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Film discourse: the semantic interpretation of film titles

This article discusses the problems of semantic interpretation of the titles of feature films, as films turned into influential means of mass communication in the modern life. Filmonyms as one of the types of small-format texts has become the object of linguistic research. The significance of the film discourse as an audiovisual discourse is determined by the possibilities of its impact on the addressee. Author comprehensively analyzed the works of foreign and Kazakhstani linguists who studied the film discourse from various aspects. The purpose of the article is to identify linguistic and pragmalinguistic interpretation of Kazakhstani film titles. To achieve the goal, the following tasks were set: to consider semantic interpretation of the titles of feature films, to identify aesthetic function of film discourse, to group films into semantic categories, to offer the definition of the concept of “film discourse”. The scientific significance of the research work expands the research scope of film-discourse as a type of institutional discourse. Practical significance is due to the fact that research results can be used as materials for preparing lectures and cases on audiovisual discourse and pragmalinguistic features applied to the names of Kazakhstani films should undoubtedly become the object of further research by linguists.

Keywords: film discourse, film titles, filmonyms, semantics, interpretation, addressee, communicative impact, verbal communication.

Introduction

In today's society, it is quite possible that for many individuals to visit cinemas for the purpose of recreation and watch new works of cinema industry like Hollywood have become a tradition. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic that has occurred in the world, open-air cinemas have started operating in many countries. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the quoted phrase “that of all the arts the most important for us is the cinema” has not lost its relevance. In modern society, we can see that cinema is used as a means of mass influence on the consciousness of recipients. The concept of film discourse suggests focusing on the film as a communicative process. The fact that film discourse is an activity that takes place within the framework of a communicative event based on a particular situation also reveals its discursive potential. This article is devoted to the analysis of the pragmatic potential of film titles in Kazakh language. First of all, it is appropriate to review the works of scientists dedicated to the study of film discourse in the field of linguistics.

In the science of Western linguistics, linguistic works devoted to the study of film discourse began to be published and supplemented with such lexemes as *cinematic discourse*, *film discourse*, *film dialogue*, *dramatic dialogue*, *fictional conversation*, *cinematic pragmatic acts*. A comprehensive study of the film discourse is reflected in the works of the following scientists: J. Culpeper [1; 260], P. Quaglio [2; 200], K. Richardson [3], M. Dynel [4].

R. McKee, a scientist who was engaged in the study of the film discourse, wrote “We watch a movie; we hear a play” thus compared film discourse with theatrical audiovisual work [5]. In fact, it is known that the recipients' perception of the film begins with the name of the film. Obviously, the study of the pragmatics of film titles will arouse interest among linguists.

In the search for works of Kazakhstani scientists dedicated to the study of the film discourse, the first outstanding work was the dissertation work prepared by a young scientist A.B. Abagan for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) on the topic “Linguocultural aspect of translation of Korean phraseology into Kazakh (from the practice of translation of Korean films)”. According to the young scientist: «Кинодискурс — дискурстардың жиынтығы, музыкамен көп жағдайда жасанды көркем мәнермен безендіре отырып адресат санасына ой салатын көшірме» (Film discourse is a collection of discourses,

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a copy of which is reflected in the mind of the addressee, often decorated with music in an artificial artistic way) [6; 4]. This work is one of the works performed in the field of Translation Studies.

Film discourse is a previously unexplored area in the field of Kazakhstani philology. In the works of young local scientists, there is a number of articles that focus on the linguistic and cultural features of the translation of film discourse. The currently formed film discourse reflects the communicative patterns of speech of modern language carriers, and the audience, watching the films, feels real conversational communication. Thus, the verbalization of movie characters created as a natural use of language in everyday life implies the canonical correspondence of spontaneous conversation. As it is known, there are many cases of developing a foreign language competence through watching movies among young people. So, having analyzed film discourse I propose the following definition of film discourse: «кинодискурс-вербалды және аудио визуалды поликодты мәтіндердің жинағы, медиалингвистика нысаны» (film discourse is a collection of verbal and audio-visual polycode texts, object of mediallynguistics).

Depending on the communicative situation, the addresser of the film competition are individuals who make the film, and the addressees are ordinary film viewers.

According to the classification given by N.V. Podolskaya, the name of films refers to ideonyms (names of works of art and scientific works, mass media) [7]. Linguists from Russian, in addition to calling film names “ideonyms”, also call them as “filmonyms”. The term “filmonym” in general was introduced into the field of linguistics by Ye.V. Knysh. The scientist identifies three functions of filmonyms: *nominative*, *communicative*, and *aesthetic* [8].

