

**NOMINATIVE CHAINS IN THE NOVEL *THE TERRACOTTA OLD WOMAN* BY E. S. CHIZHOVA**

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**Abstract:** *The article deals with nominative chains in the novel «The Terracotta old woman» by E. S. Chizhova in order to identify thematic groups of chains and their connection to problems of the work and the position of the author. The relevance of the study is conditioned by expansion of functions of nominative chains in the literary text. Using the method of continuous sampling, 240 chains were extracted from the text of the novel. The chains belonging to following thematic groups were analyzed: clothing, food, premises, the appearance of a person, historical events, literature. These thematic groups characterize a person and main spheres of his/her life: physical sphere (where he/she lives and works, how he/she dresses, what he/she eats) and intellectual sphere (his/her attitude to the recent past of the country and the current state of society, the range of his/her reading as an indicator of cultural level), as well as his/her appearance. Nominatives that form chains are analyzed taking into account their stylistic coloring and evaluative connotations manifested in the context. Particular attention is paid to functioning of nominatives in contexts with stylistically marked vocabulary and in contexts where nominatives acquire estimative connotations. It is concluded that nominative chains in the novel by E. S. Chizhova help to convey an author's view of the position of an intellectual in the post-Soviet society. Obtained results broaden the notion of expressive possibilities of nominative chains in contemporary literary text.*

**Keywords:** nominative chain, estimated values, connotation, context, author's position.

E. S. Chizhova is a writer, novelist, author of several novels, one of which, *Time of Women*, was awarded the "Russian Booker" award (2009). This work has become the main object of philological researches.<sup>1</sup> We address the less known and less studied novel *The Terracotta old woman* by E. S. Chizhova.

The research hypothesis is that nominative chains in the novel are not only the means of describing characters and the situation, but also help to convey the author's attitude to the problem set forth in the work – the problem of position of an intellectual in the post-Soviet society.

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<sup>1</sup> N. G. Babenko, "New page of the St. Petersburg text: poetics of Elena Chizhova's story "The Time of Women", in *The World of the Russian word*, 1, (2013), pp. 86-91; T. Pudova, "Petersburg in the prose by Elena Chizhova: "Nyutochka's House" and "Time of women", in *Polilog. Studia Neofilologiczne*, 2, (2012), pp. 285-293; Yu. Pykhtina, "Structure and functions of the chronotope in the novel "The Time of Women" by E. S. Chizhova", in *GISAP: Philological Sciences*, 11, (2016), pp. 15-18.

The study of nominative chains in the novel *The Terracotta old woman* by E. S. Chizhova is aimed at resolving of following tasks:

- 1) definition and characterization of the most frequent thematic groups of nominative chains;
- 2) identification of the fact how the use of these chains is related to problematic of the work and position of the author.

### Literature review

Chains of nominative sentences are traditionally considered as one of means of expressiveness in the literary text, since they allow "to create laconic, expressive and contentful words".<sup>2</sup> A textbook example is A. Fet's poem "Whisper, timid breathing...".<sup>3</sup> It is noted that modern fictional prose replaces figural nominative chains with informative and conceptualizing and truly informative ones.<sup>4</sup> An example from the novel "The Time of Women" by E. S. Chizhova: "In the basement in the yard there is a common laundry. All good housewives went there. First, I went there, too. But then I swore off. *Heat, stuffiness, these huge boilers*"<sup>5</sup> (nominative chain is italicized). Functioning of nominatives is supported by the actualizing character of Russian prose of the beginning of the 21st century.<sup>6</sup> Compare an example from the novel *The Terracotta old woman* by E. S. Chizhova: "The pedagogical council sits in the director's office. The office is decorated with a taste for a decent life: *dark oak furniture, heavy curtains*".<sup>7</sup>

Nominative chains are usually represented by nominative sentences. For example: "*Maple walkways. Lawns showered on with gold ... With mold smells it from the ground*".<sup>8</sup> Separate chains of nominatives with a determinative value are singled out in the scientific literature, coinciding with nominative sentences in form. For example: "I saw him this

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<sup>2</sup> E. N. Shiryaev, "Nominative sentence", in *Russian language. Encyclopedia*, Moscow, The Soviet Encyclopedia, 1979, p. 152.

