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Communicative-Pragmatic Functions and Discursive Transformation of Precedent Names and Utterances in Kazakh-Language Film Discourse

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Abstract Precedent names and utterances connect film dialogue with shared cultural knowledge and acquire situated meanings in specific cinematic contexts. This study examines their communicative and pragmatic functions and discursive transformations in Kazakh-language film discourse. The data comprise precedent units selected through source verification and contextual screening from purposively chosen Kazakhstani films released between 2012 and 2023. Contextual, pragmatic, intertextual, linguocultural, comparative, and multimodal analyses were used to identify, classify, and code the units. Behavioral regulation and appeal, together with evaluation, were prominent functions within the selected corpus. The examples illustrated contextual specification, semantic expansion, and shifts in addressee and intention in religious reminders, blessing sequences, and justificatory exchanges. The findings suggest that shared cultural meanings are adapted to the specific communicative purposes of particular scenes through dialogue and audiovisual context. Precedent units thus serve as resources for negotiating values, regulating conduct, and supporting positions, with their interpretation shaped by established cultural associations and the pragmatic conditions of their cinematic use.

Keywords: *Precedent phenomena, Precedent names, Precedent utterances, Kazakh-language film discourse, Discursive transformation*

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1. Introduction

In contemporary linguistics, cinema is understood as a complex discursive space in which language interacts with sociocultural meanings and audiovisual resources. Kazakh-language cinema provides a significant context for examining how national worldview, historical memory, and cultural values are represented through character dialogue and cinematic narration. Within this discourse, precedent names (PNs) and precedent utterances (PUs) draw on culturally established associations and prior texts. A PN evokes attributes associated with a culturally significant person, character, or situation

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rather than merely identifying its referent (Karaulov, 1987; Krasnykh, 2003), whereas a PU draws on an established expression or textual source whose contextual use can generate additional meaning (Gudkov, 2003; Krasnykh, 2003). Their communicative role depends on the scene in which they occur and on their interaction with imagery, music, intonation, gesture, and editing. Research on English-language cinematic discourse likewise indicates that the uses and functions of PNs vary across genres and communicative contexts (Bushueva & Muliukina, 2023).

In Kazakhstani scholarship, precedent phenomena have primarily been investigated in relation to national-cultural stereotypes, literary texts, press materials, and media discourse. Murzinova et al. (2018) compared stereotyped PNs in Kazakh, Russian, and English. Nurbaeva (2022) examined their role in transmitting ethnocultural information in the Kazakh press, and Kappassova et al. (2025) explored the informational, expressive, and pragmatic potential of folklore PNs in contemporary Kazakh media discourse. Cultural-cognitive representation through historical figures and literary and folkloric characters has also been considered in Kazakh film discourse (Nurbaeva & Abikenova, 2026). These studies provide a basis for identifying culturally significant references, but the scholarship reviewed here leaves three connected questions insufficiently addressed in Kazakh-language film discourse: how PN and PU function within specific dialogue exchanges; how their source-associated meanings are retained or reoriented by the scene; and how observable visual and acoustic cues accompany these uses. In particular, identifying a cultural referent or source does not by itself explain why a speaker uses the unit at a particular moment, which communicative-pragmatic function is primary in that exchange, or how its contextual meaning relates to its source. What remains insufficiently developed is a consistent procedure for tracing these relationships across both unit types within the same film corpus.

To address this gap, this study links source-based identification with scene-level functional coding, analysis of discursive transformation, and examination of multimodal realization. To be specific, the aims of this study are to identify and describe the communicative-pragmatic functions of PN and PU in a selected corpus of Kazakh-language films and to examine how their inherited cultural meanings are preserved or transformed through verbal, visual, and acoustic resources. The analysis first identifies the unit type, then examines its communicative-pragmatic function, subsequently analyzes its discursive transformation, and finally considers its multimodal realization. This analytical framework integrates three complementary perspectives: precedent phenomena as culturally shared references, pragmatic meaning as situated communicative action, and cinematic meaning as the interaction of verbal, visual, and acoustic resources. It comprises four interconnected components: source-based identification of PN and PU, communicative-pragmatic functional coding, examination of semantic preservation or transformation using six analytical categories, and analysis of multimodal realization. These components are combined in this sequence to establish what cultural reference is activated, what communicative purpose it serves, how its inherited meaning is preserved or reshaped, and how cinematic resources contribute to its interpretation. Altogether, the study addresses three research questions:

1. What communicative-pragmatic functions do PNs and PUs perform in the selected corpus?
2. How are their inherited cultural meanings preserved, expanded, or modified in specific cinematic contexts?
3. How do visual and acoustic resources contribute to the realization of these functions and transformations?

The study contributes a corpus-based descriptive account that applies this analytical sequence to PN and PU within a common coding framework. Descriptive frequencies summarize the distribution of assigned primary functions, while worked examples trace how religious reminders, blessing sequences, and justificatory exchanges involve contextual specification, semantic expansion, and shifts in addressee and intention. By connecting each interpretation to an identifiable source and to verbal and audiovisual evidence in the scene, the analysis makes explicit how functional and transformational categories are applied to the selected film fragments. Its contribution therefore lies in a structured account of situated precedent use in this corpus and an analytical procedure that can guide further examination of Kazakh-language film discourse.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Precedent Phenomena

The classical approach to the study of precedent phenomena conceptualizes them as culturally significant units stored in collective memory and reactivated in communication (Gudkov, 2003; Karaulov, 1987; Krasnykh, 2003). Although these foundational works establish the theoretical boundaries of PNs, texts, situations, and PUs, they rely predominantly on verbal material and do not systematically address the effects of pragmatic shifts or multimodal resources within specific communicative contexts. Subsequent pragmatic and discourse-oriented studies, however, have demonstrated that the function of a linguistic unit is determined not only by its conventional meaning but also by such contextual factors as the speaker's intonation, the addressee, the sociocultural environment, and the communicative purpose of the discourse. This pragmatic orientation aligns with the theoretical foundations of precedent theory, which can be productively related to pragmatics and recontextualization. Precedent theory explains the cultural recognizability of names and utterances, while Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) speech act theories provide a basis for examining the communicative actions performed through their use. Grice's (1975) account of conversational implicature explains how meanings beyond explicit wording are inferred, and Sperber and Wilson's (1995) relevance theory clarifies how contextual assumptions guide interpretation. Van Dijk's (2008) sociocognitive approach further explains how participants' context models mediate the relationship between discourse and social situations. Recontextualization connects these perspectives by directing attention to how culturally recognizable units acquire context-specific meanings and functions when embedded in new filmic situations.

