

The Reflection of Cultural Codes in English And Uzbek Filmonyms

 Dilafruz Razzakberdiyevna Umarova

Independent Researcher, Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Received: 13 February 2026; **Accepted:** 10 March 2026; **Published:** 31 March 2026

Abstract: This article analyzes the manifestation of cultural codes in English and Uzbek filmonyms from a comparative linguocultural perspective. Today, film titles not only convey the content, genre, and ideological direction of a motion picture, but also reflect a nation's values, historical memory, and national worldview. The study employs comparative, semantic-pragmatic, and linguocultural methods of analysis. The findings show that cultural codes related to individualism, heroism, historical memory, and popular culture are dominant in English filmonyms, whereas Uzbek filmonyms primarily foreground cultural codes associated with family, the mahalla, weddings, parents, traditions, and collectivism. As a result, filmonyms are substantiated as important linguocultural units that express a nation's cultural memory and system of values.

Keywords: Filmonym, cultural code, linguoculture, national mentality, value, English and Uzbek film titles.

Introduction: Cinema appears as an important semiotic field that expresses a nation's cultural memory, social values, and aesthetic perceptions. The art of cinema reflects reality and, through artistic images, also represents the worldview, moral criteria, historical memory, and social relations specific to a particular society. Therefore, the linguocultural study of cinematic text is considered one of the current issues in modern linguistics, cultural studies, and translation studies. S.Hall interprets culture not only as a matter of art or taste, but also as a person's "lived, interpreted, and defined experience" [4]. According to this approach, cinema can also be interpreted as a cultural text that reflects the lifestyle, values, and worldview of a particular society. The title of a film is of special importance in the reception of this cultural text, since the viewer's initial impression of a film is often formed precisely through its title.

In J.Genette's theory of paratext, the title is regarded as a boundary zone that guides the process of interpretation between the text and the reader, or, in

our case, between the film and the viewer. This means that a filmonym functions as an entrance to the content of a cinematic work and as its semantic and cultural signal. The presence of specific naming elements in the creation of English and Uzbek filmonyms indicates that the cultural codes, values, and ways of perceiving the world of both peoples are reflected in film titles. Y.M.Lotman's statement that "Language is a code plus its history" [7] substantiates the idea that language is not merely a means of communication, but also a system of signs connected with historical memory and cultural experience. Therefore, the units used in filmonyms are interpreted not as ordinary lexical means, but as signs that activate a particular nation's cultural experience, historical memory, and system of values. From this perspective, the comparative study of English and Uzbek filmonyms makes it possible to identify the system of images, values, and symbolic meanings that are dominant in the cultural thinking of the two peoples.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cinema, as one of the important forms of modern cultural communication, reflects the social life, aesthetic views, values, and cultural memory of society. Anissimov, Borissova, and Konson regard cinema as an integral part of the cultural life of society and describe it as “a mirror of culture and a mediator in its formation” [2:439]. This indicates that film not only reflects existing cultural reality, but also actively participates in its formation, dissemination, and reinterpretation. A similar view is found in Lu Yin’s study “The film, a popular art with both artistic and commercial values, is one of the most influential mass media” [5]. The author interprets film as a mirror reflecting the material and spiritual world of society, stating that “Film looks like a piece of mirror, which reflects all the respects of human society, including the material world and the spiritual world as well” [5]. Thus, film titles also emerge as concise yet semantically dense expressions of this cultural and social reality.

A filmonym is the first element of a cinematic text perceived by the viewer, and the initial impression of a film is formed precisely through its title. According to Anissimov, Borissova, and Konson, “The viewer’s acquaintance with a film, regardless of its genre-thematic orientation and format, begins with its title...” [2:437]. Therefore, a film title is not merely a formal nominative sign, but a unit that performs aesthetic, communicative, pragmatic, and cultural functions. The semantic impact of a film title largely depends on the shared background knowledge of the author and the audience. The researchers note that “the creation of a title presupposes an orientation toward the background knowledge of both the author and the target audience...” [2:439]. For instance, in English filmonyms, such units as king, knight, war, star, treasure, and ring activate associations related to Western history, mythology, and popular culture, whereas in Uzbek filmonyms, such units as mahalla, kelin, to’y, ota, ona, suyunchi, and andisha rely on cultural knowledge connected with national mentality, traditions, family, and social life.