<sup>3</sup> A. A. Fet, *Poems*, Moscow, Exmo, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> T. E. Naydina, "The world in nominatives (syntactic way of representation of the world picture in the information age)", in *Materials of the XIII Congress of MAPRYAL: Russian language and literature in the space of world culture*, Saint Petersburg, MAPRYAL, 2015, pp. 159-163.

<sup>5</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Time of women: novels*, Moscow, ACT: Astrel, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> O. V. Arzyamova, "Updating techniques of the actualizing syntax in Russian prose of the end of the XX-the beginning of the XXI century", in *Materials of the XIII Congress of the MAPRYAL*, pp. 11-15.

<sup>7</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, Moscow, ACT: Astrel, 2012, p. 57.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 45.

morning. A common man as he should be. *Eastern lineament, cheap leather jacket*".<sup>9</sup> Chains of this kind are used in describing characters of literary art works.<sup>10</sup> G. K. Khamzina notes the formal affinity of the nominative characterizing the nominative proposal and its involvement into the system of means for implementing the text "observer's position" category.<sup>11</sup> Attention should also be paid to nominatives, the appearance of which in the text is due to parcellation and segmentation.<sup>12</sup> For example: "Animal kingdom is Yanina's specialization. *Ants, amoebas, rabbits*"<sup>13</sup> (example of parcellation).

In this article, a broad understanding of nominatives is accepted; it takes into account all the conditions for their functioning mentioned above.

Researchers paid attention to expressive possibilities of nominatives, expansion of their functions in contemporary literary text, but a complex and unsolved problem is identification of how the patterns of functioning of syntactic means (nominative chains in particular) are related to problems of the literary piece and position of the author.

### **Materials and methods**

Using the method of continuous sampling, 240 chains were extracted from the text of the novel, which count from 2 to 5 nominatives (single examples of chains consisting of 6 and 9 components were also noted). More than half of all chains (136 examples) are two-component ones. As the number of components increases, the number of examples decreases (three-component chains-73, four-component ones-22, five-component ones-7). The example of five-component chain: "I stroll into the kitchen, open the fridge. *Cheese, sausage, soup in a saucepan. A bank of colorful yogurt. There is a started bottle on the door*".<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 116.

<sup>10</sup> G. N. Akimova, *New in syntax of modern Russian language*, Moscow, High school, 1990.

<sup>11</sup> G. K. Khamzina, "The ratio of implicit and explicit components of the utterance-nominative semantics", in *Russian and Comparative Philology. System-functional aspect*, Kazan, Kazan State University, 2003, pp. 139-142.

<sup>12</sup> M. V. Panov (ed.), *Russian language and Soviet society. Morphology and syntax of the modern Russian language*, Moscow, Science PH, 1968.

<sup>13</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 21.

When analyzing nominative chains, the contextual analysis method is used. Context is considered as an environment in which nominatives function and under the influence of which they receive estimative connotations.

## Results

Let us address the novel *The Terracotta old woman* by E. S. Chizhova. The main character, Tatyana Andreevna, worked as a teacher in a university, but accepts an invitation to become an assistant to a businessman who is involved in furniture production. Despite the fact that she turns out to be a successful manager, after a while Tatyana Andreevna leaves the business. Being a real intellectual, she does not want and can not live according to dog-eat-dog laws of business life reflected in the novel.<sup>15</sup>