Recent studies have extended this perspective by emphasizing contextual and cultural-discursive dimensions. Al-Khawaldeh et al. (2024) demonstrate the relationship between lexical, rhetorical, and intertextual resources and communicative purposes in discourse, while Kartika and Jumanto (2024) show that speech acts in audiovisual discourse are conditioned by culturally specific norms. Bazarbayeva et al. (2024), drawing on the works of bilingual writers, examine the relationship between language and culture in the construction of social reality in literary texts. Although these studies confirm that cultural meaning is context-dependent, they do not systematically compare the communicative-pragmatic functions of PNs and PUs within a unified operational framework. Studies published in 2025–2026 have further emphasized the cultural and pragmatic recontextualization of linguistic meaning. Al-Shboul et al. (2025) analyze the communicative functions of metaphorical directives in television series in relation to their social context, whereas Sadirova et al. (2025) demonstrate the discursive and cultural conditioning of rhetorical strategies in Kazakh- and English-language media discourse. Rysbayeva et al. (2026) provide a cognitive-conceptual analysis of culturally significant words in the Kazakh and Kyrgyz linguistic worldviews and demonstrate how national-cultural knowledge is represented through linguistic units. While these studies deepen our understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and discourse, they do not specifically address how the established cultural meanings of precedent units in Kazakh-language film discourse are transformed when recontextualized within new visual and acoustic environments.

Thus, previous research can be grouped into three broad areas: (1) studies identifying the cultural and cognitive nature of precedent phenomena; (2) studies describing their pragmatic and discursive functions; and (3) studies examining the transformation of linguistic meaning in cultural and multimodal contexts. However, relatively little research has integrated these perspectives within a single analytical framework that systematically relates the type of precedent unit (i.e., PN or PU) to its primary communicative-pragmatic function, discursive transformation, and multimodal realization in a corpus of Kazakh-language films.

A PN activates cultural content through a proper name associated with a historical figure or a literary, folkloric, religious, or public character. A PU reproduces a recognizable verbal formula from literature, folklore, proverbs, poetry, songs, cinema, or historical discourse. The operational distinction depends on the principal carrier of cultural meaning: a proper name is coded as PN, while a recognizable verbal formula is coded as PU. The main PN/PU distinction concerns the component carrying the primary

cultural meaning. A name is coded as PN only when its use activates an established attribute beyond denotation.

In Zhauzhurek Myn Bala (00:50:00–00:53:00), the recorded example attributes a maxim opposing division by zhuz and tribe to Töle Bi. A related attribution appears in Sadykov (2023), but its wording and historical authorship must be distinguished from the film version. Where the verbal formula carries the principal communicative load, the fragment is coded as PU, and the name is retained as cultural attribution. Attribution alone neither warrants a separate PN count nor establishes symbolic reinterpretation. The excerpt «Kölde jürgen qoñyr qaz...» in Zhauzhurek Myn Bala (00:10:00–00:12:00) was coded as PU because the verbal formula carries the principal cultural meaning. Karenov (2016) reproduces the lines as a tolghau attributed to Asan Qaygy, supplying secondary scholarly support for the attribution. The attribution is not independently established by the film itself. When a name accompanies a quotation, only the element carrying the primary semantic-pragmatic function contributes to the count; the other is retained as contextual information.

The distinction is particularly important in film discourse because names and quotations may co-occur. A formula such as «as Abai said» contains a proper name, but the quotation that follows may carry the principal communicative burden. In the present study, formal co-presence does not justify two independent observations. The code is assigned to the element that supplies the semantic-pragmatic center, while the other element is retained as contextual attribution. Conversely, when a name itself functions as a standard of wisdom, courage, resistance, or artistry independently of a quotation, it is treated as a PN. This distinction draws on research showing that precedent names activate culturally established attributes and evaluative associations beyond the identification of a referent (Yan, 2022; Zhumabekova & Shakhmetova, 2023). This coding hierarchy prevents inflation of frequency counts and preserves the interpretive relationship between linguistic form and discourse function.

Recognizability is also treated as an empirical requirement rather than an assumed quality of every proper name or familiar phrase. Research on the perception of PNs demonstrates that recognizing a name does not necessarily entail understanding its culturally associated meaning (Sarycheva & Derybina, 2023). In the present study, a unit must have a verifiable cultural source, evidence of circulation beyond the immediate film, and an additional meaning that cannot be reduced to literal denotation. This criterion is especially relevant to historical films, where numerous personal names occur as part of factual narration. A historical name is included only when its use activates a culturally established attribute, value, comparison, or symbolic position. The same principle applies to utterances: ordinary dialogue is excluded unless it maintains an identifiable structural-semantic relationship with a culturally shared source. These operational criteria draw on the cultural circulation, associative content, and evaluative significance of precedent phenomena described by Zhumabekova and Shakhmetova (2023). Table 1 summarizes the PN/PU boundary and the evidence required for classification.

Table 1

Operational Distinction between PNs and PUs

Criterion	Precedent name (PN)	Precedent utterance (PU)
Basic linguistic form	Proper name or established name variant	Complete phrase, sentence, or multi-sentence formula
Cultural source	Historical, literary, folkloric, religious, or public figure	Literature, folklore, proverb, poem, song, film line, or historical saying
Activation mechanism	Activates attributes associated with a culturally recognizable name	Reuses a recognizable verbal formula
Primary identification test	Produces symbolic or evaluative meaning beyond denotation	Preserves a recognizable structural-semantic relation to the source
Transformation categories	Six categories defined in Section 2.3; classification depends on contextual evidence.	Six categories defined in Section 2.3; classification depends on contextual evidence.

2.2. Recontextualization, Transformation, and Multimodality

Recontextualization occurs when a unit taken from an earlier text, situation, or cultural memory is inserted into new semantic, evaluative, and pragmatic relations. Bauman and Briggs (1990) relate this process to textualization, through which stretches of discourse become identifiable units that can be detached from one interaction and reused in another. Their discussion directs attention to what is carried over from earlier contexts and what changes in form, function, and meaning during reuse. Even when wording is preserved, a new addressee and illocutionary force may produce a new meaning. Linell (1998) similarly conceptualizes recontextualization as the relocation and transformation of discourse across contexts, emphasizing the relationships between transferred material and its new discursive setting. A related account is provided by van Leeuwen (2008), who describes discourse as the recontextualization of social practice. His model identifies substitution, deletion, rearrangement, and addition as processes through which representations select and reshape elements of social practice, and it examines how purposes, legitimations, and evaluations enter those representations. Genette's (1982/1997) account of transtextuality complements these approaches by distinguishing intertextual co-presence, including quotation and allusion, from hypertextual relations involving transformation or imitation of an earlier work. This distinction separates recognition of a prior text from the particular relationship established with it. These accounts converge on the point that recontextualization is never a neutral carrying-over of material but always involves selection, adjustment, and the negotiation of meaning in a new setting.