The theory of cultural codes is one of the key theoretical directions for studying filmonyms from a linguocultural perspective. Avanesova and Kuptsova interpret cultural codes in connection with communicative-linguistic practice, mental stereotypes, and psychological representations. Referring to R. Jakobson’s views, they

cite the idea that “the structure of any language contains a certain number of distinctive features that constitute an effective and economical code” [1:31]. This approach makes it possible to understand language as a means of transmitting cultural meanings in a concise, systematic, and symbolic form. From this perspective, filmonyms can also be regarded as nominative units that condense the values, images, symbols, and social representations specific to a particular culture. Y.M.Lotman’s statement that “language is a code plus its history” [1:31] is of particular importance in explaining the relationship between language and culture. According to this view, language is not only a means of communication, but also a phenomenon that contains historical memory, cultural experience, and a system of signs. Cultural codes function in a text as mechanisms of meaning creation and interpretation. Avanesova and Kuptsova emphasize that, in the semiotic process, “the sender uses signs with a particular meaning, and then the receiver interprets or ‘unpacks’ these meanings...[1]”. This idea is also applicable to the nature of filmonyms: a film title embodies cultural, aesthetic, and semantic meanings encoded by the author or filmmaker, while the viewer interprets them on the basis of his or her own cultural experience, background knowledge, and values.

The influence of cultural codes on language and thought can also be observed in M. Foucault’s views. Researchers cite his idea that “the fundamental codes of any culture, which govern language, determine empirical orders for each person...” [see: Avanesova, Kuptsova]. It follows from this that every culture has its own codes for perceiving, ordering, and evaluating reality. Avanesova and Kuptsova write that “it is through meanings – values, symbolism, and images – that culture develops certain general principles of understanding and categorizing the world, which are reflected in language” [1]. In this regard, the units used in film titles, such as home, king, war, star, dark, treasure, wedding, father, mother, mahalla, kelin, to’y, and suyunchi, denote not only objects or events, but also express the system of values, aesthetic ideals, and cultural memory of a particular people.

V.A.Maslova interprets language as a cognitive mechanism and connects the process of understanding the world through language with concepts, values, and cultural codes. She puts forward the idea of “linguistic

pictures of the world, which include: 1) a system of concepts, 2) cultural values, and 3) cultural codes” [3:81]. This approach makes it possible to study filmonyms as an integral component of the national linguistic worldview. For example, English filmonyms such as *The Dark Knight*, *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *National Treasure* reflect heroism, power, historical memory, and fantastic imagination in Anglo-American culture, whereas Uzbek filmonyms such as *Mahallada duv-duv gap*, *Kelinlar qo'zg'oloni*, *To'ylar muborak*, and *Suyunchi* express national social relations, traditions, and collectivism. Thus, the existing theoretical views demonstrate the necessity of studying filmonyms as linguocultural units that reflect cultural codes, national values, historical memory, and social stereotypes. Although a film title is brief in form, it concentrates the idea of the cinematic work, the system of national images, its axiological orientation, and associative meanings that are significant for the viewer. Therefore, the comparative study of English and Uzbek filmonyms makes it possible to identify both common and distinctive features in the cultural thinking, naming traditions, and worldview of the two peoples.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The concept of cultural code refers to the expression of symbols, values, traditions, historical experience, and social stereotypes specific to a particular society through linguistic signs. In the semiotic approach, cultural code is interpreted as a system of signs embedded in all spheres of culture; the sign connects the material and spiritual layers of culture. Therefore, such units as *to'y*, *mahalla*, *ota*, *kelin*, *godfather*, *devil*, *slave*, and *society* in the structure of filmonyms activate not only their lexical meanings, but also cultural associations shaped in the collective memory of a people.