Nominative chains in the novel *The Terracotta old woman* are diverse in thematic sense. They are used to characterize an appearance of a person, clothes, premises, name food products, reflect the sphere of business relations, events of history, phenomena of culture and art, etc. Forming nominative chains function both in stylistically neutral contexts and in contexts with stylistically marked vocabulary and in contexts where nominatives acquire estimative connotations (estimation values include sensory, sublimated and rationalistic estimations from the point of view of N. D. Arutyunova).<sup>16</sup> Stylistically marked contexts prevail (61% of the total number of nominative chains), and in a significant part of such contexts (51%), the negative evaluation is manifested, which arises primarily under the influence of following factors:

1) lexical meaning and stylistic coloring of nouns in the composition of nominative chains: "But I despise! To make the matters worse... First, it is dangerous. *Vintage? Dishrags. Common second-hand.* You do not know who she was..."<sup>17</sup> (See the meaning of the word "Dishrags": "*Colloq.* Worn, shabby clothes, shoes"),<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> M. V. Yershov, "The Terracotta old woman": between the image of the city and the museum exhibit", in *Culture of urban space: power, business and civil society in preserving and multiplying cultural traditions of Russia: materials of the All-Russian Scientific and Methodological Conference*, Omsk, The Nauka Publishing House, 2013, pp. 291-295.

<sup>16</sup> N. D. Arutyunova, *Types of language values: Estimation*, Moscow, Science PH, 1988.

<sup>17</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> S. A. Kuznetsov (ed.), *Great Dictionary of the Russian language*, Saint Petersburg, Norint PH, 2000.

2) meaning of adjectives and participles arranged with the nominatives: "Rare passers-by moved short runs, clinging to the walls of houses. *The dead city with dark eyeless facades...*"<sup>19</sup>

We will characterize the most frequent thematic groups of nominative chains (groups that include more than 10 examples), taking into account manifestation of the evaluation component: clothing (30 examples), food (17 examples), premises (15 examples), a person's appearance (14 examples), literature (14 examples), historical events (12 examples). These thematic groups characterize physical and intellectual spheres of human life as well as person's appearance.

1. Thematic group "clothes". Most of nominative chains receive estimative connotations in the novel. On one hand, it's fashionable, new clothes, from good material (a), on the other hand, clothes are old or simple and do not fit properly (b). Let's compare:

a) "I had bought from speculators. *a French dress, an Italian blouse* – I was fascinated by these words".<sup>20</sup> It's about Tatiana Andreyevna in her youth time, when she strove to dress fashionably;

b) "*Slippers. Thick stockings.* At the ankle, they crumpled pleated ... A seamstress, sitting at a nearby table, takes out a plastic jar".<sup>21</sup> We are talking about a worker of a furniture factory.

It is remarkable that elegant, stylish clothes more likely belong to negative characters. For example: "He entered the waiting room and stopped at the door: *black wool suit, silk shirt in color*".<sup>22</sup> This is Namir, a man invited to provide a racket of the furniture business to "cover" it. "*A fair blouse. A skirt made of natural fabric.* Her clothes were bought in the most expensive store...".<sup>23</sup> This is the mother of Ivan, a boy whose tutor is Tatiana Andreyevna. Despite the skill to dress and refined manners, she does not make the author well disposed, because she "forgot" her son, did not establish a trusting relationship with him.

On the contrary, simple or old clothes are clothes of either Tatyana Andreyevna herself in present, or of characters who are close to her in some way. For example: "The aunt (*a blue suit, a white blouse-jabot* tattered in laundrings) leads the figure around".<sup>24</sup> This is the chairman of commission, who examines documents of the furniture factory. With her

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<sup>19</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, p. 84.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 21.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 104.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 96.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 159.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 70.

Tatiana Andreyevna manages to find a common ground ("With this aunt we grew up in one country").<sup>25</sup>

Thus, functioning of the nominative chains of the thematic group "clothing" reflects not only social stratification, but also author's attitude to that outwardly attractive modern world, into which Tatiana Andreyevna never managed to fit.