In film, transformation is not confined to verbal form. Speech, image, music, sound, editing, space, and camera work jointly construct meaning (Bateman & Schmidt, 2012). Their account treats film as an organized multimodal text in which individual resources contribute to larger audiovisual structures. Kress (2010) emphasizes the socially shaped affordances of different modes and their coordination in multimodal ensembles. In their study of educational materials, Bezemer and Kress (2008) distinguish transformation within a mode from transduction across modes, showing how content is remade as it moves between writing, images, and other resources. The term transformation consequently has different scopes across these traditions: discursive accounts concern changes associated with contextual relocation, while the modal distinction specifies whether representational change occurs within or across modes.

2.3. Integrated Analytical Framework and Research Gap

The preceding perspectives connect the recognition of prior cultural material with the conditions of its subsequent use. Genette (1982/1997) helps specify the relation to an earlier text; Bauman and Briggs (1990), Linell (1998), and van Leeuwen (2008) explain relocation and contextual change; and multimodal approaches account for the audiovisual realization of meaning (Bateman & Schmidt, 2012; Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Kress, 2010). These strands converge on a single methodological problem: how the recognition of prior cultural material, its relocation, and its audiovisual realization can be linked in the analysis of PN and PU within individual scenes of Kazakh-language films. Accordingly, this study aims to identify and describe the communicative-pragmatic functions of PN and PU in a selected corpus of Kazakh-language films and to examine how their inherited cultural meanings are preserved or transformed through verbal, visual, and acoustic resources.

To operationalize this aim, the proposed framework links four components: source-based identification, scene-level functional analysis, comparison of inherited and situated meanings, and examination of multimodal realization. Their sequence establishes which cultural reference is activated, what it does in the interaction, what is preserved or changed, and how cinematic resources contribute to its interpretation. Within this framework, recontextualization denotes the general process of relocation, while discursive transformation refers to an evidenced change in a unit's situated meaning or pragmatic force. Semantic content, evaluative orientation, addressee relations, and communicative intention are used as four dimensions of comparison. These dimensions and the six-category arrangement are operational choices made for this study, informed by the accounts of recontextualization in Bauman and Briggs (1990) and van Leeuwen (2008). The categories are contextual specification, semantic expansion, symbolic reinterpretation, evaluative reorientation, shifts in addressee and intention, and condensation or formal modification. The first three distinguish the foregrounding of an existing

meaning, the addition of implications, and the acquisition of a new symbolic role. The next two concern changes in stance and in recipient or communicative purpose; the sixth records changes in verbal form. Formal modification is recorded separately from evidence of semantic or pragmatic change: shortening or substitution alone does not establish a change in cultural meaning. Conversely, unchanged wording can carry a different evaluation or illocutionary force when the speaker, recipient, narrative context, or audiovisual framing changes. Categories may co-occur, and assignment requires an explicit comparison between the source-associated meaning and the dialogue, interaction, and multimodal framing of the film scene. The four dimensions and six categories thus constitute an author-developed coding scheme grounded in the preceding theoretical perspectives.

The final component of the framework, i.e., multimodal realization, requires a more specific account of how verbal and visual meanings interact in film discourse. Martinec and Salway (2005) distinguish the relative status of image and text from their logico-semantic relations, while Unsworth (2006) describes this interaction in terms of concurrence and complementarity, with the latter encompassing augmentation and divergence. These categories make it possible to examine how images reinforce verbally expressed meanings, contribute additional content, or convey meanings that differ from those expressed verbally. Bateman and Schmidt (2012) further relate multimodal meaning to the temporal and discourse organization of shots and sequences. From this perspective, the meaning of PNs and PUs emerges through the interaction of their verbal content, visual context, and placement within a sequence. Together, these approaches provide the theoretical basis for the multimodal component of the framework and for examining how multimodal context contributes to the communicative-pragmatic functions and discursive transformation of precedent units.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The study employed a qualitatively oriented corpus-discourse design. Qualitative interpretation was used to explain communicative functions and contextual transformation, while quantitative description identified corpus frequencies and distributions rather than supporting population-level generalization. The analysis considered linguistic form, surrounding dialogue, speaker-addressee relations, communicative purpose, narrative position, and visual-acoustic accompaniment.

3.2. Corpus

The corpus comprised ten Kazakhstani films dated 2012–2023, selected purposively to include historical, biographical, musical, military, socio-psychological, and family narratives. The film titles, assigned years, and primary genre descriptions are listed in Table 2. The years identify the corpus films and should not be taken to mean that production, festival premiere, and domestic theatrical release necessarily occurred in the same year.

Table 2
Films Included in the Research Corpus

No.	Film title	Year	Primary genre
1	Zhauzhurek Myn Bala (Myn Bala: Warriors of the Steppe)	2012	Historical military drama
2	Aslannyn Sabaktary (Harmony Lessons)	2013	Socio-psychological drama
3	Zhat (Stranger)	2015	Historical social drama
4	Kunanbai (Kunanbai)	2015	Historical biographical drama
5	Anaga Aparar Zhol (The Road to Mother)	2016	Historical war drama
6	Uly Dala Zary (The Crying Steppe)	2020	Historical drama
7	Mukagali (Mukagali)	2021	Biographical drama
8	Akyn (Poet)	2021	Socio-philosophical drama
9	Dos-Mukasanc (Dos-Mukasan)	2022	Musical biographical drama
10	Bauryna Salu (Adoption)	2023	Social family drama

Selection criteria were sufficient Kazakh-language dialogue or narration; references to history, literature, folklore, music, national culture, or public memory; sufficient context to determine function;

representation of historical and contemporary themes; and access to a complete version that permitted time-code verification. Credits-only names, purely denotative proper names, unconfirmed analogies, trailers, advertisements, reviews, interviews, and audience comments were excluded. Only Kazakh-language fragments were analyzed in multilingual films. This purposive selection supports comparison within the corpus rather than representativeness of Kazakh-language cinema.