It can be noticed, there is a rapid increase in demand among the audience for watching domestic films in our country. We are witnessing that domestic films take part in many film festivals and have won prizes. The audience is aware that the film “Tomiris” that won the Grand Prix of the French Film Festival L'étrange Festival in Paris. Kazakhstani historical films are currently being purchased by Turkey, China, and South Korea. In addition, the fact that the American distributor WellGo USA acquired the rights to distribute the film “Tomiris” on the territory of the United States. A number of major Hollywood publications wrote about it. Turkish TV channel is going to shoot series based on Kazakh film “Tomiris”. The film “Mukagali” which was filmed in 2021 won a prize at the International Festival in Tallinn. These facts can be the indicator of the competitiveness of the Kazakh film industry in the world market.

Material and methods

In the process of describing and studying domestic film discourse, the following methods are taken as a basis: descriptive method, methods of pragmatic and discursive analysis. As research materials, domestic film titles were taken and their pragmatic potential had been analyzed. In addition, the titles of films in Kazakh language were analyzed and studied according to the nominative, communicative and aesthetic functions of filmonyms proposed by researcher E.V. Knysh.

The main function of all film titles is the nominative function. From the title of the film, recipients can also get an idea of what the film is about.

The next function of filmonyms is a communicative function, since the title of the film is the communication between the film itself and the audience on the other side of the screen.

The next major function of filmonyms is its informativeness. The title of the film is aimed at influencing the addressees intellectually and emotionally.

In the course of the study, having studied the titles of films in Kazakh language, grammatically they can be divided into the following categories:

- film titles consisting of only one proper name;
- film titles used with phrases related to historical events;
- film titles used under the name of the profession;
- film titles used with foreign phrases;
- film titles used with occasional words.

Results and Discussion

If we consider the pragmatic potential of film titles according to the above-mentioned categories, the following popular films will form a series of films consisting of the proper names: “Kunanbay”, “Abay”, “Amre”, “Shokan Ualikhanov”, “Tomiris”, “Birzhan-Sal”, “Zhaksylyk”, “Mustafa”, “Mukagali”. Addressees will be able to obtain information about who is the film about, from the use of precedent names in the titles of the films. For example, the fact that the film “Tomiris” managed to have a positive effect on the recipients

can be seen in the comments left on YouTube and on Instagram page. For example, «*Көзімді ашқан документалды кино болды!*», «*Жақсы фильм. Көп кино түсіруге болады біздің тарихымызбен*», «*Керемет фильм!!! Қатты ұнады*», «*Патриоттық, керемет фильм екен! Біз солардың ұрпағымыз ғой. Мақтануға әбден болады*», «*Өте жақсы түсірілген, көне түркі тілінде сөйлеген, тарих бойынша осылай болуы керек, Кир парсы тілінде сөйлеуі керек еді, ол да көне түркі тілінде сөйлеген сияқты, парсы әскерін кішкене әлсіз етіп көрсетіпті, Томирис басын өзі шапқан еді, сәл өзгертіп жіберіпті, фильм ұнады, еңбекті бағалау керек, алға қазағым! kz*». (“It was a documentary movie that opened my eyes!”, “Good movie. You can shoot many films with our history”, “Great movie!!!” “Cool film”, “It turned out to be a patriotic, wonderful film! We are descendants of them. I was quite proud”, “It was very well shot, she spoke the ancient Turkic language, according to history it should have been like this, Cyrus should have spoken Persian, he also spoke the ancient Turkic language, the Persian army looked little weak in the film, Tomiris behead Cyrus. This episode changed a little, liked the film, the work should be appreciated, go ahead, Kazakh! kz”). [9]. (The audience's opinion was given without change). Some of these films have become the winners of International film festivals. For example, Kazakh feature film “Mukagali” won the main prize at the international film festival Meta Film Fest in Dubai this year. Film “Tomiris” won Nouveau Genre Prize at L’Étrange Festival in France in 2020. Such achievements also can influence the addressee’s desire to watch the film winners.

