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Communicative Model – Author, Hero, Text, Recipient in a Postmodern Novel

Nataliia LEVCHENKO¹,
Pecherskyh LUBOV²,
Olena VARENIKOVA³,
Nataliya TORKUT⁴

¹ Habilitated Doctor of Philology, Professor in Leonid Ushkalov Department of Ukrainian Literature and Journalism, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7535-6330>, E-mail: filolognl@gmail.com

² PhD in Philology, doctoral student of the Leonid Ushkalov Department of Ukrainian Literature and Journalism, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1377-4462>, E-mail: lpecherskyh@i.ua

³ PhD in Philology, Associate Professor, Professor Leonid Ushkalov Department of Ukrainian Literature and Journalism, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9869-3201>, E-mail: varenikova25@hnpu.edu.ua

⁴ Doctor of Philology, professor, the head of the Ukrainian Shakespeare Centre in Zaporizhzhia National University, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8905-6769>, E-mail: nataliya.torkut@gmail.com

Abstract: The study deals with the communicative interaction between the author, the hero, the text, the reader in a postmodern novel.

A similar and ambiguous reality, on the one hand, sometimes led to the subjectivist hypertrophy, absolutizing the author's world view, and at times minimized and devaluated the author's identity, on the other. Therefore, from the end of the 1990s the ways of expressing author's "Self" changed dramatically, which directly affected the means of creating a hero in the contemporary Ukrainian literature. An important place in the communicative literary model was occupied by the text as an independent semantic unit and the reader as an interpreter of the text.

The specifics of deploying the dialog between the author and the hero point to the transformation of their functions in the Ukrainian postmodern novel. Considering the statement of the death of the author proclaimed by R. Barthes, the former stops being the main holistic text creator, thus rather becoming its product and the way of expression.

The author, the hero and the text have a certain integrity aimed at the interpretative game with the recipient, who diffuses the newly created semantic integrity into a diversity of meanings.

Keywords: *author, hero, text, recipient, dialog.*

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1. Introduction

Disharmony, destruction and fragmentation are prominent in the postmodern art, where everything is uncertain and changeable. The absurdity of life, the disruption of social and moral links in the life of a person or even a society, the loss of role models and landmarks in the existing world are the essential highlights in a postmodern novel, which appeals to its recipient with its insecurity, uncertainty, chaotic nature, as well as the depth of the crisis and despair. Having no prospects development and no secure future plans, the imaginary world of the postmodern novel, being divided and disrupted, focuses on itself and involves fragmentation, chaotic and collage nature in the plot structure, which becomes a special feature of postmodern fiction.

New life conditions required new ways and means of its literary reflection. “According to the idea of the nonlinearity of the text by J. Derrida (Derrida, 2000b), modern thinking can not be represented linearly in the form of a book or a letter. Hypertext, which can be described by the postmodernism principles as multimedia, heterogeneity, ambiguity and intertextuality, turned out to be extremely in tune with the post-modern situation and most adequately represents new relationships with reality” (Zubenko & Sytnykova, 2020, p. 197). The interpretation foci on the author and the hero shifted towards the text and the addressee, where the text is perceived as the intertext medium, which encourages the recipient to interpret it multi-culturally.

Accordingly, the earlier cultural value system was fundamentally reassessed. It was denied and some of its achievements and priorities were rejected. The illogical and ambiguous reality either led to the hypertrophy of subjectivism, absolutizing the author’s worldview, on the one hand, and neglected and devaluated the author’s personality, on the other. That way, from the late 1990s the specifics of expressing the author’s “Self” changed completely, which had a direct impact on the ways of creating a hero in the contemporary Ukrainian literature.

One of the key stylistic features of post-modernism is the intertwining or blurring of boundaries between reality and the text, which is perceived as the post-modern game with the text continuation.

The author of the post-modern novel offers another game – a game with the hero and the recipient, which both the author and the reader takes seriously and believes in the reality created by the imagination of both the author and the reader. “That is, the recipient is not affected by the forms,

but by the atmosphere of the “meeting” of the semiotic subject and the phenomenon of perception. Moreover, the authenticity of the experience (the “new sincerity”) and the internal psychological truth are proclaimed as the key to the successful result of such a “meeting” as an autopoietic actualization of the mental experience of archetype entrapment” (Romanovska et al., 2020, p. 240).

Such a game, in the end, creates four planes of communicative model in the post-modern novel, the study of which, despite the existing numerous scientific investigations, is still relevant for literary criticism.

The special features of deploying the literary dialog between the author and the hero, text with reader reveal the transformation of their functions in the Ukrainian postmodern novel, which is to be considered in this study.

