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PRAGMATIC POTENTIAL OF THE NOMINATION OF THE SUBJECT-SOURCE OF FEAR (A MONSTROSITY) IN TEXTS OF HORROR DISCOURSE

The research is aimed at studying the pragmatic potential of nominations of the subject-source of fear (a monstrosity, in particular) in texts of horror discourse in English and Ukrainian. The idea is that the expression of the communicative sense "fear" in a subjectively created world according to an author's intention is explicated in the nomination of the subject-source of fear (SSF). Generally, any SSF is a monster as far as its attributes and actions are harmful for the recipient of fear (SRF), its essence contradicts the SRF's world creating norms. Psychologically, a SSF-monstrosity is a metaphor that gives ground to a trend in the horror discourse (J. Hartwell) and preconditions the modus of fear emphasis that lets the reader concentrate his empathy on the SRF, revealing his hidden fears. In psychology this state is called dysmorphophobia, or an obsessive fear of deformities (both own and others). Alogism of SSFs' reference includes repellent appearance as the feature of external inconsistency with the norms of the SRF's world: in this sense it borders on the notion of otherness that, revealed to its fullest, may be perceived as horrific. On the other hand, deformities viewed as the features of some other world creation relate to the notion of novelty, and may be understood as not fearful. Both sense variations mentioned above are present in texts of horror discourse and actualize such senses as "fear-disgust", "fear of the unknown" and "fear of otherness"; their differentiation helps exclude from the analysis tautological notion "fear of fearful".

KEY WORDS: pragmatic potential, horror discourse, text, communicative sense, fear, subject-source of fear, monstrosity.

Introductory remarks

Fear has always been the object of scientific interest in the humanities: not only philosophers (S. Kuharsky, A. Turenko, W. Wundt, etc.) and psychologists (C. Izard, J. Laplanche, Yu. Scherbatykh, etc.) but also representatives of cultural and social studies (Ch. Baker, A. Brian, J. Kristeva, V. Rudnev, V. Wee), semiotics (N. Bukhs, L. Geller, M. Lotman), pragmatics (P. Cap), conceptology (M. Nikitin, T. Zajtseva) paid their attention to the roots and expression of this phenomenon. These studies contribute to each other and create a multifaceted view on the understanding of fear. Still, there is one topical aspect that needs

clarification – textual actualization of fear. Investigating this aspect offers an opportunity to engage linguistic pragmatics that could provide rich insight into how author-reader communication is organized in order to transmit and perceive the sense of fear.

Within the limits of the article, texts with the subject-source of fear a monster are analyzed. The material of the research is texts in Ukrainian and English where the subject-source of fear is nominated by lexemes and phrases with the meaning synonymous to the noun *monster/монстр*. This research is aimed at revealing the pragmatic potential of nominating SSF-monsters in creating and perceiving horror texts while transmitting the communicative sense of fear (the ground for differentiating subjects in texts of horror discourse into sources of fear (SSF) and recipients of fear (SRF) is analyzed before (Sazonova 2016 a). To achieve this aim the following methods are used: sampling, structural analysis, hypothetical-inductive method, intent analysis.

Accepting the interdisciplinary tendencies in modern linguistics, we cannot but address the neighbouring sciences, first, psychology where the notion of a fearful object is used to denote an actual element in emerging the state of fear. Second, in semiotics the subject-subject relations are viewed as the basic ones in the construal of the passion discourse (Greimas, Fonanille 2007) where one of the subjects overwhelmed by passion pursues another. Borrowing these ideas allows hypothesizing that a text, to convey the sense of fear, should contain two elements – the source of fear and its recipient; the characteristics of the former are psychologically and culturally predetermined that allows the reader to get involved in sharing the author's intention to transmit this communicative sense (with variations depending on the author's intention). The verbalization of the source of fear influences its perception and as a result successful actualization of the communicative sense in author-reader interaction. In this respect, the verbalization of the source of fear by a lexeme *monster/монстр* or its equivalents bears pragmatic potential in the actualization of fear in texts. The roots of its pragmatic potential lie both in linguistic and extra linguistic spheres.