2. Thematic group "food". Most of nominatives of this group also have estimative connotations, with mostly positive evaluation. For example: «← *Awesome salad! Classics of the genre*, - my ex eats and praises highly";<sup>26</sup> "Excellent grocery. *Coffee, muffins, vegetable oil*, - she opens the kitchen cabinet".<sup>27</sup> We note that a lexically expressed positive evaluation appears in the first case ("awesome salad") in the speech of Tatiana Andreevna's ex-husband, who subsequently addresses those present at the celebration with empty pretentious words, and in the second example ("excellent grocery") it is a humanitarian aid that is sold illegally. In examples given above and in some other ones, nominative chains of the considered group appear in contexts reflecting critical attitude of the author to those who can (and could) settle their life well. See also: "We, overseers of our own exhibitions, approached the selection rigorously: *sprats of Baltic production, red caviar with a green label, imported liver paste. Far Eastern crabs. In extreme cases, cod liver*. All the usual that jays received in orders. Once a week"<sup>28</sup> (we are talking about catering service of the Soviet era).

3. Thematic group "premises". Nominative chains with estimative connotations also predominate in this group: both positive (5 examples) and negative ones (7 examples). A positive evaluation is presented, in particular, in examples describing houses and apartments where pupils live, with whom Tatiana Andreyevna practices. For example: "*High oak doors. Flowers on marble candlesticks. There is a turngate in main entrance*. Just in case the female tutor carries a passport with her"<sup>29</sup> (the house where Maxim lives); "She stood, looking round skulkingly. *Patterned wallpaper. Landscapes in gilded framework. Dark bronze lamp: female figure. There are three dome bell-like lights in hands*. Such ones I saw only in antique shops"<sup>30</sup> (Ivan's flat). The place where Tatiana Andreyevna will work looks quite

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 451.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 44.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 145.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 52.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 127.

different: "A narrow wooden staircase, the walls full of notes from the ceiling to the floor. The smell of urine and fried cabbage: I walk, trying not to breathe".<sup>31</sup>

The world of comfort in which children of rich parents live, contrasts with working conditions of Tatiana Andreyevna and her colleagues, which is reflected in estimative values of nominative chains.

4. Thematic group "appearance of a person". Nominations of this group differ from those of other thematic groups in the fact that the majority of names comprising this group (9 out of 14) do not have distinctly positive or negative connotations. Nominative chains are used here in the context of an explicit or implicit comparison.

Thus, two boys are compared: guests who came for the birthday of Tatiana Andreyevna's daughter, Alexandra:

"Perhaps, I like this boy: *strict suit, sharply outlined cheekbones. Expression of restrained perseverance.* I remembered his name at once: Rodion.

The second one's name was either Vitali or Valerii. *Blond hair, cheeks blush girlish way. Light plastic gestures.* To my mind, too plastic ones".<sup>32</sup>

A comparison in favor of greater naturalness can also be traced in description of two girls, also guests of Alexandra: "I like her face/*Strict lineament, minimal makeup.* In a smart dress she feels uneasy-moves her shoulder, as if straightening a strap".<sup>33</sup> The second girl, who came to visit, Foxy, surely does not cause sympathy of the narrator: "Foxy is attached to the load to her knight".<sup>34</sup>

Another line of comparison of nominative chains is observed in contexts associated with the work of Tatiana Andreyevna as a manager and a tutor: the passage of time, past and present.

For example, Olga Vladimirovna, mother of Ivan, a boy with whom Tatiana Andreevna practices, in a photograph with her mother: "Her mother finished eight-year school: *wide hips, short strong legs.* In the third generation, everything grew lengthened and narrowed. Elegant calves, chiseled ankles: a common granddaughter, who managed to turn into a fawn...<sup>35</sup>

When meeting with Elena, a colleague in the furniture factory, Tatiana Andreyevna's view is also turned into the past: "I remember her former smile: simple-minded, like a song near the fire, *Soft cheekbones,*

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 36.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 145.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 146.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 161.