The series of film titles used with phrases related to historical events consists of the following films: “Kazakh Khandigi. Altyn takh”, “Kultegin”, “Otarardıñ küyrewi”, “Almas qılış”, “Artımızda Moskva”, “Jawjürek mın bala”, “Ulı dala zarı”, “Zulmat”. Addressees can clearly see from the title of the film that the film was shot on the basis of historical events. For example, if to look through the comments of the addressees devoted to the film “Ulı dala zarı” there can be noticed very patriotic comments. «*Ай өзімнің 2 сағат уақытымды осы киноға арнап едім өкінбедім. Еріксіз жылағанымда болды. Бірақ ол тұрарлық сезім еді. Киноны көріп болған соң кесірліктен айырылып шүкіршілік ете білуді нығайта түсемін. Онымен қоса бұл кино сюжеті ұлтжандылықпен, адалдыққа тәрбиелейді екен. Қандай да жағдай болмас адал болсаң дұрыс жасағаның деп білемін. Жасым бар болғаны 13-те болса да айтарлықтай әсер алдым, әрбір үзіндісі кез келген көзі ашық тұлғаға надан емес адам болуды үйретеді. Өте жақсы деп бағалар едім!*» (I devoted 2 hours of my time to this movie, I did not regret for it. I couldn't help crying. But it was worth it. After watching the movie, I lose my stubbornness and strengthen my gratitude. At the same time, the plot of the film fosters patriotism and honesty. I know you did the right thing. Although I am only 13 years old, I was deeply impressed, and each passage teaches any open-minded person to be not ignorant. I would say it is a great film!)” [10].

The names of the films used in the name of the profession: “Balwan Şolaq”, “Desant”, “Añşı”, “Şıraqsı”, “Kompozitor”, “Akhmet. Ult ustazı”, “Dos-Mukasan”, etc. Addressees also get information from the title of the film about the direction of the film's content. For example, the film title “Dos-Mukasan” can easily attract the addressees, who have known this legendary music band that was very famous in 1970.

Another phenomenon that is gaining popularity in the domestic film industry is the tactic of presenting film titles to the audience using Kazakh and Russian languages. From a psychological point of view, it can be recognized one of the ways of selling cinema product on to the audience. The names of these films are very popular among Russian-speaking Kazakh viewers. This is also an approach aimed at influencing recipients psychologically. For example, the recipients of the films «Biznes po-kazakhski v Afrike», «Biznes po-kazakhski v Amerike», «Biznes po-kazakhski v Koree», «Kelinka Sabina», «Pobeg iz aula», «Kelinka tozhe chelovek», «Boyjetken. Vsyo iz-za neyo», «Agashki po vyzovu 2: Nachalo». In these titles of the films the presence of precedent units inherent to the Kazakh culture that affect the linguistic consciousness of the addressees, and addressees will be eager to watch these films.

It is easy to see that extralinguistic factors predominate in the film discourse over linguistic factors. For example, the script of the comedy, «Biznes po-kazakhski v Afrike» consists of light jokes and easy to accept. After viewing the film, the recipients understand the main value of “brotherhood”, which is inherent in the Kazakh culture. Despite the fact that the film is shot in the comedy genre, the addressee is thought-provoking. On the YouTube channel the addressees left positive reviews about the film. The addressees left comments on the film in Kazakh and Russian languages. 12461 comments have been left by the addressees from all parts of the world. For example, 1) «*Алға Қазақ киносы. Нұрлан аға жарайсыз өнеріңіз өрге жүзсін!*» (“Forward Kazakh cinema. Nurlan aga, may your business flourish!”); 2) «*Ооочееенньньнь класснооо вчера смотрели в кинотеатре рекомендую*» (“Soooooo cool, we watched it at the cinema yesterday, I recommend it”); 3) «*Из 3-х фильмов «Бизнес по казахски в ...» — это самый смешной.*

The usage of English lexemes in domestic film titles has become a tendency. It is noticed in titles of films that have recently appeared. For example, «Гудбай мой бай», «Каникулы off-line», «Аташка на хаіне». It is easy to see from the film's titles that the main addressees are young viewers. For those who speak English, the appearance of English lexems in the title of the film can be considered an attractive tool to capture the attention of the audience. Therefore, it can be assumed that the film is aimed at young audience. However, such phenomena can lead to the alteration of the language norms. Domestic films in the genre of comedy are mostly made in Russian language. This may be due to the fact of commercializing the films. However, the film discourse materials currently offered to the recipients reflect the communicative patterns of real speech of the Kazakh language, create a clear sense of communication in the minds of the audience, thus sharing the code of truth and cultural realism. Recent trend of using the lexeme of another language in the titles of domestic filmonyms has become fashionable. As it has already mentioned above, the titles of filmonyms proposed in this position can be easily accepted by English-speaking addressees. However, this will certainly create difficulties for recipients who do not understand this language.