The aim of our research is to analyze the peculiarities of the development of the author's artistic dialogue with his hero, the text with the reader and the study of the phenomena of transformation of their functions in the communication model in the Ukrainian postmodern novel.

The novelty of the study is due to its aim and relevance. For the first time the analysis of the communicative model was carried out: the author, the hero, the text, the recipient on the example of novels “Secrecy” (Andrukhovych, 2007) and “Recreations” (Andrukhovych, 1996) by Yuriy Andrukhovych.

To implement these tasks, the study used traditional general scientific methods: the method of deconstruction was used to identify hidden contradictions in the text in order to show the possibility of ambiguous interpretation; the method of metatextuality was applied during the study of types of intertextuality relations, secondary communication; using the method of intertextuality, the analysis of fragments of other texts in the form of quotations, allusions, and reminiscences embedded in the text of novel “Secrecy” (Andrukhovych, 2007) by Yuriy Andrukhovych was carried out.

2. Literature review

The process of the postmodern person’s loss of his/her role and function of the only semantic centre was described in the decentralization theory developed by J. Derrida (Derrida, 2000a; Derrida 2000b), according to which the philosopher reassessed the logocentric tradition of the Western European thinking, where a human dominated in all areas of activities. Instead, the researcher shifted the focus towards the linguistic semantics of

the text. The theory of the subject decentralization was supported by Dutch researcher D. Fokkema (Fokkema, 1984; Fokkema 1986), M. Foucault (Foucault, 2003), who went further by introducing the concept of the “death of the subject”, which was manifested in denying any variant of the subject in the postmodern philosophy. The subject destruction was completed by R. Barthes (Barthes, 1994), who declared the “death of the author”, which totally ruined the generally accepted stable and socially determined subject. The philosophy of postmodernism did not regard a human as the key value, the master of nature and an integral autonomous unit of a society. Instead, postmodernity outlined human activities as those dependent on external factors.

Thus, the theoretical basis of these articles was the concepts of deconstruction by J. Derrida, decentralization by D. Fokham, destruction of the subject by M. Foucault and R. Barthes.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 The world of the postmodern novel as a form of mosaic text

As early as in the twentieth century postmodernity ruined neo-mythological opposition between the text and reality, declaring that the text does not reflect reality but creates a variety of new realities, which are not sometimes interrelated or interdependent.

Since the reality has not been finally identified, there is a text only, and thus J. Derrida suggested that every text does not have its clearly fixed objective meaning. There is only the author’s perspective and recipient’s opinion, which provide the text with new meanings (Derrida, 2000b, p. 412).

Consequently, in postmodernity the text has new senses. Bringing the text to the dominant position in the postmodern novel, R. Barthes claims that it is not the “author that speaks, but the language itself; writing is initially meaningless” (Barthes, 1994, p. 385). Therefore, the text does not become the implementation of a certain objective concept, but, on the contrary, it involves a variety of interpretations, which, primarily, differ from the original author’s intention. This look at the text made it, as well as the search for the truth, the essential objects of postmodernity, sidelining and marginalizing the positions of the author and the hero, shifting them from the center.

The emphasis on the crisis representation of reality with no unified center deprived the hero of the postmodern novel of life clarity, which entailed the destruction of the objectivity during the world learning due to its continuous stay in the captivity of its own situations and circumstances

(Newman, 1985, p. 15). According to S. Fish, a postmodern hero is deprived of an opportunity to learn the world on the whole. He or she does not know comprehensive and holistic information about the facts and events he or she participates in (Fish, 1967).

In the postmodern novel the concept of the human is formed reflecting the chaotic and tragic nature, and absurdity of the world. The personality is subject to controversies, disruptions between the natural and civilized world, city and country, childhood and maturity, fear and hope. For instance, while analyzing the novels by Y. Pashkovskiy, K. Moskalets noted that the heroes of his works were homeless, disadvantaged, miserable and totally morally crippled. “They were affected by radiation, light headed by cheap wines and perfumes, sulphur, and haloperidol. i. e. from everything generously supplied by the sly world” (Moskalets, 1999, p. 73).

The spirit, represented, for example, by national identity and mentality that is normally the core of any nation, like in the novel by Yuriy Andrukhovych “Recreation”, is depicted as absurdity: “And who will win the conflict: Catholics or Orthodox? – As always, the ungodly will win. Because the number of towels in his church is more important for a Ukrainian than some Sermon on the Mount” (Andrukhovych, 1996, p. 73, our translation).

The postmodern writer has to mystify the vision of reality, where the world appears a shelter for chaos, where pseudo values and mass culture artefacts prevail (Derrida, 2000b, p. 418).