*delicate contour of the chin...* Something has changed in her face. As if it has been run over by a graver".<sup>36</sup>

The context, in which the narrator represents how the children playing in the children's room will look like in the afternoon of their life, is interesting: "These children will certainly remember in the afternoon of their life. I'm trying to imagine their future: here they become old men and old women, sat down in deep armchairs. *Gray hair, wrinkled hands...* In their memory remains *the beautiful* (italics of the author-V. K.) childhood colored with all the colors of the rainbow: playing balls is a delightful game".<sup>37</sup> This is a look from the future onto the present, which will become the past, and this, a beautiful past, in contrast to the future that draws a chain of nominatives ("Gray hair, wrinkled hands ..."). Life flows and changes people, but memories of what passes away are painted in warm colors.

5. Thematic group "literature". Nominatives included in this thematic group (14 examples of nominative chains) are natural in the novel, since the main character, Tatiana Andreyevna, is a philologist by education (as well as the author of the novel). Tatiana Andreyevna turns to literature in her memoirs and reflections, in conversations with her daughter and ex-husband. Nominative chains are represented by names of Russian writers and poets (A. Pushkin, L. Tolstoy, F. Dostoevsky, M. Bulgakov, M. Tsvetaeva, I. Brodsky), including Soviet poets (P. Kogan, M. Svetlov, I. Selvinskiy), foreign writers (D. Austin, L. Feuchtwanger, S. Zweig, H. Hesse, T. Mann), as well as Greek playwrights (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides). The chains of the considered thematic group denote the cultural context with which the author correlates the described reality, and also is a means of describing characters. Let us comment on following examples of nominative chains in this connection.

1) Russia through the eyes of foreigners: "He spoke German rather poorly, but he spoke about Russian poetry with genuine enthusiasm: *Pushkin, Tsvetaeva, Brodsky*-the clerk lists difficult names";<sup>38</sup> "*Tolstoy, Dostoevsky*-the West has got used to these names".<sup>39</sup> In this context, Russian classical literature is characterized as a "promoted brand."

2) Interest in reading in childhood as a character description (Tatiana Andreyevna): "First-*Feuchtwanger and Stefan Zweig*. Ugly Duchess Margarita Moulash. Twenty-four hours from life of a woman... I took

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 115.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 37.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*.



these books in the library. I read them skulkingly from parents. In the night, under my blanket using a torch. My parents did not know about anything. Then, in student years, *Hermann Hesse* and *Thomas Mann*".<sup>40</sup> E. S. Chizhova recalled her personal experience of familiarizing herself with foreign literature: "Shakespeare-yes. And in the original. He was my first strongest literary experience. But then translated literature came into my life. First of all, German one: Hermann Hesse, Thomas Mann".<sup>41</sup> It is obvious that Tatiana Andreyevna's memoirs about her childhood are based on facts of biography of the author of the novel.

3) World literature in the associative row, which emerges in the mind of the character when describing the surrounding dull reality:

"...Parnassus is a dull *industrial area* [the italics of the author.-V. K.], built in the Soviet times.

I came there in autumn for the first time. The 6th Lower Driveway was indicated on the paper I have checked. The poetic name corresponded to *nothing* [author's italics.-V. K.]. Kastal key, Apollo, insanity of the Bacchaes... *Aeschylus*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides* are ancient Greeks who have entered the golden fund of world culture. Hesiod with his worldwide flood".<sup>42</sup>

The phraseology "to ascend to Parnassus" means "to become a poet, to speak in verse" ("According to beliefs of ancient Greeks, Parnassus is the mountain on which the Muses, patronesses of arts and sciences lived").<sup>43</sup> In the novel, the contrast between the name of the industrial zone, where Tatiana Andreyevna comes to meet with the director of the factory, and the poetic name of the mountain, is shown. Note that these associations arise with a retrospective look at the past, when Tatiana Andreyevna has already left the business; when she went to Parnassus, there were no such thoughts: "I have been thinking of *nothing of a kind*. [author's italics.-V. K.] I was just staring around".<sup>44</sup>

4) A quote from a literary work in the context of reflections on contradictions of the modern era:

"I pull the balcony door.

