

PAPER

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND LINGUO-CULTURAL SPECIFICITY IN FILM TEXTS: UZBEK AND WESTERN CINEMATOGRAPHY

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Abstract

This article examines intercultural communication and linguistic-cultural specificity in film discourse, comparing Uzbek and Western cinematography. Through discourse analysis of selected dialogues, the study explores how cultural values, communicative norms, and metaphors are embedded in cinematic language. The research identifies key differences: Uzbek films employ indirectness, honorifics, and proverbs reflecting collectivism, while Western films display directness, informality, and individualism. By synthesizing intercultural communication theories and discourse analysis, this study shows how cinema serves as a mirror of cultural identity and a channel for intercultural dialogue.

Key words: intercultural communication, film discourse, Uzbek cinema, Western cinema, linguistic-cultural features, pragmatics.

Introduction

Cinema functions as both an artistic expression and a communicative medium that reflects and transmits cultural identity. Beyond entertainment, films encode linguistic and cultural patterns that shape perceptions of self and others (Hall, 1997). With globalization intensifying intercultural encounters, film discourse provides a unique site for observing how communication styles and values differ across societies.

In the Uzbek context, films emphasize traditions, family hierarchy, and collective harmony, while Western films foreground individual choice, egalitarianism, and explicit communication. This comparative research aims to identify linguistic-cultural and pragmatic features of film texts, analyzing their role in intercultural communication.

Literature Review

Intercultural Communication Theories

Edward T. Hall (1976) introduced the concepts of high-

context and low-context cultures. Uzbek communication, with its reliance on implicit meanings, proverbs, and indirectness, aligns with high-context communication, while Western cultures lean toward low-context, explicit communication. Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions further highlight contrasts: collectivism vs. individualism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance. These models provide the theoretical lens for analyzing film dialogues.

Cinema as Cultural Representation

Cinema has long been studied as a medium of cultural identity and ideology. Stuart Hall (1997) emphasized the role of representation in constructing cultural meanings, while Elsaesser (2005) argued that films serve as cultural artifacts reflecting social realities. In Western scholarship, Bordwell and Thompson (2017) analyzed how cinematic techniques interact with narrative and discourse, showing that meaning arises not only from visuals but also from language.

Linguistic Approaches to Film Discourse

Film dialogue has been studied as a form of media discourse (Gee, 2014). Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory has been applied to cinematic texts to understand character interaction. Bleichenbacher (2008) highlighted how

multilingualism in Hollywood films reflects identity construction, while Kozloff (2000) investigated the stylistics of dialogue and its role in narrative. These works demonstrate that cinematic language can be examined with the same rigor as everyday discourse.

Uzbek Cinema and Linguocultural Studies

Scholarship on Uzbek cinema emphasizes its role in preserving national values. Karimova (2019) examined cultural symbols and collective memory in Uzbek film, while Juraeva (2021) analyzed narrative identity and the construction of traditional roles. Research in Uzbek linguistics (Yuldasheva, 2020) also stresses the importance of proverbs, metaphors, and honorifics in media communication. However, few studies have undertaken a comparative intercultural perspective between Uzbek and Western film discourse.

Gaps in Research

While intercultural communication has been widely studied in business, education, and media contexts, its application to film discourse remains limited. Existing studies (e.g., Bleichenbacher, 2008; Elsaesser, 2005) mainly focus on Western cinema, with insufficient attention to Central Asian perspectives. This research addresses the gap by analyzing Uzbek films alongside Western ones, highlighting how cinema encodes cultural communication strategies.

Methodology

The study applies a qualitative comparative discourse analysis.

Corpus:

✓ Uzbek films: *Shum bola* (1977), *Abdullajon* (1991), *Sabot* (2019).

✓ Western films: *The Godfather* (1972), *Forrest Gump* (1994), *The Social Network* (2010).

Data Collection: Film dialogues were transcribed and translated (for Uzbek texts). Excerpts were selected based on their cultural or communicative salience (forms of address, politeness, metaphors, conflict resolution).

Analytical Framework:

✓ **Pragmatics:** Speech acts and politeness strategies (Brown Levinson, 1987).

✓ **Cultural Dimensions:** Collectivism vs. individualism, high/low context (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 2001).

✓ **Discourse Analysis:** Narrative identity and cultural representation (Gee, 2014; Hall, 1997).

Results

Forms of Address

Uzbek film (*Shum bola*): “Opa, sizni kutib turgandim.” (Sister, I was waiting for you.)

→ Honorific kinship terms show respect.

Western film (*The Social Network*): “Mark, you’re not an asshole, you’re just trying so hard to be.”

→ First-name basis, informal, confrontational.

Politeness and Indirectness

Uzbek film (*Abdullajon*): “Agar xohlasangiz, bugun biznikiga mehmon bo‘ling.” (If you wish, please be our guest today.)

→ Indirect, softening imposition.

Western film (*Forrest Gump*): “My mama always said: Life is like a box of chocolates...”

→ Direct aphorism, without mitigation.

Proverbs and Metaphors

Uzbek film (*Sabot*): “Mehmon otangdan ulug‘.” (A guest is greater than your father.)

→ Collectivist value, hospitality.

Western film (*The Godfather*): “I’m gonna make him an offer he can’t refuse.”

→ Individual dominance, power metaphor.

Conflict Resolution Styles

Uzbek film (*Shum bola*): “Gapni ko‘paytirmaylik, bir-birimizni tushunaylik.” (Let’s not argue, let’s understand each other.)

→ Emphasis on harmony.

Western film (*The Social Network*): “If you were the inventors of Facebook, you’d have invented Facebook.”

→ Sarcastic, competitive, individualistic.

Discussion

The findings confirm theoretical expectations: Uzbek films align with high-context communication (Hall, 1976), where indirectness, proverbs, and honorifics dominate, reflecting collectivism and social hierarchy. Western films embody low-context, individualistic communication, with explicitness, irony, and confrontational styles.

These communicative differences can create intercultural misunderstandings: Western directness may be perceived as rude in Uzbek culture, while Uzbek indirectness may appear evasive to Western audiences. Cinema thus becomes a cross-cultural mirror, offering insights into values and identities.

Moreover, Uzbek cinema increasingly integrates global narrative techniques (Robertson, 1995), reflecting glocalization—the blending of local traditions with global cinematic practices. This hybridization allows Uzbek films to remain culturally authentic while engaging international audiences.

Conclusion

Cinema is both a cultural mirror and a communicative bridge. Uzbek cinematography encodes respect, collectivism, and indirectness, while Western films prioritize individuality, explicitness, and informal communication. These findings highlight how cultural values are linguistically and pragmatically embedded in cinematic texts.

The study contributes to media linguistics and intercultural communication by providing comparative evidence from underexplored Uzbek film discourse. Future research could include audience reception studies and multilingual films to broaden the scope of intercultural cinematic analysis.

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