From the listed films, we analyzed communicatively complete film fragments containing a candidate PN or PU, together with the turns and visual-acoustic context necessary for interpretation. A PN was a proper name activating documented cultural, symbolic, or evaluative associations beyond identification. A PU was a complete, condensed, or modified verbal unit traceably linked to an established text, expression, or cultural-communicative situation. Inclusion required an identifiable precedent, conformity with the PN/PU definition, and contextual evidence of its activation. Familiar wording or personal associations alone were insufficient. Where PN and PU co-occurred, the unit carrying the primary semantic-pragmatic function received the primary code to avoid double counting.

Screening identified 112 candidates, of which 63 were retained: 39 PN and 24 PU. The 49 exclusions comprised denotative proper names (n = 10), ordinary utterances without a verifiable precedent (n = 6), subjective or unconfirmed associations (n = 19), and precedent texts, situations, or symbolic signs outside the PN/PU definitions (n = 14). Borderline candidates were excluded conservatively; film context could demonstrate cultural activation but could not establish an undocumented source.

3.3. Procedure

All ten films were viewed and analyzed by a single researcher, who conducted the identification, screening, classification, and coding procedures. The analysis began by identifying and recording candidate units in their cinematic contexts. For each candidate unit, a record was maintained containing the film title, year of release, time code, verbal expression, speaker, addressee, and relevant narrative and audiovisual context. Source-related information was documented separately from evidence derived from the film context to distinguish culturally or intertextually inherited associations from meanings activated in specific cinematic situations. The recorded candidates were subsequently screened against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Ambiguous cases involving the identification or classification of PN and PU were resolved conservatively through exclusion when the available evidence was insufficient. The eligible units were then classified as PNs or PUs, establishing the dataset to which functional, transformation, and multimodal coding was applied.

Following unit classification, the communicative-pragmatic function of each retained unit was determined from its dominant communicative purpose in the scene. The assessment considered the speech act, linguistic form, speaker-addressee relationship, preceding and subsequent dialogue, recorded character responses, and relevant audiovisual cues. Each unit received one primary function; additional functions were discussed as secondary effects in the qualitative interpretation and were not counted separately. Cultural or intertextual recognizability alone was insufficient for functional assignment.

When more than one function remained equally supported by the interactional evidence, the following operational priority order was used to select the primary code: behavioral regulation and appeal; argumentation and legitimation; evaluation; national-cultural identification; emotional-expressive influence; irony or humor; and narrative and descriptive organization. This hierarchy served as an operational rule for selecting one primary code and did not rank the functions by importance. For example, a culturally marked appeal could be coded primarily as behavioral regulation and appeal, with national-cultural identification retained as a secondary interpretation. An instruction or appeal was classified by its orientation toward an action or desired state, without requiring proof that it succeeded. Likewise, an emotional or ironic reading concerned cues in the unit and its context rather than a measured viewer response.

After functional coding, discursive transformation was examined by comparing source-associated meanings and, where verifiable, original formulations with their use in the film context. The comparison considered semantic content, evaluative orientation, addressee relations, and communicative intention

through the author-developed coding scheme. Its six categories are contextual specification, semantic expansion, symbolic reinterpretation, evaluative reorientation, shifts in addressee and intention, and condensation or formal modification. Formal modification was recorded separately from evidence of semantic or pragmatic change, so that a change in wording alone did not establish a change in cultural meaning. Conversely, unchanged wording could be interpreted as transformed when contextual evidence supported a different evaluation or communicative force.

The subsequent multimodal analysis examined how audiovisual resources contributed to the functional and transformation interpretations. The theoretical basis for this stage combines Martinec and Salway's (2005) logico-semantic model of image-text relations, Unsworth's (2006) account of intersemiotic concurrence, augmentation, and divergence, and Bateman and Schmidt's (2012) framework for multimodal film analysis. These perspectives provide a basis for four descriptive codes adapted for the present corpus. Reinforcement identified convergent cues supporting the verbal reading; specification identified cues narrowing its contextual interpretation; symbolic expansion identified additional cultural or symbolic implications; and counter-interpretation identified contrasting cues that qualified or challenged the verbal reading. These labels constitute an author-developed adaptation of intersemiotic relations to dialogue, image, music, and sound; they are distinct from the six transformation categories. Interpretations were grounded in verbal evidence and supported by at least one relevant contextual indicator, such as intonation, character reactions, music, framing, or recurrence. Character responses were treated as evidence of meaning construction within the fictional interaction rather than as evidence of actual audience reception.

To clarify the documentary basis and limits of these interpretations, selected examples received additional source checks during revision. «Kölde jürgen qoñyr qaz...» was attributed to Asan Qaygy through Karenov (2016, p. 128); the anthology he cited was not examined directly. «Bölingendi böri jeidi» was checked against the first clause of the proverb in Babalar sözi (2010, p. 308, item 4142). Sadykov (2023, p. 145) supported traditional attribution of a related saying to Töle Bi, rather than conclusive authorship or identical film wording. «Bismillah» was checked against Qur'an 27:30 (Quran.com, n.d.) and its use before eating against Sahih Al-Bukhari (n.d., hadith 5376). These checks concerned the specified examples, not source-by-source documentary verification of all 63 units.

The coded dataset was summarized using descriptive frequencies and percentages. The screening analysis used 112 candidate units as its denominator (Table 3); analyses of the retained corpus used 63 units (Tables 4 and 5); and comparisons within unit types used 39 PNs or 24 PUs. Each retained unit contributed to one primary-function row in Table 5, preventing double counting. Recurrence was defined as the occurrence of a unit or an identifiable pattern in more than one film or setting. As the coding was conducted by a single researcher, the classifications necessarily reflect individual interpretive judgments, and intercoder agreement was not assessed.

4. Results

This section is organized into four subsections. Section 4.1 presents the distribution of PNs and PUs across the selected films and describes the composition of the focal corpus. Section 4.2 examines their communicative-pragmatic functions and addresses the first research question. Section 4.3 analyzes patterns of discursive transformation in relation to the second research question. Section 4.4 brings together the relationships among unit type, function, transformation, and multimodal realization, with particular attention to the second and third research questions.

4.1. Distribution of PNs and PUs

The quantitative component is descriptive. Frequencies and percentages indicate how PNs, PUs, and their coded functions are distributed within the selected corpus; no inferential tests were conducted to establish associations or causal relationships. Unless initial screening or a within-type comparison is explicitly identified, percentages use the focal corpus of 63 units (n = 63) as their denominator. Within-type comparisons use 39 PN or 24 PU and are labeled accordingly. Percentages based on the 112 initially identified candidates are reported separately (N = 112). Qualitative interpretations are based on the units' verbal form and their narrative, communicative, and multimodal contexts. Table 3

distinguishes retained units from excluded candidates and uses the initial screening pool (N = 112) as its denominator.