The postmodern human sterilized life promotes devastation and desolation of personality. The mosaic, illogical, and mainly absurd reality requires new means and forms of expression, another novel poetics, where the sophisticated narrative manner deliberately complicates the structure. It features fragmentation and tends to parody, the author uses masks, intertextuality, allusions and a play element. The postmodernity has exchanged the language speaker and the language itself thus providing the language with dominance and updating the concept of a literary text, creating its total endlessness in the diverse mosaic pure and applied aspects. Everything can be found within a multilevel text canvas whereas nothing can exist beyond it any longer.

The world depicted in the postmodern novel is a mosaic text with highlighted dominant signs, united therein according to the principles of a postmodern recipient-oriented game. The prospect of understanding this multifaceted and diverse literary work may be realistic for the recipient only, as “the reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its

origin but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted” (Barthes, 1994, p. 390).

3.2. “Death” and “resurrection” of the author in the novel “Secrecy” by Yuriy Andrukhovych

According to all the rules of postmodernity and the concept suggested by R. Barthes, the author as a function had to be totally removed, but at times the author as the text creator, declaring there his or her personal involvement in everything that has been created within the text seems to proclaim his or her return into the text.

“Secrecy” by Yuriy Andrukhovych can be regarded as an example of this return or, rather resurrection of the author. It occurs along with numerous cases of self-citation and autobiographic elements.

The reception of the autobiographic units in “Secrecy” by Yuriy Andrukhovych represents the author’s coming back to the body of the postmodernist text, providing for an opportunity of its existence in the space between the text and the recipient reckoning with the fact that the “biography is always focused on the author as the core, while the discourse is a peripheral eccentric instance of “Self”” (Olshanskyi, 2007, p. 14).

In “Secrecy” Andrukhovych partly denies the reader’s apologia typical of the postmodernist novels and speaks from himself as a personality that creates a new imaginary world as the total of certain creative psychological features, as a representative of a certain literary tradition and his own historical, cultural and political epoch.

To that end, in the above novel Yuriy Andrukhovych presents his own vision of the contemporary novel, transforming the phenomenon of the “death of the author” and complementing it with the typical postmodernist total play element. The author includes intertextual fragments, written by himself, into his new text. The deployment of the vector of returning into the creator’s pre-text through self-citation, autobiographic nature, turning into the author-hero makes the “Secrecy” stand out of the mainstream of the European postmodernism and deconstructivism, outlining the national specific features of the author’s literary work as well as of the Ukrainian literature on the whole.

It is to be mentioned that some European intellectuals did not unconditionally support the idea of the “death of the author”. For example, S. Burke, criticizing R. Barthes’s logic, who stated that from the “linguistic viewpoint the author was merely a writer similarly to “Self” being just the

one who says “Self” (Barthes, 1994, p. 387), noted that the main aporia of the modern discourse is in the fact that the principle of the author is seen at its best when everybody discusses his absence. In other words, the author is more alive than before despite being considered dead (Burke, 1992, p. 7). Therefore, it seems logical that in “The Secret” Yuriy Andrukhovych demonstrated the absurdity of ignoring the author’s figure and his or her complete substitution with the reader (recipient), since the concept of the “death of the author” was doomed from the very beginning. While the author is integrated into the text and is its certain function, he or she is also a living being that creates the text regardless of the reader and reader’s will: “<...> Now I have to be a narrator. That is, a messenger of the surrounding world, bigger and bigger, more and more external <...>” (Andrukhovych, 2007, p. 346, our translation).

Even refusing from the authorship in the foreword to his novel “Perversion”, Yuriy Andrukhovych includes in the will a traditional element showing the author’s presence in the text: “My records and about me, testimonies, papers, films, in short, the amount of documents involved in my identity – B...YU – to Yuriy Andrukhovych, Ivano-Frankivsk, for further use” (Andrukhovych, 1992, p. 273, our translation).

Considering the ways of the author’s return, reconstruction or recreation, A. Assis did not rule out a possibility of transforming the deconstructivism experience gained by J. Derrida: “though in his own way Derrida supports the concept of the “death of the author” and refuses to interpret the text from the perspective of author’s intentions, the practice of deconstruction makes him construct a persona of the author-father who could be killed” (Assis, 2011).

An appropriate example of author’s recreation in “Secrecy” is its integral autobiographic nature, owing to which the author is also present in the plot of this work as a character.

The autobiographic nature enabled the novel author to tightly interweave the events of personal and social life in his own story about the military service, studies in Lviv, the creation of “Bu-Ba-Bu”, and travels across Europe.

