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 the 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 жайыныны, мұзықамен қоп жағдайлда жасауы дәрі көркем мәнерлі болып, біздің нысандық дайындығымызда қолданылатын сөзлердің адистері болып табылады” (Film discourse is a collection of discourses,
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-вербальды және аудио визуалды поликодты мәтіндіріс жинағы, медиалингвистика нысаны» (film discourse is a collection of verbal and audio-visual polycode texts, object of medialoguistics).

Depending on the communicative situation, the addressee 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 “filronym” 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, “Кошмодий ашкан документалды кино бөлдө!” «Жаксы фильм. Кон кино түсуриге бөлдө бүздүн парыкымызбөн», «Керемет фильм!!! Катты үндөрдөө!», «Патриоттык, керемет фильм екен! Биз солардың үрүнүңүзүзү өгөй. Мактануға эбден бөлдө, бөлдө эже жаксы түсурилген, көне түркү тилинде сөйлөгөн, тарык боюнча осугула болу жөрө көрөк. Кир парсы тилинде сөйлөгөн көрө эдө, ол да көне түркү тилинде сөйлөгөн сүйкты, парсы эксөрүн кішкене эгіс іптеп корсетипті, Томирис басыны өзі шапқан эдө, сөл озгертүн жүзөрөрлүт, фильң үндөрдөө, эңдөкү бағалу жөрө көрөк, алга қазағылы!» [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”, “Otrardıň küreywi”, “Almas qɔıl”, “Artımzda Moskva”, “Jawjürek mıñ 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 озиминиң 2 саат үақытынды осы кимөң арнап еөм экинбөдөм. Ерикіз жылыгынмода болғы. Бірқар ол түрлөрө тезім еді. Қының корін болған соң кесірілген айырымың шыққырлық ете бөлідің нығайтта түсемін. Онының қоса бұл кино сюжеті ұлтжандылықпен, адалдыққа тарык болу керек. Адамдар жоң көлө болмас асаң болсаң дүрүс жасаганың деп білемін. Жасымы бар болғаны 13-те болса да айтарлықтай өсер алдың, арбір үзіндік кез келген қоңыр түлгеге надоң емес адам болуды үйредім. Оте жаксы деп бағалар еөм!» (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”, “Añşi”, “Şıraqşı”, “Kompozitor”, “Akmet. Ult ustazi”, “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-każakhski v Afrike», «Biznes po-każakhski v Amerïke», «Biznes po-każakhski v Koree», «Kelinka Sabina», «Pobeg iz aula», «Kelinka tozhe cheloveko», «Boyjetken. Vsyo iz-za neyo», «Agashki po vzovu 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-każakhski 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) «Алга Қазақ киносы. Нұрлан ага жарай сыз өнерінің орғеге жүзөйін!» (“Forward Kazakh cinema. Nurlan aga, may your business flourish!”); 2) «Оюччеееенниньбы класссноо вчера смотрели в кинотеатре рекомендую» (“Sooooooo cool, we watched it at the cinema yesterday, I recommend it”); 3) Из 3-х фильмов «Бизнес по казахски в ... « — это самый смешной.
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Молодцы! Здорово сняли! Вообще, всем советую смотреть казахские комедии, чтобы пережить время карантина и не впасть в депрессию. Ребята, вы создали шедевры! Ваши фильмы помогают людям в трудное время, а что может быть лучше этого! Здоровья всему вашему большому коллективу, который работал над этим и другими фильмами» (Of the 3 films “Business in Kazakh style in ... "is the funniest. Well done! Great shot! In general, I advise everyone to watch Kazakh comedies in order to survive the quarantine time and not get depressed. You guys have created masterpieces! Your films help people in difficult times, and what could be better than that! I wish you health to all your large team who worked on this and other films); 4) «КЕРЕМЕТ !!! НУРЛАН АҒА СІЗГЕ КӨП РАХМЕТ. БУЛ КИНО ЕМЕС ШЕДЕВР ФОЙ. ҚАЗАҚСТАНДЫ ЭЛӨМІ ЖАЙІЛІҚЕ ҚЫЛАТЫНЫЗГА СЕНЕМІЗ!!!» (“AWESOME!!! NURLAN AGA THANK YOU VERY MUCH. THIS IS NOT A MOVIE, IT’S A MASTERPIECE. WE BELIEVE THAT YOU WILL MAKE KAZAKHSTAN FAMOUS TO THE WORLD!!”) [11]. The emotionally-expressive letter animation in the second example reflects the mood of the addressees about the film. According to the addressees, the use of paralinguistic elements — emojis — is one of the most popular phenomena in written communication. For example, the following statement proves it: «Классный фильм 😂😂😂» (“Cool film”). Although emojis do not have any semantic meaning in texts, they are a tool that gives completeness and expressiveness to the text. Addressees in their comments proposed the author the idea of shooting “Kazakh style business” in Korea”, “Kazakh style business in Russia” in the future. It can be seen that the author, takes into account the interest of the audience and their wishes. For example, as a continuation of this film, The film “Kazakh style business in in Korea” was shot. Today, it is noted that the domestic film industry has turned to a marketing channel. The author offers stories that are interesting to addressees, devoted to the problems in society.

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, «Губай мой бай», «Каныкылы оф-лайн», «Аташка на хаите». 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 lexemes 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.

Conclusion

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 conciousness 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.
Кинодискурс: кино атауларының семантикалық интерпретациясы

 Макалада коркем фильмдердін атауларының семантикалық интерпретациялау мәселелері көрсетілген. Ауыз сөздің негізгі коммуникативдық құрылысы құралының айналымын талдау. Мәтіндін форматына әр бұрыштың бір түрі ретінде фильмдер атаулары лингвистикалық зерттеу нысанына қарай. Кинодискурстың аудиовизуалдық дискурс ретінде зерттеу нысанынан әлі оның оңай өкілі және көптеген қоғамдық сақтоқтарының әрекетінің нәтижесі болады. Макаланың мақсаты — көптеген фильмдердің атауларының семантикалық интерпретациясы қол жеткізу. Мәліметтердің ар бұрышының бір түрі ретінде фильмдердің семантикалық интерпретациясы қол жеткізу. Ауыз сөздің коммуникативдық зерттеу нысанына қарай. Кинодискурстың аудиовизуалдық дискурс ретінде зерттеу нысанынан әлі оның оңай өкілі және көптеген қоғамдық сақтоқтарынің әрекетінің нәтижесі болады. Макаланың мақсаты — көптеген фильмдердің атауларының семантикалық интерпретациясы қол жеткізу.

Қітім сөздер: кинодискурс, фильм атаулары, фільмонимдір, семантика, интерпретация, адресат, коммуникативтік есеп, 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 проанализировал работы зарубежных и казахстанских ученых-лингвистов, изучавших кинодискурс с различных аспектов.
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Статья — 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; группировать 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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