Table 3
Screening of Candidate Units and Composition of the Focal Corpus

Screening outcome	Number	Share of initial pool (N = 112)
Retained PNs	39	34.8%
Retained PUs	24	21.4%
Excluded: denotative proper names	10	8.9 %
Excluded: ordinary utterances without a verifiable source	6	5.4 %
Excluded: subjective associations or unverifiable sources	19	17.0%
Excluded: precedent texts, situations, or symbolic-axiological signs outside PN/PU	14	12.5%
Total initial candidates	112	100.0%

Note. The retained PNs and PUs together constitute the focal corpus (n = 63). The four excluded categories total 49. Percentages may not total exactly 100% because of rounding.

Table 4 presents the retained units by film and uses n = 63. Historical and biographical productions provide a possible contextual explanation for the number of culturally marked names, but these descriptive counts do not establish an effect of genre or a distribution representative of Kazakh-language cinema generally.

Table 4
Distribution of the Focal Units across Films

Film	PN	PU	Total	Share of focal corpus (n = 63)
Zhauzhurek Myn Bala	10	3	13	20.63%
Aslannyn Sabaktary	3	3	6	9.52%
Zhat	2	2	4	6.35%
Kunanbai	4	3	7	11.11%
Anaga Aparar Zhol	2	2	4	6.35%
Uly Dala Zary	8	2	10	15.87%
Mukagali	3	3	6	9.52%
Akyn	3	2	5	7.94%
Dos-Mukasan	2	2	4	6.35%
Bauryna Salu	2	2	4	6.35%
Total	39	24	63	100.00%

Table 4 records the highest PN counts in Zhauzhurek Myn Bala (10) and Uly Dala Zary (8). Their historical orientation is relevant to interpreting these particular films, but the counts do not establish a genre effect. Equal PN and PU counts in Zhat, Anaga Aparar Zhol, Dos-Mukasan, and Bauryna Salu describe the retained units in those films; they do not measure the films' overall reliance on dialogue or symbolic naming.

4.2. Communicative-Pragmatic Functions

The following fragments illustrate the analytical sequence. The analysis first identifies the unit type and determines its communicative-pragmatic function. It then examines how the unit's cultural meaning is preserved, expanded, or modified in the cinematic context. Finally, it considers how visual and acoustic resources contribute to the realization of these functions and transformations. Conventional meaning and immediate communicative context provide the basis for each classification. The examples distinguish evidence in dialogue and prosodic transcription from interpretations requiring additional visual or acoustic documentation.

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Zhauzhurek Myn Bala. Sartai's utterance «El maqtağan jigitti qyz jaqtağan» [A young man praised by the people is supported by a young woman] (00:57:20–00:57:24) is recorded as a PU in the corpus. Read as a proverbial generalization, it links public approval of a young man with a young woman's approval. The exact earlier textual source of this wording remains unverified; the contextual interpretation is therefore distinguished from source attribution. In the dialogue analyzed here, Sartai uses the formula in a conversation about the girl he admires, after his interlocutor suggests asking her directly and questions his suitability. The question «Qayda barady?» [«Where could she go?»] redirects the generalization toward Sartai's own prospects. Argumentation and legitimation is the primary function because the formula supplies a reason for his confidence. The transformation is described as a shift in addressee and intention: a general proposition is directed to a specific interlocutor to justify an immediate personal claim. The response «Bos maqtan ne kerek?» [What is the use of empty boasting?] contests that claim. This response establishes a claim-counterclaim relation; it does not demonstrate successful persuasion. The prosodic transcription records falling intonation in Sartai's statement. That acoustic notation and the verbal counter-response support the interpretation of the exchange.

Aslannyn Sabaktary. The grandmother's «Bismilla deudi ūmytyp kettiń» [You forgot to say «Bismillah»] (00:04:43–00:04:49) contains the religious formula «Bismillah», meaning «In the name of Allah». The fuller invocation occurs in Qur'an 27:30 (Quran.com, n.d.), and mentioning Allah's name before eating is documented in Sahih Al-Bukhari (n.d.) 5376. These sources establish the conventional formula and one customary use, rather than the authorship of the grandmother's complete sentence. In the analyzed film dialogue, the formula is embedded in a reminder addressed to Aslan. The expression «deudi» [saying/to say] identifies the omitted action, while «ūmytyp kettiń» [you forgot] presents it as an expected action that has not been performed. Behavioral regulation and appeal is the primary function because the reminder prompts the child to perform that action. Contextual specification describes the transformation: the invocation retains its religious meaning but becomes the object of a concrete correction in an elder-child exchange. Everyday use does not itself constitute a departure from religious tradition, since such use is already conventional. The grandmother's reminder specifies who should say the formula and why it is relevant at that moment. The evidence here is the wording, direct address, and intergenerational context. The classification rests on these linguistic and contextual features rather than on a demonstrated emotional response or subsequent compliance.

Uly Dala Zary. The sequence «Jolyń aq bolsyn! … Qazağyma birlik bere gör! … Elim aman, jūrtym tynyş bolsyn!» [May your path be bright! … Grant unity to my Kazakh people! … May my country be safe and my people live in peace!] (00:10:26–00:10:32) is counted as one communicatively complete PU fragment. Its wording draws on blessing and prayer formulas, although a specific earlier textual source for the complete sequence remains unverified. The individual orientation of «Jolyń» [your path] is followed by the collective references «Qazağyma» [to/for my Kazakh people], «Elim» [my country/people], and «jūrtym» [my community/people]. The wishes thus move from one person's journey to unity, safety, and peace for a collective. Behavioral regulation and appeal is the assigned primary function because the optative «bolsyn» [may … be] and petition «bere gör» [grant] express desired future conditions. This is an appeal in the utterance's form, not evidence that a character or viewer was mobilized. Semantic expansion describes the widening scope within the sequence; it does not imply that collective wishes were absent from earlier blessing traditions. National-cultural identification and Emotional-expressive influence are discussed as secondary readings of its references and evaluative content, not additional counted functions or measured effects. The linguistic progression supplies the evidence for this interpretation. This interpretation is limited to the documented wording and contextual progression.