3. 3. “Alter ego” of the author and of the novel hero as the key to understanding the text for the recipient

As the author, Andrukhovych uses Andrukhovych as a character and engages the recipient in participation, since being a hero – Egon Alt-Alter Ego, whose image on the book binding resembles that of its author, “on the binding we can primarily see Andrukhovych who speaks with his

interlocutor, whose face is invisible, but the figure and hairstyle makes it apparent that it is the same person, disguised and photographed from a different angle” (Klyuyko, 2010, p. 102) depicts him as a knowledgeable person who knows about the events in the novel and even describes the prospect of the co-existence of the author and the recipient.

The playful nature of novel "Secrecy" by Yuriy Andrukhovych is manifested in the absence of absolute immanence of the text. The image of the author is split in the text into the person of the author, the author as a textual category and his alter ego, which is not an inner voice, but rather an external distant observer, the hero of the novel Egon Alt. The name Egon Alt is an ironic paraphrase in the form of a phonetic alteration of the term alter ego, which serves as a key to the reader's understanding of this image. Egon Alt opposes the narrator, is the generator of the search for truth in the kaleidoscope of memories. He acts as an internal censor, interrupts and directs the narrator.

3.4. The form of time of the novel as a compositional method of becoming the author-hero

The form of the novel's time is limited to seven days, each of which is a compositionally complete and chronologically limited stage of the author's formation. The demiurgic nature of the new hypertext he created is manifested in the creation of an image of himself in just seven days, where the seventh day of conversation with Egon Alt was devoted to rest rather than work, which is a biblical allusion to God's creation of the world in seven days.

The elaborate biblical metaphor of the seven days of creation corresponds to the seven chapters of the novel's text. The cathartic ending of each chapter of the novel is an increase in the rhythm of the end of the life of his hero and at the same time is a closed cycle of existence of Egon Alt. The reader knows nothing about his past or his future. The current Egon Alt appears to the recipient in the form of five days of work on the survey of the poet Yuriy Andrukhovych, the sixth day of rest, the seventh day of entertainment and reflection.

The author's game with the text, the hero and the reader acquires new forms in the epilogue, where the narrator returns to the beginning, to childhood, where there is happiness, next to the lost father. The communicative model author, hero, text, reader took the form of a closed circle. The beginning became the end, and the end became the beginning.

The fact of Alt's death at the beginning of the novel provided the author with an opportunity to disassociate himself from his imaginary hero,

which is an author's mask, created as a way of constructing and completing the text.

A mask as the means of literary mystification in text creation enables the writer to diffuse in the text in various elements, thus being able to turn into the author-hero and become a part of his newly created text. The novel author admits that it was similar to finding his own identity “<...> It was so as if I suddenly found myself” (Andrukhovych, 2007, p. 68, our translation).

The autobiographic nature as the way of returning to the author's “Self” alongside the integration of the hero's story into the world landscape can be also found in Yuriy Andrukhovych's novel “The Lexicon of Intimate Cities”, where he provides the following definition of the genre: “Autobiography superimposed on geography – how to call it? Autogeography? Autogeobiography? It sounds too complicated – as some heavy hexametric “Batrachomyomachia” <...> This book is an attempt to experience them (“geo” and “bio”) as a single inseparable whole” (Andrukhovych, 2011, p. 9, our translation).

Thus Yuriy Andrukhovych found his way to returning the author into the body of the text as its integral part.

4. Conclusions

The study shows that in the postmodern novel the text is created basing on a variety of previously existing ones as the multiplicity of intertextual links and interpretations. The abundance of citations, collages, irony, and a maze are presented in the postmodern text at the level of image systems. The semantic textual components are rather autonomous and are interrelated in an unstable way, which allows for the communication from the interpretative perspective in different directions reckoning that “the concept of any interpretation really admits variations in understanding, since interpretation is the process of thinking, which consists in recreating implicit senses into explicit ones, shows the depth of the meanings contained within the literary one” (Levchenko et al., 2020, p. 64).

The subject hero of the postmodern novel features otherness compared to the heroes of classical or modernist novels. His or her distinction is in uncertainty, marginality, ethical pluralism, schizoid nature etc.

He or she loses integrity and diffuses in numerous segments in the mosaic world and the abundance of real and fake information.

Considering the death of the author proclaimed by R. Barthes, the author stops being the main holistic creator of the text and becomes its

product, and the shape of expression. The author's presence in the created text, on the one hand, can be found as a specific discourse task, on the other – as the owner of the right to speak, where he or she is not the source but merely a mediator. The author partly returns to the text via the identity of his/her biography, where its perspective does not always match the discourse perspective: the biography is always focused on the author's body, while the discourse is at the periphery in its relation to the individual.

The author, the hero, and the text are united by certain integrity oriented on the interpretative playing with the recipient, who disperses the newly created semantic integrity into the multiplicity of meanings.

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