

**THE FATHER FIGURE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK CINEMA: A
PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS
(BASED ON THE FILMS "THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS," "INTERSTELLAR,"
"OTA," "MAHALLADA DUV-DUV GAP")**

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Abstract

The article compares the psycholinguistic characteristics of the father's image in English-language and Uzbek-language film discourse. Based on four films - "The Pursuit of Happiness," "Interstellar," "Ota," and "Mahallada duv-duv gap" - the study analyzes fathers' speech acts in dialogues with children, forms of address, emotional coloring of utterances, and distribution of communicative strategies. It demonstrates that American films reinforce the model of an emotionally engaged and verbally supportive father, while in classical Uzbek film discourse, an authoritarian-directive type of speech behavior prevails with minimal verbalization of feelings. The modern Uzbek film "Ota" presents a transitional model that combines the traditional authority of the father with the growing role of emotional empathy and dialogic interaction. The article highlights both culture-specific and universal features of paternal discourse related to the motif of sacrifice and responsibility for children's future.

Keywords

father image, film discourse, psycholinguistics, speech acts, emotional support, directiveness, English language, Uzbek language.

Introduction. The image of the father in cinema serves as a cultural indicator of society's perceptions of the male parental role, acceptable boundaries of authority, and emotional closeness within the family. Through the words and intonations used by father characters in their communication with children, cinema discourse establishes enduring patterns of fatherhood: a strict mentor, an emotionally involved partner, a distant breadwinner, and others. The psycholinguistic approach allows us to describe this image in terms of speech act

types, pragmatic strategies, and emotional coloring of utterances, as well as to compare different cultural models.

English-language cinema of the early 21st century is characterized by the strengthening of the "new father" model - engaged, supportive, and capable of verbally expressing love and vulnerability. The Uzbek cultural tradition relies on the patriarchal stereotype of the father as the head of the family, a figure of authority and disciplinary function; emotional warmth in such a model often manifests itself indirectly. The changes observed in society (urbanization, transformation of family roles, influence of global media) are also reflected in cinema, forming hybrid models.

The purpose of this article is to identify the psycholinguistic similarities and differences in the representation of the father's image in English and Uzbek film discourse based on four films and to describe the dynamics of the transition from an authoritarian to a more dialogic model of fatherhood in contemporary Uzbek cinema.

Material and methods

The empirical basis consisted of four feature films:

- *"The Pursuit of Happyness"* (Columbia Pictures, 2006);
- *"Interstellar"* (Paramount/Warner Bros., 2014);
- *"Mahallada duv-duv gap"* (Uzbekfilm, 1960);
- *"Ota"* (Uzbekfilm, 2012).

The first two represent American film discourse at the turn of the 20th-21st centuries and focus on father-child relationships as the core of the plot. The two Uzbek films represent the classical Soviet-Uzbek model and its modern transformation.

Based on scripts and subtitles, transcripts of key "father-child" interaction scenes were compiled. The analysis included:

- dialogues in which the father directly addresses the child or responds to the child's remarks;
- father's brief monologues explicitly addressed to children.

The minimum unit of analysis was the father's utterance. For each utterance, the dominant communicative function was determined; then, frequency distribution was carried out according to the identified categories.

The category system included:

1. *Emotional support and expression of love (acknowledgments, praise, encouragement, assurances of help, apologies to the child).*

2. **Guidance and advice** (explanation of norms, moral lessons, sharing of life experience without strict commands).
3. **Directives and disciplinary statements** (orders, prohibitions, harsh remarks, reproaches).
4. **Emotional reactions** (verbalization of fear, anger, longing, despair, not reducible to educational influence).
5. **Humorous and playful remarks** (jokes, teasing, wordplay with the child).

Additionally, the following were recorded:

1. Forms of address to the child (name, diminutive and affectionate variants, kinship appellatives - "son," "honey," "bolam," "qizim," "o'g'lim," etc.);
2. Degree of communicative distance (symmetry/asymmetry of communication, presence of respectful forms);
3. Lexical markers of emotionality (words of love, support, swear words, aphoristic and proverbial expressions).

Methodologically, the work combines qualitative discourse analysis (interpretation of context, communicative intentions, and intonation patterns) and quantitative content analysis, calculating the proportion of main categories in the total volume of the father's speech.

Results and discussion. American film discourse: A model of an emotionally involved father. In "The Pursuit of Happyness," Chris Gardner's lines addressed to his son primarily fall into the category of emotional support and love. The father regularly verbalizes affection, expresses pride and belief in the child's abilities, and constructs motivational statements that emphasize the son's right to dream and make independent choices. The key scene with the phrase about not letting other people discourage you from your dream reinforces the image of the father as an emotionally supportive mentor, rather than just a disciplinary figure.

