

**“PRAGMALINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF
FEAR-INDUCING LEXICAL UNITS IN DETECTIVE DISCOURSE”**

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Annotation: This article explores the pragmalinguistic functions of fear-inducing lexical units in detective discourse, comparing Uzbek (Shaytanat) and English (Sherlock Holmes) literary traditions. The study examines how linguistic tools evoke fear, analyzing semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic strategies. The findings reveal cultural and linguistic distinctions in fear representation, highlighting the role of context, metaphor, and speech acts.

Keywords: pragmalinguistics, fear-including lexicon, detective discourse, semantic strategies, discourse analysis

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola detektiv diskursida “qo‘rquv”ni ifodalovchi lisoniy birliklarning pragmalingvistik vazifalarini o‘zbek (“Shaytanat”) va ingliz (“Sherlock Holmes”) adabiyotlari misolida solishtirib o‘rganadi. Tadqiqotda semantik, sintaktik va pragmatik usullar tahlil qilinadi. Natijada, madaniy va lisoniy farqlar aniqlanib, kontekst, metafora va nutq aktlarining ahamiyati ko‘rsatiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Pragmalingvistika, qo‘rquvni anglatuvchi leksik birliklar, detektiv diskurs, semantik va pragmatik strategiyalar, diskurs tahlili

Аннотация: В данной статье исследуются прагмалингвистические функции лексических единиц, вызывающих страх, в детективном дискурсе на примере узбекского (Шайтанат) и английского (Шерлок Холмс) произведений. Анализируются семантические, синтаксические и прагматические стратегии. Результаты выявляют культурноязыковые различия в передаче страха, подчеркивая роль контекста, метафоры и речевых актов.

Ключевые слова: Прагмалингвистика, лексические единицы, вызывающие страх, детективный дискурс, семантические и прагматические стратегии, анализ дискурса

Pragmalinguistics observes how language is used for communication by defining meaning without literally interpreting it. It also studies how words impact the audience. Unlike traditional semantics, which examines the meaning of words in isolation, or syntax, which is sentence structure, pragmalinguistics studies meaning in relation to context, the intention of the speaker, and the impact of the words on the

audience. The synthesis of core principles based on fundamental scholarly literature is presented below.

Post-1980s fiction and literature outline worlds unknown to the average reader, offering diverse clusters of evocative, sensational constructs laced with frightful descriptions. The psychology of fear emerges uneasily yet critically important, while creepy fiction and dread are maintained through pliable narration and rigorous psychological control over the reader. The style of detective fiction, heavily reliant on suspense and psychological influence, becomes a language of fear: an emotionally manipulated reaction not simply to danger, but an intensively staged attempt to capture. In this research, I analyze the pragmalinguistic aspect of fear in quite different detective cultures, Arthur Conan Doyle's "Sherlock Holmes"-the very pinnacle of English detective fiction. In Sherlock Holmes, fright is viewed through a prism of logic and deduction; echoing the West's preoccupation with reason and tangible menace. Doyle's prose oozes packaging precision-dread, a fear to be positioned as binary complicated, a "chill of fear" creeping down the spine, the "paralyzing terror" of a predator not seen, the "gnawing unease" inside a crime undone. These constructions are heavy on physiological metaphor ("his blood ran cold") and violations of "Gricean maxims," like ominous vagueness.

In stark contrast, Shaytanat roots its terror in the collective and the supernatural, drawing from Central Asian folklore, Islamic cosmology, and communal taboos. Fear here is not just an individual experience but a shared cultural specter-a qo'rqinchli shovqin (terrifying noise) in the dead of night, the shayton ishi (devil's work) lurking in mundane spaces, or the o'likning nafasi (breath of the dead) haunting the living. The lexicon of fear in Uzbek detective fiction is saturated with religious and folkloric imagery, where curses (Jazosi kelar!-You'll pay for this!) and omens (Deraza g'irillab ochildi-lekin hech kim yo'q edi-The window creaked open-but no one was there) function as speech acts that invoke existential dread. Unlike Doyle's detached suspense, Shaytanat employs repetition (Qo'rqdim, qo'rqdim!-I was afraid, so afraid!) and auditory dominance (e.g., the g'irg'ir of a door swinging on its own) to immerse the reader in a world where fear is inescapably communal, tied to the weight of tradition and the unseen eyes of society.