Filmonyms are the most concise, yet the most powerful semantic-pragmatic part of a cinematic text. Contemporary studies note that film titles perform not only naming, but also marketing, cultural adaptation, semantic, and pragmatic functions. It is also emphasized that pragmatic and sociocultural adaptation is of great importance in the translation of film titles, and that filmonyms are interpreted in connection with cultural narratives, social expectations, and genre conventions. This situation demonstrates the necessity of

comparative study of English and Uzbek filmonyms on the basis of cultural codes.

In English filmonyms, cultural codes are often associated with historical memory, religious-mythological images, social status, individual freedom, and popular culture. For example, in the filmonym *The Godfather*, the lexeme *godfather* evokes not only the meaning of religious-spiritual patronage, but also associations connected with family authority, patriarchal order, and mafia culture. In this title, a religious-social unit is semantically reinterpreted in relation to the criminal world, family loyalty, and power relations. In the title *Dead Poets Society*, the component *society* creates a semantic field broader than the simple meaning of society or organization. This unit expresses the code of an intellectual group, free thought, creative resistance, and internal opposition to the official system. Thus, in this filmonym, the cultural code is manifested not directly through national traditions, but through cultural perceptions of education, creativity, personal freedom, and intellectual environment. In the filmonym *The Devil Wears Prada*, *devil* functions as a religious-mythological image denoting negative power, temptation, severity, and dominance, while *Prada* is used as a sign of fashion, luxury, and consumer culture. The combination of these two units in one title activates cultural codes related to the fashion industry, social status, appearance, and consumer values in modern Western society. In such titles, cultural codes are strengthened through metaphorical and intertextual meaning. According to conceptual metaphor theory, human thought often understands abstract concepts through concrete cultural images; this approach was extensively developed by Lakoff and Johnson.

The historical-heroic code in English filmonyms is vividly manifested in such titles as *The King's Speech*, *Braveheart*, *The Patriot*, and *The Dark Knight*. Units such as *king* and *knight* are connected with European historical memory, monarchy, knightly culture, courage, duty, and social status. Components such as *war*, *patriot*, *brave*, and *dark* activate the concepts of struggle, danger, patriotism, internal conflict, and heroism. Such filmonyms show the important role of personal courage, social responsibility, and images of historical struggle in Anglo-American culture. In Uzbek filmonyms, however, cultural codes are more often

manifested in connection with family, kinship, the mahalla, weddings, parents, traditions, and collective life. For example, in the filmonym *Kelinlar qo'zg'oloni*, the lexeme *kelin* expresses a cultural code connected with Uzbek family relations, the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law system, social status after marriage, and traditional family order. The component *qo'zg'olon* in this title reveals comic resistance to the usual family hierarchy, internal conflict, and the artistic interpretation of social stereotypes.

In the filmonym *Mahallada duv-duv gap*, *mahalla* is interpreted as a social space specific to Uzbek society, a center of collective control and oral information exchange. The phrase *duv-duv gap* expresses colloquial speech, rumor, collective curiosity, and a social atmosphere of discussion. In order to understand such a title, the Uzbek viewer must be aware not only of the geographical meaning of the *mahalla* institution, but also of its social and moral significance. Thus, in this filmonym, the cultural code is manifested directly through a national social institution. In the filmonym *To'ylar muborak*, *to'y* is one of the most important ritual codes in the life of the people, bringing forth meanings of joy, collectivity, tradition, kinship ties, and social solidarity. In Uzbek culture, a wedding is not merely a family event, but a sociocultural phenomenon involving the *mahalla*, relatives, neighbors, and the wider community. Therefore, this filmonym reflects the ritual culture and collective lifestyle of the Uzbek people. The title *Suyunchi* reflects the national communicative custom of delivering good news, sharing joy, and expecting a gift. When this unit is translated into other languages simply as "good news," all of its cultural meanings may not be fully conveyed. This is because the word *suyunchi* in Uzbek culture denotes social closeness, the sharing of joy, folk-style communication, and an ancient communicative tradition. In this sense, it may be regarded as a filmonym with a strong cultural connotation.