Zhat. The radio announcement beginning with «Govorit Moskva» [This is Moscow speaking] features «Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin» [Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin] and «Lenin» [Lenin] as PNs that activate Soviet political memory (1:12:02-1:12:18). The descriptions of Stalin as «velikiy mudrets» [a great sage], «vozhd» [leader], and «prodolzhatel dela Lenina» [the continuer of Lenin's cause] glorify his image and connect his activities to Lenin's ideological legacy. In this context, the PNs serve not only to identify historical figures but also to reinforce political authority and shape public evaluations. Meanwhile, the conventional broadcasting formula «Govorit Moskva» [This is Moscow speaking] establishes the official character of the announcement and represents the voice of the central authorities.

UNDER PEER REVIEW

While these official, institutional references represent the voice of the state, the characters' own speech draws on a different layer of precedent: folk wisdom expressed through proverbs. The proverb «Qyryq zhyl qyrghyn bolsa da, azhaldy oledi» [Even if the slaughter lasts forty years, only those destined to die will perish] (1:10:08) functions as a PU that activates culturally shared understandings of fate and death. In a conversation about war, the proverb associates death not only with external danger but also with a person's predetermined fate, revealing the character's perspective on life and death. By contrast, the line «Ura berse, ayu da oledi deushi me edi?» [Wasn't it said that even a bear will die if beaten repeatedly?] (1:04:32-1:04:35) conveys the idea that sustained violence can destroy even the strongest being. The image of the bear represents strength and endurance, while «deushi me edi?» [wasn't it said?] explicitly signals an appeal to a familiar folk saying. Thus, the first utterance supports a judgment about fate, whereas the second evaluates the consequences of oppression and serves as a warning.

Precedent in the film is not limited to proverbs, however, and religious formulas show a different kind of adaptation, in which the original meaning gives way to a new function. The religious formula «Astapyralla» [I seek Allah's forgiveness] expresses fear, alarm, and intense astonishment, performing an emotional-expressive function (Zhat, 1:12:22). Originally used to seek divine forgiveness, it conveys the character's spontaneous reaction to an unexpected situation in this context. Its religious meaning thus recedes into the background as its emotional significance becomes more prominent, illustrating how a culturally familiar precedent formula acquires a different pragmatic function in situated discourse.

Whereas «Astapyralla» is explicitly voiced, precedent can also operate more indirectly, by evoking a cultural concept without naming it. In the line «Sheshem marqumnyn 'ozeninde qymyz aghatyn, qoy ustine boztorghay zhumyrtqalaghan, adamdary ashtyq degendi bilmeytin ghazhayyp el zhayynda' kop aytatyny ghana esimde» [I only remember my late mother often speaking about a wondrous land where rivers flowed with kumys, skylarks nested on sheep's backs, and people knew no hunger] (Zhat, 28:35–28:47), the precedent concept of Zheruyiq [an ideal land of peace and abundance] is indirectly activated. Although Zheruyiq is not explicitly named, the descriptions of rivers flowing with kumys, freedom from hunger, and abundance evoke the ideal place preserved in cultural memory. The PU «Qoy ustine boztorghay zhumyrtqalaghan» [A time when skylarks nested on sheep's backs] reinforces this image through a culturally familiar symbol of peace and prosperity. Thus, precedence manifests itself through the recognizable expression and an indirect reference to Zheruyiq.

Finally, different precedent phenomena may be combined within a single utterance, as the following example shows. In the line «Akem marqum: Kari zhylqy esekke uyir keledi,- deushi edi. Qudaygha tauba» [My late father used to say, «An old horse seeks the company of a donkey». Thanks be to God] (Zhat, 26:21–26:25), «Kari zhylqy esekke uyir keledi» [An old horse seeks the company of a donkey] functions as a PU based on a nationally familiar proverb. The construction «Akem marqum … deushi edi» [My late father used to say …] indicates the intergenerational transmission of the proverb through family communication, combining the authority of folk wisdom with that of the father's words. The images of the horse and the donkey enable an indirect evaluation of human relationships, conveying mockery or self-directed irony in the specific context. Meanwhile, the religious formula «Qudaygha tauba» [Thanks be to God] expresses the character's emotional response to this evaluation. Together, the proverb and the religious formula communicate the character's perspective through culturally familiar linguistic expressions.

Dos-Mukasan. The line «Tanertennen bir sulu qyz erip keledi» [A beautiful girl has been following me since morning] is treated as a PU created by modifying a familiar song's lyrics and rendering them in Kazakh (00:10:15–00:10:20). Its precedent status rests on its recognizable connection with the source song. The Kazakh reformulation demonstrates cross-linguistic adaptation and formal transformation, preserving this connection while adapting the content to the immediate communicative situation. The modified lyric performs humorous and emotional-expressive functions. «Bremenskikh muzykantov» [the Bremen Town Musicians] (00:04:35–00:04:51) functions as a PN that activates the familiar collective image of the fairy-tale characters. By contrasting future engineers with musicians, the speaker mockingly evaluates the students' artistic interests and attempts to align their behaviour with professional expectations. In «Gagarin nam kosmos otkryl» [Gagarin opened up space for us]

(01:13:56–01:14:11), the PN Gagarin evokes shared cultural associations with scientific achievement and social progress. The father invokes this authoritative image to challenge his son's interest in music and influence his career choice, using the historical reference to support his argument and legitimize his expectations.

Table 5 summarizes the primary communicative-pragmatic functions of the 63 retained units (39 PN and 24 PU). Evaluation represents the largest share of PN (23.1%), while behavioral regulation and appeal is the largest category among PU (20.8%). Argumentation and legitimation is proportionally more frequent among PU (16.7%) than PN (7.7%).

Table 5

Cross-Tabulation of Unit Type and Primary Communicative-Pragmatic Function

Primary function	PN (n = 39) n (%)	PU (n = 24) n (%)	Total (n = 63) n (%)
Evaluation	9 (23.1)	2 (8.3)	11 (17.5)
Argumentation and legitimation	3 (7.7)	4 (16.7)	7 (11.1)
National-cultural identification	5 (12.8)	3 (12.5)	8 (12.7)
Emotional-expressive influence	4 (10.3)	3 (12.5)	7 (11.1)
Behavioral regulation and appeal	7 (17.9)	5 (20.8)	12 (19.0)
Irony or humor	5 (12.8)	3 (12.5)	8 (12.7)
Narrative and descriptive organization	6 (15.4)	4 (16.7)	10 (15.9)
Total	**39 (100.0)**	**24 (100.0)**	**63 (100.0)**

4.3. Patterns of Discursive Transformation

The analysis identifies six types of discursive transformation: contextual specification, semantic expansion, symbolic reinterpretation, evaluative reorientation, shifts in addressee and intention, and condensation or formal modification. These categories describe how recognizable PUs acquire situated meanings and communicative functions in film discourse. Contextual specification applies inherited meanings to particular interactions, whereas semantic expansion broadens their scope. Symbolic reinterpretation foregrounds a cultural image, and evaluative reorientation changes the attitude expressed toward a familiar referent. Shifts in addressee and intention redirect a unit toward a new interlocutor or purpose, while formal modification alters its wording without eliminating recognizability. Table 6 brings together the illustrative examples and relates each unit's most salient transformation to its primary function.