*The city's magnificent, the city is poor, the sight is captive, attractive view...*

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 20.

<sup>41</sup> E. Pogorelaya, "The ability to start with a sound...", in *Issues of literature*, 3, (2011).

<sup>42</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, p. 10.

<sup>43</sup> A. K. Birikh, V. M. Mokienko, L. I. Stepanova, *Russian phraseology. Historical and etymological dictionary*, Moscow, ACT: Astrel, 2005.

<sup>44</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, p. 10.

I look with bated breath: high bell tower, behind it-the St. Nicholas Cathedral. The walls of the cathedral are covered with gray sags. On the opposite is the old Gostiny Dvor.

The breathtaking beauty of death. I only read about this: a city that died after the revolution. It seems that it was from someone from the Serapions. Petersburg was subject to dying. The dark, pagan city: a dying and resurrecting deity. *We too* live in the epoch of death [the italics of the author.-V. K.].<sup>45</sup>

Nominative chain is taken from the poem by A. S. Pushkin "The city is magnificent, the city is poor...", where the chain consists of more components: The city's magnificent, the city is poor, the sight is captive, attractive view; just cold and granite, the sky is pale-it's all what's left to have for you...".<sup>46</sup> But if Petersburg is represented as a city of contrasts in the poem, then this association is related to the attitude to history and contradictions of the modern era in the novel.

5) Intertext as a means of creating a subtext important for understanding the relationship between the characters:

"She tells with enthusiasm. It seems that I managed to get used to terms. If this goes on, very soon she will dream of regiments of 12-arshine logs. Marching into the forest warehouse.

-What about forest? Did you try to trade? As of: *beam, roundwood, batten, grate, slab...* - I quote my favorite story with pleasure.

-Mum!-she looks reproachfully.-I am not Sweetheart. Stop that.

In any case, at least I have read it".<sup>47</sup>

In the novel we mean the story by A. P. Chekhov, "Sweetheart", in which the situation is presented when the main character, Sweetheart, is imbued with thoughts and feelings of her chosen ones without having her own opinion. Here is a fragment of the story by A. P. Chekhov: "It seemed to her that she had been trading wood for a long time, that the most important and necessary thing in her life was wood, and something dear and touching was heard in her words: beam, roundwood, batten, planking, amonia, grate, half timber, slab... At night, when she slept, she dreamed of whole mountains of planks and batten, long, endless lines of carts transporting wood far beyond the city; she dreamt like a whole regiment of twelve-arshine, five-peak logs, steadily marched to a forest warehouse...".<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Ididem*, p. 36.

<sup>46</sup> A. S. Pushkin, *Works in 3 volumes, volume 1*, Moscow, Fiction Literature, 1985.

<sup>47</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, p. 129.

<sup>48</sup> A. P. Chekhov, *The Selected. In 2 vols, volume 2: The Serious*, Moscow, PROZAIK, 2010.

Exchange of remarks in the novel by E. S. Chizhova is an intellectual and emotional contact possible due to the fact that background knowledge from the field of literature is common to participants of the act of communication: mother and daughter. Tatiana Andreyevna sneers at the influence that, as it seems to her, Vitya has on her daughter. Alexandra catches irony-subtext (the subtext is the "hidden meaning of the utterance, not directly expressed, but the internal content of the speech stemming from the situation, individual details, replicas, dialogues of the heroes"),<sup>49</sup> which is more important than the literal meaning of the quote. However, the reader must be the same prepared recipient, otherwise the depth of meaning-intertext and subtext-will be inaccessible, which means that an important feature of the artistic image will miss the reader.