Generally speaking, any frightening object is a monster in human perception as far as its attributes and actions, its essence are set at damaging the person's world order. As researchers say, monsters explicate senses that reveal hidden social or religious problems. The ugliness of these problems and their consequences, as well as the person's fear, wishes, worries and fantasy, are visualized by the monster's body (Cohen 2012). This way of visualizing allows to draw a line between the norm and deviations because a monster is "A product of a multitude of morphogenesis (ranging from somatic to ethnic) that align themselves to imbue meaning to Us and Them behind every cultural mode of seeing, the monster of abjection resides in that marginal geography of the Exterior, beyond the limits of the Thinkable, a place that is doubly dangerous: simultaneously "exorbitant" and "quite close" (Cohen 2012, p. 17). The notion of monstrousness becomes one of the crucial elements of revealing fears before boundary confusion, in other words before mingling with the new, deviant, or otherworldly (Wright 2013). Still, as M. Foucault (Foucault 2003) mentions, this borderline nature of a monster is very appealing as far as it is associated with freedom and sublime bravery.

Researchers of monster culture (Kristeva 1982) emphasize the following important aspects of the notion of monstrosity:

– it is characterized by an anomalous body, abjection (misery and borderline existence) and transgression (breaching the laws and borders);
– it helps clearly distinguish the norm from otherness;
– its explication of senses is tied with transmitting the sense of fear.

These extra linguistic factors are implied in the nomination of the source of fear *a monster/монстр* and direct its pragmatic potential to building the text around the source-recipient relations.

Monsters' nominations and the variety of communicative senses expressed by them

Pragmatic potential of the lexeme *monster/монстр* is implied by its lexical meaning as well which the following considerations will prove. Lexical units that verbalize this SSF include both lexemes that comprise the synonymous chain of *monster/монстр* (*monster, monstrosity, чудовище (чудовисько), огидник, страховище, (кретинська) потвора, пугало* (*з того світу*) and others) as well as nounal phrases with a neutral head and an attribute that characterizes this head as a monster-like creature (*демонічне видовище, дивогляд страшний*, *unearthly creature, gigantic thing,* etc.) – they mark the subject as fearful a priori. Dictionaries define *monster* in the following way: **1. a.** An imaginary or legendary creature, such as a centaur or Harpy, that combines parts from various animal or human forms. **b.** A creature having a strange or frightening appearance. **2.** *Archaic* An organism that has structural defects or deformities. **4.** One who inspires horror or disgust: *a monster of selfishness* (TFD); *monstrosity* is defined as its synonym: **1.** An outrageous or ugly person or thing; monster (TFD).

It is worth mentioning that the lexeme *монстр* (1. Виродок, потвора. 2. *перен., лайл.* Про людину, що вирізняється своїми негативними рисами (ВТС, p.539)) in horror text in Ukrainian lingual culture is not used, though instead a range of its synonyms is widely used: *чудовисько* (*чудовище*) 1. Жахлива фантастична істота, потворне страховище. // Людина або тварина, яка має дивний, потворний зовнішній вигляд. // Тварина велетенських розмірів або величезна на зріст людина. 2. *перен.* Про людину з негативними моральними якостями, надзвичайно жорстоку, люту і т. ін. (ВТС, p. 1384); *огидник розм.* Огидна, бридка людина (ВТС, p. 657); *страховище розм.* 1. Фантастична істота незвичайного, страшного вигляду; страхіття. // Тварина або людина незвичайного вигляду, ненормальних розмірів, ваги і т. ін. (ВТС, p. 1203); *потвора* 1. Страхітлива фантастична істота; страховище. // Про велетенську тварину, що вражає розмірами свого тіла. // Про бридку, негарну зовні людину або тварину, що має непропорційну будову тіла, фізичні вади тощо. 2. *перен.* Про люту, жорстоку і т. ін. людину, що втратила кращі моральні якості; недолюдок (ВТС, p. 902); *пугало* (*опудало*) 2. *перен., лайл., зневажл.* Про незграбну, вайлувату або негарну людину (ВТС, p. 678).