Table 6

Relationships among Unit Type, Primary Function, and Six Types of Discursive Transformation

Transformation type	Unit type & primary function	Film and example	Interpretation
Contextual specification	PU; Behavioral regulation and appeal	Aslannyn Sabaktary [Harmony Lessons]: "Bismilla deudi ūmytyp kettiñ" [You forgot to say "Bismillah"] (00:04:43–00:04:49).	The conventional religious formula is associated with a specific omitted action. Its established meaning is preserved, while its function as a corrective reminder directed at Aslan becomes salient.
Contextual specification	PN; Argumentation and legitimation	Mukagali [Mukagali]: "Dante" [Dante] (00:06:24–00:08:30).	Dante's literary authority supports a specific claim about the expressive capacity of Kazakh. The transformation involves applying that authority to a particular issue rather than changing the name's inherited cultural meaning.
Semantic expansion	PU; Behavioral regulation and appeal	Uly Dala Zary [The Crying Steppe]: "Jolyñ aq bolsyn! … Qazağyma birlik bere gör! … Elim aman, jūrtym tynyş bolsyn!" [May your path be bright! … Grant unity to my Kazakh people! … May my country be safe and my people live in peace!] (00:10:26–00:10:32).	The blessing develops from an individual wish into a collective appeal for national unity, safety, and peace. Its optative meaning is retained, while its scope expands.

Semantic expansion	PN; Narrative and descriptive organization	Akyn [Poet]: "Makhambet Ötemisūly" [Makhambet Otemisuly] (00:20:59–00:21:42).	Through the comparison with Didar, the established ideal of poetic resistance associated with Makhambet extends to a contemporary poet. The PN connects two periods and broadens the historical figure's relevance to the interpretation of the present.
Symbolic reinterpretation	PN; Evaluation	Dos-Mukasan: "Bremenskikh muzykantov" [The Bremen Town Musicians] (00:04:35–00:04:51).	The collective name of familiar fairy-tale characters is transferred to engineering students. It becomes a symbolic label for an artistic way of life that conflicts with the speaker's expectations of professional discipline.
Symbolic reinterpretation	PU; National-cultural identification	Zhat [Stranger]: "Qoy ustine boztorghay zhumyrtqalaghan" [A time when skylarks nested on sheep's backs], within the description of a wondrous land without hunger (00:28:35–00:28:47).	Together with the descriptions of abundance, the expression indirectly activates the cultural concept of Zheruyiq. Within the narrative of hunger, the familiar image of peaceful life becomes a symbol of an ideal land contrasted with deprivation.
Evaluative reorientation	Indirect reference to a PN; Evaluation	Dos-Mukasan: "bukashkami" [little bugs] and "zhukami" [beetles], indirectly referring to The Beatles (00:19:40–00:19:57).	The familiar band's cultural image is reframed through disparaging descriptions. Rather than foregrounding its musical prestige, the speaker emphasizes a negative attitude toward Western culture.
Evaluative reorientation	PU; Irony and humor	Zhat [Stranger]: "Akem marqum: 'Kari zhylqy esekke uyir keledi,'—deushi edi" [My late father used to say, "An old horse seeks the company of a donkey"] (00:26:21–00:26:25).	The nationally familiar proverb is directed toward a humorous assessment of a particular relationship. Its general cautionary meaning shifts toward mockery or self-directed irony in situated use. This change is supported by the scene's intonation and the characters' reactions.
Shifts in addressee and intention	PU; Emotional-expressive function	Zhat [Stranger]: "Astapyralla" [I seek Allah's forgiveness] (01:12:22).	Originally directed toward seeking divine forgiveness, the religious formula expresses fear, alarm, and intense astonishment in this scene. Its communicative intention shifts from requesting forgiveness to conveying an emotional reaction to an unexpected situation.
Shifts in addressee and intention	PN; Narrative and descriptive organization	Mukagali [Mukagali]: "Aleksandr Sergeevich" [Alexander Sergeyevich], addressing Pushkin (00:11:59–00:12:42).	Pushkin is invoked not only as a literary authority but also as an imagined interlocutor. This shift in addressee organizes Mukagali's reflections on poetic freedom as a personal dialogue.
Condensation or formal modification	PU; Irony and humor	Dos-Mukasan: "Tanertennen bir sulu qyz erip keledi" [A beautiful girl has been following me since morning] (00:10:15–00:10:20).	A familiar song's lyrics are modified, reformulated in Kazakh, and adapted to the immediate situation. A recognizable connection with the original song is preserved, while the modified version serves a humorous communicative purpose.
Condensation or formal modification	PU; Evaluation	Zhat [Stranger]: "Ura berse, ayu da oledi deushi me edi?" [Wasn't it said that even a bear will die if beaten repeatedly?] (01:10:12–01:11:03).	The proverb's declarative core is incorporated into an interrogative recollection. The construction "deushi me edi?" [wasn't it said?] explicitly signals an appeal to shared cultural knowledge and enables an evaluation of the consequences of sustained pressure.

The examples in Table 6 show that there is no one-to-one correspondence among PU type, communicative function, and discursive transformation. A single transformation type can serve different functions, while the same function can be realized through several transformations. For example, contextual specification enables a religious formula to regulate behaviour and a literary name to support an argument, whereas a shift in communicative intention allows a familiar utterance to express an emotional reaction. Identifying a transformation therefore requires comparing the unit's inherited cultural meaning with its function in the specific utterance and the context of the scene.

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4.4 Visual and Acoustic Resources in the Realization of Precedent Units' Functions and Transformations

The meaning of a precedent unit is considered in relation to its verbal content, mode of delivery, musical performance, and the actions depicted in the scene. The following examples explicitly apply the four descriptive multimodal codes: reinforcement, specification, symbolic expansion, and counter-interpretation. These codes describe relationships between verbal, visual, and acoustic cues, whereas transformation categories describe changes in a precedent unit's meaning, form, or communicative intention.