Kazakh cinematography is shooting quality films year after year. The film industry is boosting some countries economy. Kazakhstani film company “Kazakhfilm” after Shaken Aimanov is on the leading position in introducing new films. More Kazakhstani people nowadays give preference to Kazakhstani films as they have great impact on the audience. After discussing the semantic interpretation and pragmatic aspect of the film discourse, it turned out that the titles of films have an impact on the consciousness of the addressees, positively affect the perception of the film content, and form a certain opinion of the addressees about the film. Kazakhstani film titles have been analyzed for the first time. As the result of the study the nominative, communicative and aesthetic function of film discourse are identified. The analyzed titles of films are grouped into different categories. It is established that the nominative function of Kazakh filmonyms is the first stage of introducing the viewer to the film. According to the results of the study, it turned out that in Kazakhstani linguistics, film discourse is mainly studied from the translation aspect. Studying and analyzing the pragmatic potential of film discourse in the context of specific communicative situations poses new challenges for linguists. Although film discourse can be considered as one of the earliest forms of media, it is still a vital to carry out practical analysis of its linguistic, pragmalinguistic, extralinguistic features in modern science. In further research, it would be better to research intralingual subtitles, monolingual subtitles of Kazakhstani films. It definitely could enhance the study of film discourse and bring contribution to Kazakhstani philological science.

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А.М. Куркимбаева

Кинодискурс: кино атауларының семантикалық интерпретациясы

Мақалада көркем фильмдердің атауларын семантикалық интерпретациялау мәселелері қарастырылған, өйткені фильмдер қазіргі өмірде бұқаралық коммуникацияның ықпалды құралына айналды. Шағын форматтағы мәтіндердің бір түрі ретінде фильмдер атаулары лингвистикалық зерттеу нысанына ие болды. Кинодискурстың аудиовизуалды дискурс ретіндегі маңыздылығы оның адресатқа әсер ету мүмкіндіктерімен анықталады. Автор кинодискурсын әртүрлі аспектілерден зерттеген шетелдік және қазақстандық лингвист ғалымдардың жұмыстарын жан-жақты талдаған. Мақаланың мақсаты — қазақстандық фильмонимдердің лингвистикалық және прагмалингвистикалық интерпретациясын анықтау. Мақсатқа жету үшін келесі міндеттер қойылды: көркем фильмдердің атауларының семантикалық интерпретациясын қарастыру; кинодискурсының эстетикалық функциясын анықтау; фильмдерді семантикалық категориялар бойынша топтастыру; «кинодискурс» ұғымының анықтамасын ұсыну. Зерттеудің ғылыми маңыздылығы институционалдық дискурстың бір түрі ретінде кинодискурсты зерттеу саласын кеңейту болып саналады. Практикалық маңыздылығы зерттеу нәтижелерін аудиовизуалды дискурс бойынша дәрістер мен кейстерді дайындау үшін материалдар ретінде пайдалануға болатындығына және қазақстандық фильмдердің атауларына қолданылатын прагмалингвистикалық ерекшеліктер лингвистердің одан әрі зерттеу объектісіне айналуы тиіс екендігіне байланысты.

Кілт сөздер: кинодискурс, фильм атаулары, фильмонимдер, семантика, интерпретация, адресат, коммуникативтік әсер, вербалды коммуникация.

А.М. Куркимбаева

Кинодискурс: семантическая интерпретация названий фильмов

В статье рассмотрены проблемы семантической интерпретации названий художественных фильмов, поскольку фильмы превратились во влиятельное средство массовой коммуникации в современной жизни. Фильмонимы как один из видов малоформатных текстов стали объектом лингвистического исследования. Значимость кинодискурса как аудиовизуального дискурса определяется возможностями его воздействия на адресата. Автор всесторонне проанализировала работы зарубежных и казахстанских ученых-лингвистов, изучавших кинодискурс с различных аспектов. Цель

статьи — выявление лингвистической и прагмалингвистической интерпретации названий казахстанских фильмов. Для достижения поставленной цели были определены следующие задачи: рассмотреть семантическую интерпретацию названий художественных фильмов; выявить эстетическую функцию кинодискурса; сгруппировать фильмы по семантическим категориям; предложить определение понятия «кинодискурс». Научная значимость исследования заключается в расширении сферы исследования кинодискурса как вида институционального дискурса. Практическая значимость обусловлена тем, что результаты исследования могут быть использованы в качестве материалов для подготовки лекций и кейсов по аудиовизуальному дискурсу, и прагмалингвистические особенности, применяемые к названиям казахстанских фильмов, несомненно, должны стать объектом дальнейшего исследования лингвистов.

Ключевые слова: кинодискурс, названия фильмов, фильмонимы, семантика, интерпретация, адресат, коммуникативное воздействие, вербальная коммуникация.

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