The comparative analysis shows that cultural codes in English filmonyms are more often associated with personal choice, social status, religious-mythological symbols, historical experience, and pop culture, whereas in Uzbek filmonyms collectivism, family, the *mahalla*, traditions, kinship, and moral values come to the fore. This difference can be explained by the priorities in the cultural thinking and social lifestyles of

the two peoples. In English filmonyms, an individual hero, personal struggle, social competition, or historical conflict may be placed at the center; in Uzbek filmonyms, however, a person's relationship with family, the *mahalla*, society, and the system of values is more frequently reflected.

Moreover, cultural codes in filmonyms shape the viewer's horizon of expectations. For instance, when an Uzbek viewer hears such units as *kelin*, *to'y*, *mahalla*, and *ota*, he or she expects family-domestic, moral, or comic situations. An English-speaking viewer, however, understands religious, historical, social, or psychological meanings through such units as *godfather*, *devil*, *society*, *slave*, and *home*. From this perspective, a filmonym is a unit that activates cultural memory, prepares the viewer for the content of the film, and strengthens the communicative impact of the cinematic work.

According to the results of the analysis, cultural codes in English and Uzbek filmonyms are manifested in the following forms: first, through direct national-cultural units; second, through historical or religious-mythological images; third, through the names of social institutions and rituals; fourth, through metaphorical and intertextual meanings; and fifth, through associative semantics based on the viewer's background knowledge. This shows the need to study filmonyms not as ordinary names, but as semantically, pragmatically, and linguoculturally complex units.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, cultural codes in English and Uzbek filmonyms appear as important linguocultural means that reflect a nation's national thinking, system of values, and way of social life. Along with being the initial sign of a cinematic text, filmonyms are paratextual units that concisely express the content, genre, ideological direction, and cultural connotations of a film. In English filmonyms, codes of individualism, historical memory, religious-mythological imagery, personal choice, heroism, and popular culture are actively used. In Uzbek filmonyms, however, codes related to family, the *mahalla*, weddings, kinship, parents, kindness, traditions, and collectivism are dominant. This difference is explained by the specific features of the cultural experience, social relations, and ways of perceiving the world of the two peoples. Thus, studying

filmonyms on the basis of cultural codes makes it possible to identify not only the semantic features of film titles, but also the similarities and differences in the cultural worldviews of the English and Uzbek peoples. Cultural codes in film titles activate certain associations in the viewer's mind, predetermine the semantic direction of the film, and help the cinematic work to be received within a particular cultural context. Therefore, the comparative linguocultural study of English and Uzbek filmonyms is of significant scholarly importance for modern filmonymics, translation studies, and intercultural communication research.

REFERENCES

1. Аванесова Г.А., Купцова И.А. Коды культуры: понимание сущности, функциональная роль в культурной практике // В мире науки и искусства: вопросы филологии, искусствоведения и культурологии: сб. ст. по материалам XLVII Междунар. науч.-практ. конф. – Новосибирск: СибАК, 2015. – № 4 (47). – С. 28–37.
2. Анисимов В.Е., Борисова А.С., Консон Г.Р. Лингвокультурная локализация кинозаголовков // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Лингвистика. – 2019. – Т. 23. – № 2. – С. 435–459. DOI: 10.22363/2312-9182-2019-23-2-435-459.
3. Маслова В.А. Духовный код с позиции лингвокультурологии: единство сакрального и светского // Метафизика. – 2016. – № 4 (22). – С. 78–96.
4. Hu X., Abdul Halim H., Mohd Zin Z. A Systematic Literature Review of Film Title Translation // Theory and Practice in Language Studies. – 2025. – Vol. 15. – No. 7. – P. 2227–2238. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1507.15>.
5. Lu Yin. On the Translation of English Movie Titles // Asian Social Science. – 2009. – Vol. 5. – No. 3. – P. 171–173.
6. Lakoff G., Johnson M. Metaphors We Live By. – Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
7. Lotman Y.M., Lotman M.Y. Semiosfera. – Искусство-СПБ, 2000. – Т. 7.