that it is a shade). And the horror is precisely in the fact that even in spite of this, despite the possibility to speak about it in this way – "there stretches between us an uncrossable line."

The poem is essentially about understanding the boundaries of the poetic word. This awareness determines its structure: the odd quatrains speak about the possibilities of the word to resurrect both the deceased and love (which is especially clear in the third quatrain), and the even ones speak of bitter reality, which, despite everything, cannot be annulled by the word. But in the process of this realization, the boundary ceases to be an "uncrossable line," or rather, not ceasing to be such, it becomes something else – the energy directed at turning these two realities to each other.

The existence of this tendency in the poem is confirmed by a peculiar position of the phrase "But there stretches between us an uncrossable line": it begins the second stanza, so compositionally it refers to the situation of death that already happened. On the other hand, after the line "Above me her young shade…," ending the first stanza, there is a semicolon, so, syntactically this phrase refers to the situation we mentioned before – of trying, by means of the word, to keep life that is already gone.

Conclusions

We have considered different ways of understanding the specificity of the artistic word in literary criticism. At the same time, each interpretation presupposes different ways to correlate the linguistic and the aesthetic in the artistic word. In the most general form, it can be argued that defining the word as a sign reveals in the artistic word the features similar to the linguistic one, whereas seeing the word as ontological significance, on the contrary, suggests aestheticization of the linguistic word. As a result of this correlation, the various hypostases of the poetic word are more clearly manifested. Thus, the "sign" approach accentuates the structure, the model; the "ontological" approach emphasizes the image, the symbol; when treating the word as mediator, its dynamic nature is stressed. We have concluded that the interpretation of the word as a sign leads to the idea of a technical, subordinate nature of the word, whereas the interpretation of the word as ontological significance gives the idea of the word's intrinsic value. Bakhtin's concept of the word as a mediator between being and life reality emphasizes its individual-

dynamic, participative character. It should be pointed out that the concept of dialogism really eliminates the extremes of the two approaches to the word considered above. Conventionality and a certain detachment of the word from reality, characteristic of the sign approach to the word, are overcome by the need to see a subject of the utterance, and, on the other hand, the monadism of the word, characteristic of the approach to the word as ontological significance, is overcome by the involvement of the word in the dialogic context.

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