6. Thematic group "historical events". Nominative chains representing this group appear in Tatiana Andreyevna's reasoning and in her dialogs with her husband, a historian by education. Most of the examples (8 of 12) reflect the recent history of Russia, more precisely, the period from the 1920s to 1991. If the events indicated by the nominatives presented in the novel are arranged in chronological order, a sequence of historical facts important for the history of the country is built, namely:

1) collectivization (1928-1937 gg.) and industrialization (1929-1941 gg.): "Their broad pants appeared during the times of industrialization. *Collectivization, yackization*",<sup>50</sup> "After the revolution, village girls came in swarms. So what?"-What do you mean "what"?-I get amazed.-*Successes of industrialization. Cast iron per capita...*",<sup>51</sup>

2) corn campaign (1950s-1960s) and economic reform of 1965: "There was much in his memories. *All this nonsense under bald crop duster. Kosygin's reform: that was the case, too*".<sup>52</sup>

3) the period of stagnation (from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s): "And what does the people have to do with this?" -"What should this possibly mean?-his outrage was sincere.-*What about jokes? What about contempt for ideology?* One can say, everyone blew the same trumpet".<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> S. P. Belokurova, *Dictionary of literary terms*, Saint Petersburg, Parity, 2007.

<sup>50</sup> E. S. Chizhova, *Terracotta old woman*, p. 30.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 48.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 87.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 46.

4) perestroika (second half of the 1980s): "*Perestroika, glasnost...* Today they announce it, tomorrow they will cancel it, moreover, they will mark especially zealous people and put them down, they will";<sup>54</sup>

5) monetary reform in the USSR in 1991 (January-April 1991): "The minister, a well-fed bird, screeched through both channels: *stabilization of financial system, regulating of cash flows*";<sup>55</sup>

6) August putsch, August 18-21, 1991: "We talked with Yana every hour. It seemed to us, this is not happening. *Tanks on the outskirts of the city. Live broadcast*".<sup>56</sup>

Nominative chains of the thematic group under consideration receive various estimative values, which are created primarily by the context. In particular, in one of the examples mentioned above ("Perestroika, Glasnost... Today they announce it, tomorrow they will cancel it..."), the context of improperly direct speech reveals the significance of psychological assessment: the distrust of the director of the tannery to changes in the political life of the country. The significance of a negative evaluation in a number of cases is expressed by the very nominatives (colloquial "nonsense", occasional "yackization") and distributors ("nonsense under bald crop duster" ("Bald crop duster" is one of nicknames of Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, leader of the Communist Party (1953-1964) and the Soviet government (1958-1964). According to G. G. Slyshkin,<sup>57</sup> "names of leaders are characterized by precedence and estimated load, have the ability to diversify and associative transfer (metaphorical and metonymic)". Khrushchev's nickname resented in the novel by E. S. Chizhova is based on the appearance (bald) and on reforms he is carrying out in agriculture (corn duster), the attempt to introduce corn in the agriculture of the USSR (the so-called corn campaign)).

Note that an adequate perception of both text and subtext requires background knowledge that allows the reader to "dive" into events described. So, the minister who spoke about stabilization of financial system and regulation of cash flows ("The minister, a well-fed bird, screeched through both channels...") is obviously the USSR Prime Minister V.S. Pavlov; on his initiative, a monetary reform was carried out

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 87.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 26.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>57</sup> G. G. Slyshkin, "Microgroup nicknames of N. S. Khrushchev and features of naming in the environment of the highest political elite", in *Volograd State Pedagogical University Herald*, 4 (68), (2012), pp. 115-118.

in early 1991, which caused discontent among the population.<sup>58</sup> Let's also pay attention to the fact that the nominatives included into the thematic group "historical events" denote events that have not been unequivocally evaluated in society or call actions of power structures that were negatively evaluated (corn campaign, August putsch).