The analysis of definitions shows that the pragmatic potential of these lexemes is based on the connotations that convey the attributes of abnormality: disgusting appearance and character; frightening moral or physical features; antisocial features; strangeness. These connotations help actualizing the following sense variations: "fear of otherness", "fear of the unknown" and "fear-disgust" implied in the nomination a priori, for example: *Above these apparent hieroglyphics was a figure of evidently pictorial intent, though its impressionistic execution forbade a very clear idea of its nature. It seemed to be **a sort of monster, or symbol representing a monster**, of a form which only a diseased fancy could conceive. If I say that my somewhat extravagant imagination yielded simultaneous pictures of **an octopus, a dragon, and a human caricature**, I shall not be unfaithful to the spirit of the thing. <…> but it was the general outline of the whole which made it **most shockingly frightful*** (Lovecraft 1926); *Із страшним писком і сиканням зі всіх кутків посипалися **страховища**: мотилі, в яких **замість крил виросли з боків вогненні язики; товсті черви, що дихали димом, пухирями піднімалися вгору; галасливі цвіркуни і крилаті гади літали над підлогою*** [Horribly squeaking and hissing, monsters scattered from all sides: moths that had fire tongues instead of wings; thick worms that exhaled fire rose up like blisters; noisy crickets and winged snakes flew above the floor] (Barschevskyi 2014, p. 59).

The identified variations of the basic communicative sense may be either combined in one text and actualized though the perception of different recipients or organize the whole text each. The reader's understanding of differences between these variations (which is analyzed further) makes the communication via the text successful.

Sense variation "fear of otherness" VS "fear of the unknown"

Alogism of the SSF's reference includes monstrousness as the characteristic feature revealing the inconsistency in the world order and the exterior norm as it is perceived by the SRF (Sazonova 2016 b). In this respect, the notion of monstrousness borders on the idea of otherness which in the highest degree of its expression may be considered fearful. On the other hand, monstrousness may be related to the idea of a new world order or a new norm – in this case the subject becomes fearful because of the threat of potential transgression. Differentiating these two variations of the sense of fear helps better understanding the mechanisms of transmitting fear through texts: it becomes obvious only

1) when the otherness reaches its peak ("fear of otherness") or
2) when the new order endangers the usual one where the SRF feels comfortable ("fear of the unknown").

The first mechanism is implemented when the subject is deformed to the extent that its external features are viewed as a deviation or abnormality: *a horribly **anthropoid forepaw**; страховиська з **собачими** головами **і козлиними** ногами* [horrible creatures with dogs heads and goats legs] – the SRF perceives these subjects as belonging to several real objects simultaneously and to neither particular at the same time. Usually, in such texts the emphasis is made on the external, visual side of the SSF's verbalization; on the textual level its otherness results in vast body descriptions and in the description of fear or other accompanying feelings experienced by the recipient.

To emphasize the abnormality of the SSF's appearance lexemes of general semantics may be used (*a figure, a thing, a creature, an object, a being*) which, when accompanied by monstrous attributes, may be viewed as units synonymous to the lexeme *monster*: *The youth's febrile mind, apparently, was dwelling on **strange things**; and the doctor shuddered now and then as he spoke of them. They included not only a repetition of what he had formerly dreamed, but touched wildly on **a gigantic thing "miles high" which walked or lumbered about**. He at no time fully described **this object**, but occasional frantic words, as repeated by Dr. Tobey, convinced the professor that it must be identical with **the nameless monstrosity** he had sought to depict in his dream-sculpture* (Lovecraft 1926). As the analysis of the corpus of texts in Ukrainian shows, lexemes of general semantics are not used there.

The second mechanism, for example, is used by S. King in the text of "Cell" where the new world order was imposed on people through phones and transformed them into *phone-crazies*, *phone people*, *phoners* who can spread new catching abilities. The nomination *phone people* is synonymous to *a monster* as it bears double connotation by marking the SSF by the origin of transformation and by emphasizing the new means to perform transgression. Researchers of monster culture mention that the most frightening aspect of encountering a monster is not seeing it but turning into one (Cohen 2012). Modern notion of transgression has widened and now it includes the fear of new technologies or space, or the fear of progress that may result in the extinction of mankind: *By using **cell phones**, which have become **the dominant form of communication** in our daily lives, you simultaneously **turn the populace into your own conscript army** – an army that's literally **afraid of nothing, because it's insane** – and you **break down the infrastructure*** (King 2011, p. 116). Similarly, M.Kidruk uses this mechanism in "Бот" where an independent computer mind operates human clones (bots who look like boys) and via them people who kill themselves and others. Thus, the variation "apocalyptic fear" appears. On the textual level the variation "fear of the unknown" directs the text creation to the further depiction of the SSF's transgression and SRF's close extinction.