Cooper in "Interstellar" is also portrayed as a deeply involved father, primarily in relation to his daughter. Their dialogues combine tender addresses and sympathetic remarks with episodes of tough decisions related to his forced departure. The father is capable of expressing his own feelings, acknowledging the pain of separation, and saying "I love you" not only at the end, but also during conflict situations. Several scenes are built on the contrast between directive content ("need to leave") and emotionally warm form (calming and supportive remarks).

Frequency analysis shows that in both American films, the share of emotionally supportive statements and verbal expressions of love reaches approximately 40-45% of all the father's lines. Instructions and advice occupy a significant, but second-largest share. Directives and strict disciplinary actions are

less common and are more often motivated by concern for the child's safety. Humor and play are used as means of reducing anxiety and strengthening intimacy.

From a pragmatic point of view, the system of addresses is important: "son," "buddy," "Murph," diminutive forms and nicknames form a style of close, informal communication. At the same time, the child is given the right to disagree, ask questions, and express negative emotions, and the father participates in this dialogue without authoritatively cutting it short.

Uzbek Classical Film Discourse: Authoritarian-Directive Model. In the film "Mahallada duv-duv gap," the father's image is constructed on a different principle. Here, directives, prohibitions, harsh remarks, and moralizing monologues predominate. The father acts as a figure of absolute authority, controlling the children's behavior and safeguarding traditional norms of the mahalla.

The proportion of emotionally supportive remarks in the father's speech is minimal. Affectionate forms of address are practically absent, and verbal expressions of love for the children are not heard. Positive statements, if they appear at all, are related not to acknowledging feelings, but to approving correct behavior. The humor present in the film is primarily aimed at playing out the contradictions between generations and the comedy of the elders' conservatism, rather than creating an intimate "father-child" space.

The forms of address "o'g'lim," "bolam" primarily serve the function of marking the family hierarchy. The tone and context of such addresses emphasize distance rather than emotional closeness. Children, in turn, construct their speech in a markedly respectful manner, avoiding direct objections and open expressions of dissatisfaction.

Modern Uzbek Film Discourse: A Transitional Model. The film "Ota" demonstrates a softening of the classic pattern. The father maintains the status of an elder, from whom responsibility and discipline are expected, but his speech contains more verbal markers of sympathy and care. In key scenes, the character verbalizes concern for the children, expresses regret about conflicts, and sometimes directly states his love and fear of losing them.

In terms of speech act distribution, the "Father" figure occupies an intermediate position: directives and instructions remain significant, but the proportion of emotionally supportive statements increases to approximately one-third of the father's speech volume. More dialogues emerge where the father attempts to explain the motives behind his actions, rather than simply giving instructions.

Traditional forms of address such as "ota," "otajon," and "bolam" are preserved, but they are more frequently accompanied by empathetic remarks. Children likely continue to address their father respectfully, but the interaction becomes more reciprocal: questions, requests, and attempts to negotiate are voiced.

Universal and culturally specific features. Comparison of the four films allows us to distinguish two levels. At the **universal** level, in all cases, there is a motif of fatherly sacrifice and responsibility for the child's future: the father is willing to endure hardships, take risks, and make difficult decisions for the sake of his children. This content is manifested in different cultural contexts, but remains consistent.

At the **culture-specific** level, strategies for verbalizing emotions and ways of combining authority with emotional closeness differ. American film discourse normalizes the open expression of emotions and a father's willingness to acknowledge his vulnerability, while the Uzbek classical model establishes restraint and prioritizes the disciplinary function. Modern Uzbek cinema demonstrates a shift towards greater balance: respectful hierarchy is maintained, but emotional openness gradually becomes acceptable.

Conclusion. The comparative psycholinguistic analysis conducted has shown that film discourse effectively reflects and transmits cultural models of fatherhood. American films "The Pursuit of Happyness" and "Interstellar" construct the image of a father as emotionally accessible and verbally supportive, inclined to dialogue with the child and recognition of the child's subjectivity. The Uzbek classic film "Mahallada duv-duv gap" reinforces an authoritarian-directive model, where verbal expression of feelings is minimal, and power and discipline serve as the primary resources.

The modern Uzbek film "Ota" illustrates the transformation: the traditional authority of the father is preserved, but elements of empathy, sympathy, and more open expression of care are incorporated into the system of speech behavior. This indicates a gradual revision of the boundaries of permissible emotionality in the father's role while maintaining the culturally significant idea of respect for the older generation.

The practical significance of the work lies in the fact that the analysis of film discourse allows for a better understanding of which models of fatherhood are normalized in the public consciousness. For further research, it is promising to expand the corpus through other genres and time periods, as well as to include data on viewer perception of on-screen father figures in different cultures.

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