### **Discussion**

The considered nominative chains help convey the author's perception of facts of recent history and assessment of the situation of intellectuals in the transitional period of the nineties of the twentieth century, which were reflected in the novel *The Terracotta old woman*.

Appeal to history in general and to Soviet history in particular, is not accidental in the novel *The Terracotta old woman*. E. S. Chizhova complains that the Soviet past is uninteresting for majority of the population, people do not have the feeling that the story continues, as if everything has started only in the 1990s.<sup>59</sup> However, one must know history in order to avoid mistakes of the past. This opinion was expressed by the author in an interview: "It seems to me that in general I am deeply immersed into the twentieth century, in its tragic history. I have already said that the calendar twentieth century is over, but in a certain sense it still lasts, since the Soviet civilization has not disappeared anywhere. Yes, we changed the economic system, but got stuck in the Soviet past in the civilizational sense. Again and again we step on the same rake, and it seems that there is no end in sight".<sup>60</sup> The author's attitude to history explains not only the selection of nominatives, but also estimated values that arise in context with nominative chains. E. S. Chizhova presents events of history not as an uninvolved spectator, but as their participant: "...to write a novel, I need personal impressions and memories of time, about this or that era. I must feel that all this is happening to me".<sup>61</sup> The subjective perception of historical events mentioned in the novel determines the estimative values of nominatives and emotions of characters reflected in the context.

The appraisal of sociocultural changes that occurred as catastrophic ones, given in an interview with E. S. Chizhova caused not

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<sup>58</sup> Yu. S. Osipov (ed.), *The Great Russian Encyclopedia: 35 vols. V. 25*, Moscow, The Great Russian Encyclopedia, 2014.

<sup>59</sup> B. Ellen, "A Writer Invites Russia to Engage Its Painful Past", in *The New York Times*, 2010.

<sup>60</sup> E. Chizhova, "Author Interview", in *Beauty and Lace*, 2012.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*.

only the estimated marking of nominative chains, but also a backward look,<sup>62</sup> reflection in nominative chains of various time plans.

The intellectual of old education finds it difficult to find a place in realities of the 1990s, and patterns of use of nominative chains revealed by observations reflect the author's opinion "about impossibly difficult survival of an old-school person in a new society"<sup>63</sup> (for example, see groups "clothes", "premises").

Observations over nominative chains in the novel *The Terracotta old woman* allow us to draw following conclusions:

1. The most frequent thematic groups of chains characterize physical and intellectual spheres of life of a person as well as his appearance.

2. Nominative chains that characterize the physical sphere of a person's life function mainly in context with stylistically marked vocabulary and in contexts where nominatives acquire estimative connotations. Peculiarities of functioning of nominative chains of corresponding thematic groups reflect the author's critical attitude to those who managed to settle in the changed world well and sympathy for the protagonist-the Petersburg intellectual.

3. Nominative chains that characterize the intellectual sphere of human life, denote the historical and cultural context with which the author contrasts the described reality. Adequate perception of both text and subtext requires background knowledge that allows a reader to become a witness of the described as well as evaluate the meaning of the intertext.

4. Nominative chains characterizing the appearance of a person are observed in the contexts of an explicit or implicit comparison. Different characters as well as appearance of one character in different periods of life are compared. Changes in appearance turn out to be connected with passage of time and even with change of epochs.

5. Nominative chains in the novel *The Terracotta old woman* by E. S. Chizhova is a syntactic means of expressiveness of literary text helping to convey the author's view on the position of an intellectual in the post-Soviet society.

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<sup>62</sup> I. Matejunaite, "Woman, state and motherhood in Elena Chizhova's novels (based on novels "Time of Women" and "The Terracotta old woman")", in *ILCEA. Revue de l'Institut des langues et cultures d'Europe, Amérique, Afrique, Asie et Australie*, 2017.

<sup>63</sup> V. Pustovaya, "Rocket and boots. How to abolish post-history", in *October*, 3, (2012).