For contrast, it is worth giving an example of non-fearful monster nominations *ape-princess*, *ape-goddess* and others in the text of H. Lovecraft "Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family". Though being monstrous, these subjects are active in the myths of an African tribe retold in the world of "real" horrible events: *A third told of the return of the son, grown to **manhood** – or **apehood** or **godhood**, as the case might be – yet unconscious of his identity* (Lovecraft 1920). The subject bears features of a human, an ape and a god but it is not perceived as frightening as it doesn't mean transgression but rather a miracle.

Sense variation "fear-disgust" VS "fear-awe"

A SSF causes abjection that is a complex attitude including disgust due to the SSF's repellent features; but even more important is the fact that being disgusted doesn't mean being fearful: *На смітнику сиділа **кретинська потвора з висадженими очима**, обгризала кістки і заходилася здушеним реготом* [A cretin freak with its eyes gouged out sat on

the garbage heap, gnawing bones and laughing like mad] (Yatskiv 2014, p. 89); *These are new people, Clay thought.* **Telepaths who don't take baths** (King 2011, p. 406); *<…> the Raggedy Man* **gave off a ripe and powerful stench that almost made Clay's eyes water** (King 2011, p. 407) – till these subjects exist in the possible world of the text without intruding into the SRF's life, they are strange, weird, hideous but not fearful. What the text needs to actualize the sense of fear is the author's intention to create a disgusting subject that shows aggression like in the examples: *Pixie Light* [a phoner] *had* **darted her pretty little face forward** *with snakelike speed,* **bared her undoubtedly strong young teeth, and battened on Power Suit Woman's neck.** *There was an enormous jet of blood* (King 2011, p. 10–11).

Estimating the subject as disgusting may be very subjective and recipients may understand it differently, for example, a scientist sees a new object for analysis and a commoner sees a being created contrary to God's will: *Lake's reports of* **those biological monstrosities** *had aroused naturalists and paleontologists to the highest pitch <…>* (Lovecraft 1931) // *The bones of the* **tiny paws**, *it is rumoured, imply* **prehensile characteristics** *more typical of* **a diminutive monkey** *than of* **a rat**, *while the small skull with its* **savage yellow fangs** *is of* **the utmost anomalousness**, *appearing from certain angles like* **a miniature, monstrously degraded parody of a human skull**. *The workmen crossed themselves in fright when they came upon* **this blasphemy**, *but later burned candles of gratitude in St. Stanislaus' Church because of* **the shrill, ghostly tittering they felt they would never hear again** (Lovecraft 1932). Fear haunts uneducated workers who don't care about thorough analysis and turn to the simplest way of defending themselves known to them – pray. Perception of fearful subjects by such recipients is characterized by a very hasty classification of the SSF as *blasphemy* (2. a**.** Irreverent or impious action or expression in regard to something considered inviolable or sacrosanct. b. An instance of this. (TFD)), which means that it is bad, unlawful, horrible and should be avoided.

Other SRFs, who are more curious for scientific reasons or some other, build subject-subject relations in the way of closer interaction that pragmatically may lead to the expression of the other variation "fear-awe", emotionally contrary to "fear-disgust" and actualized a posteriori. By "fear-awe" we mean the experience of relations that causes both fear and respect before the SSF because of its greatness, mightiness and absence of ability to be classed under any of the known groups; it's the fear that is accompanied by the understanding that people and their world are not the only ones, that a human being is not the crown of creation. The SSF that causes "fear-awe" is real in the possible world of a horror text and its nomination exploits comparisons and analogies with the objects of the non-fiction world: **Archaean** *monstrosities*; *city of no* **architecture known to man** *or to human imagination;* [mountains] *lie beyond* **the three dimensions** *we know.* Among horror texts the researchers (Ukrainets 2016) single out works by H. Lovecraft who is considered the master of expressing chthonic fear before otherworldly creatures from other civilizations. His way of depicting the possible world is encyclopedic and his vocabulary is full of terms from various branches of natural science, though he also uses the lexeme *monster* to emphasize the lack of human knowledge, language and power to describe, study