Underpinning this analysis are key theoretical frameworks. Safarov's (2008) pragmalinguistics positions fear as a contextbound performative, where language does not merely describe terror but enacts it. Van Dijk's discourse analysis reveals how fear narratives serve as ideological tools, reinforcing cultural norms (e.g., the Uzbek emphasis on communal morality vs. Holmes' celebration of individual intellect). Meanwhile, Peirce's semiotics helps decode fear as a system of signs-the howl of a hound in Doyle or the creak of a door in Shaytanat are not just sounds but culturally loaded symbols of impending doom.

By examining detective fiction through lexical, syntactic, pragmatic, and cultural lenses, we uncover how language is weaponized to manipulate fear. Whether through Arthur Conan Doyle's surgical suspense or Shaytanat's folkloric horror, both traditions reveal fear not merely as an emotion but as a linguistic artifact-sculpted by word choice, strategic silences, and unspoken cultural truths. Consider the following Uzbek passage: Xonada g'ayritabiiy sovuq tarqaldi. Nigora bo'yniga nimadir yopishganini his qildi – yelkasiga sovuq nafas tegdi. Orqasiga qaytganida, hech narsa ko'rinmadi... lekin qo'rquv ildiz otgandek yuragiga singib ketdi.

In our next example, a literal translation might read: An unnatural cold spread through the room. Nigora felt something cling to her neck-a cold breath touched her shoulder. When she turned around, nothing was there... but fear took root in her heart like a growing vine. Yet, to convey the full psychological and cultural weight, we adapt the lexicon of fear: G'ayritabiiy sovuq - A supernatural chill (evokes dread beyond the natural).

Sovuq nafas – Ice cold breath (enhances tactile horror).

Qo'rquv ildiz otgandek - Fear coiled around her heart like a serpent (metaphorically intensifies the suffocating grip of terror). The refined translation amplifies the horror: A supernatural chill seeped into the room. Nigora felt something slither against her neck - a gasp of ice-cold breath on her shoulder. She whirled around... nothing. Yet fear coiled around her heart, squeezing like a vise.

Here, fear is not just described; it is engineered through language. The syntactic brevity (She whirled around... nothing.) mirrors the abrupt shock, while the serpent metaphor (coiled around her heart) roots the terror in a visceral, almost primal, physicality. Uzbek horror, as in Shaytanat, often blends supernatural folklore with bodily terror, demanding culturally attuned translations: Shaytanat implies demonic possession; English might render it as satanic whispers or the Devil's grip to preserve its theological dread.

Adapted for English's pragmatic rhythms: Night after night, the whisper slithered into her ears: "I am what comes for you." The voice drilled into her skull like a rusted blade, unraveling her mind thread by thread. Here, miyasiga mixdek kirib (pierced like a nail) becomes drilled like a rusted blade-a more violent, sensory escalation-while aql-idrokni buzardi (shattered sanity) transforms into unraveling her mind, evoking gradual disintegration. We analyzed both syntactic and pragmatic strategies across traditions. The linguistic strategies for evoking fear differ markedly between Western detective fiction like Sherlock Holmes and Uzbek horror such as Shaytanat, reflecting deeper cultural and narrative traditions.

Even speech acts function differently. In Holmes, warnings like Don't go there. signal tangible, rational danger-crime, violence, or moral consequence. But in Shaytanat, curses such as Jazosi kelar! (You'll pay!) invoke a deeper, mythic

retribution, binding fear to cultural taboos and the unseen wrath of spirits. Ultimately, while both traditions manipulate language to unsettle, Holmes crafts fear through implication and reason, whereas Shaytanat conjures it through incantation and folklore—each a mirror to its storytelling roots. Western detective fiction often relies on logical fear (e.g., crime, moral consequences), while Uzbek horror invokes mythological terror (e.g., jinn, fate). Both, however, manipulate Grice's Maxims—flouting Quantity with ominous silences or Quality with unreliable narration—to unsettle the reader.[6]

Fear in detective fiction is neither universal nor incidental; it is a deliberate construct shaped by linguistic and cultural norms. Doyle's Holmes weaponizes suspense through implicature and rationality, while Shaytanat deploys folkloric horror through visceral metaphor and religious allusion. Yet both traditions confirm a singular truth: fear is not merely felt—it is orchestrated.

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