or oppose the new world: *How could he be sure he would not land on that green-litten hillside of a far planet, on the tessellated terrace above* **the city of tentacled monsters somewhere beyond the galaxy or in the spiral black vortices of that ultimate void of Chaos where reigns the mindless demon-sultan Azathoth?** (Lovecraft 1932). The reaction of the SRFs is the one the author intends to imply – "fear-awe": *I think that both of us simultaneously cried out in* **mixed awe, wonder, terror, and disbelief in our own senses** *as we finally cleared the pass and saw what lay beyond* (Lovecraft 1931). Ukrainian lingual culture horror texts with the SSF-monster do not expose the variation "fear-awe".

The two sense variations compared are actualized in texts where the pragmatic potential of the nomination leads the text creation in opposite directions – "fear-disgust" (humbles the SSF and repulses the SRF); "fear-awe" (exalts the SSF and attracts the SRF).

Conclusions

Nomination of SSFs by the lexeme *monster/монстр* and words and expressions synonymous to it possesses pragmatic potential in transmitting the communicative sense "fear". The analysis of vocabulary definitions shows that variations "fear-disgust", "fear of the unknown" and "fear of otherness" are implied in the nominations and may be actualized according to the author's intentions. The actualization of variations "fear of the unknown" and "fear of otherness" is possible only when the author intentionally throws together the SSF and the SRF in the process of transgression; till then the sense variations remain a priori, potential but not actualized. The variation "fear of the unknown" may be accompanied by the variation "apocalyptic fear" a posteriori. The actualization of the variation "fear-awe" is possible only in case of exalting the SSF and depicting a specific nature of the SRF – an advanced scientific-like curiosity. It is the variation that is expressed a posteriori and doesn't depend only on the SSF's nomination.

The comparison of texts of the Ukrainian and English lingual cultures showed that pragmatic potential of nominating the SSF-monster is universal for these two cultures but for the variation "fear-awe" that is not found in Ukrainian texts. Universal is the nature of reference of a SSF in such texts: ontological – to outline the borders of the new world; philosophic – to understand the roots of human fears, stress upon the imaginary stability of the modern world order; text creating – to build a text around a SSF and its implied characteristics; communicative – to express the sense "fear" in certain variations.

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Summary

Communicative potential of expressing the sense of fear in non-conventional, subjectively created circumstances depends upon the author's intention and is indirectly implied in the nomination

of the subject-source of fear. Generally, any source of fear is a monster as far as its attributes and actions, its essence are set at damaging the recipient, contradict the recipient's world order norms. Monsters are the bearers of senses that are explicated in such a way of visualizing (verbalizing in texts) that symbolizes existing social or religious problems accumulated in the society. In modern non-conventional horror texts with the subject-source of fear a monster, reference to this subject performs several functions: ontological – to outline the borders of the new world; philosophic – to understand the roots of human fears, stress upon the imaginary stability of the modern world order; text creating – to build a text around the necessary set of sources of fear and their relations with the recipients of fear as the author intends for the ups and downs when depicting the fearful atmosphere; communicative – to express the sense "fear" in certain variations like "fear-disgust", "fear of the unknown" and "fear of otherness" that are implied in the text a priori. Other variations appear in the text a posteriori, for example, "apocalyptic fear" or "fear-awe". The former reveals the interpretation that monstrous subjects mean transgression. In this case the recipient encounters not a single monster but a representative of an aggressive community that has already invaded the "safe" world of the recipient; the number and quality of subject-subject collisions is indefinite and depends upon the author's intention. "Fear-awe" is viewed as the sense that bases on the experience of subject-subject collisions which cause the recipient's respect and obeisance before the source of fear due to its grandeur, power and impossibility to be identified; it is the fear that is accompanied by the comprehension that the man and our world are not the only ones in the Universe, that the man is not the crown of creation, and finally, that there are other gods and worlds created by them. Pragmatic potential of the nomination of the source of fear a monster is viewed in transmitting a priori and a posteriori variations of the communicative sense "fear" in the process of text creation and text perception.

KEY WORDS: monster, horror discourse, communicative sense, subject-source of fear, subject-recipient of fear, text creation, text perception, reference.