In Zhauzhurek Myn Bala [Myn Bala: Warriors of the Steppe], the argumentative function of «Ejelgi dūshpan el bolmas» [An age-old enemy will never become a friend] is supported by the scene's visual organization (00:35:10–00:35:17). Showing the interlocutors within the same shot establishes the immediate communicative situation. The proverb supports a particular position in a discussion about whether to trust the opposing side. This relationship is coded as specification, because the visual cues narrow the contextual interpretation of the verbal utterance by clarifying its addressee and the circumstances of its use. The participants' presence within the frame and the dialogic situation thus support the interpretation of the proverb's argumentative function and contextual specification.

In Akyn [Poet], the semantic scope of the name Makhambet Otemisuly expands through the on-screen portrayals of the historical figure and a contemporary poet, connected through parallel storylines. These portrayals invite a comparison of creative freedom and social pressure across different historical periods. The relationship is coded as symbolic expansion, because the screen representations and their narrative connection extend the cultural implications of the historical name to the contemporary poet. The multimodal code identifies how the visual and narrative relationship supports this extension, while semantic expansion describes the resulting transformation of the PN. Its function therefore emerges through the characters' on-screen representations and the connections between their stories, extending beyond the individual utterance.

In Dos-Mukasan, «Tanertennen bir sulu qyz erip keledi» [A beautiful girl has been following me since morning] illustrates the acoustic channel's contribution to recognizing a precedent text (00:10:15–00:10:20). Although the familiar song's lyrics are modified and rendered in Kazakh, the retained melodic connection with the original enables recognition. This relationship is coded as reinforcement: the familiar melody supports the interpretation of the altered wording as a reworking of an existing cultural text. The modified lyrics demonstrate formal transformation, while the musical performance maintains the connection with the source. Thus, reinforcement describes the relationship between the musical and verbal cues, while formal modification describes the change in the precedent text's wording. Their combination contributes to the humorous and emotional-expressive functions of the utterance.

In Zhat [Stranger], the PN in the radio announcement of Stalin's death is presented in conjunction with his portrait and the emotional reactions of the assembled crowd. The portrait visually identifies the name's referent, while the people's facial expressions of grief convey the collective reception of the announcement. The convergence of the acoustic announcement and the visual representation of mourning is coded as reinforcement, because the two channels support a shared interpretation of the event as an occasion of collective grief. Specification also applies: the portrait and the crowd's reactions situate the name within a particular public event and clarify its immediate emotional significance. This relationship makes Stalin's name the emotional focus of the announcement, extending its role beyond identifying a historical figure. The example therefore demonstrates contextual specification and an intensification of emotional impact rather than evaluative reorientation.

The functions of religious formulas in the same film are differentiated through intonation, facial expression, and bodily movement. In «Astapyralla» [I seek Allah's forgiveness] (01:12:22), the speaker's intonation and facial expression foreground fear, alarm, and intense astonishment. This example is treated as a limited case of counter-interpretation: the visual and acoustic cues qualify a strictly literal reading centered on seeking forgiveness and support an interpretation of the utterance as an immediate emotional reaction. Here, counter-interpretation concerns the formula's communicative

purpose, corresponding to a shift in intention. In “Bog moy!” [My God!] (01:40:10–01:41:04), intonation and bodily movement clarify the intention to appeal to God and pray. This relationship is coded as reinforcement, because the verbal formula, vocal delivery, and bodily expression converge in supporting its religious orientation.

Together, these examples show how the four multimodal codes account for different relationships between semiotic resources. Specification narrows contextual interpretation, symbolic expansion introduces further cultural implications, reinforcement supports recognition or a convergent interpretation, and counter-interpretation qualifies a literal reading through cues that foreground a different communicative intention. An episode may involve more than one multimodal code, and these codes do not correspond one-to-one with the transformation categories.

5. Discussion

The findings suggest that the communicative significance of PNs and PUs depends on the relationship between their established cultural associations and their situated use. Recognizing a reference provides a basis for interpretation, but does not by itself explain what the reference accomplishes in an interaction. Its function also depends on the speaker’s position, the immediate communicative purpose, and the film’s visual and acoustic organization. The principal contribution of the analysis is therefore to explain how cultural recognizability can coexist with functional flexibility and discursive transformation.

Regarding RQ1, PNs and PUs operate as resources for positioning characters, supporting judgments, and organizing interaction. Their contribution extends beyond identifying a shared cultural background. A familiar name can make a cultural model available for evaluating a person or situation, while a familiar proposition can supply an apparently established reason for a judgment or decision. These possibilities help explain the observed association of PNs with evaluation and of PUs with argumentation and legitimation. However, this explanation concerns their pragmatic affordances rather than a fixed correspondence between unit type and function. The argumentative use of Dante’s name illustrates how a PN can contribute to reasoning, just as a proverb can acquire humorous or corrective force. Speech-act theory provides a basis for interpreting this flexibility by directing attention to what speakers accomplish through utterances and to the conditions of their use (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). In the present analysis, however, the seven functional categories encompass different levels of discourse: regulation and argumentation concern local interaction, whereas narrative organization concerns a reference’s contribution to the film’s development. The categories should consequently be understood as an analytical scheme for identifying primary roles, rather than as a direct reproduction of an illocutionary taxonomy. Assigning one primary function makes comparison possible, but also reduces the visibility of overlapping functions. The resulting distributions describe the analytical emphasis assigned to each occurrence, rather than the full range of meanings it may support.

The findings also qualify the relationship between PUs and national-cultural identification. Historical, religious, and artistic references make different cultural resources available within Kazakh-language film discourse. Their use suggests that cultural identification can be constructed through intersecting repertoires rather than through references belonging exclusively to one national tradition. Moreover, invoking a culturally authoritative name or proposition does not establish that its authority is accepted. The reference presents a position as culturally grounded; its acceptance, rejection, or reinterpretation remains dependent on the interaction.

Regarding RQ2, the findings indicate that cultural continuity and discursive transformation can occur together. An established reference may remain recognizable while its immediate purpose, evaluative orientation, or scope of application changes. This interpretation is consistent with approaches to recontextualization that examine how discourse is extracted from earlier settings and situated within new communicative relationships (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Linell, 1998). Genette’s (1982/1997) account of relationships between texts offers a complementary perspective on the connection with an earlier cultural text. Taken together, these perspectives help distinguish two questions: what prior cultural material is invoked, and what happens to that material in its present use. Establishing the source

relationship addresses the first question; interpreting transformation requires additional contextual evidence.

The six transformation categories are useful because reuse can affect different aspects of a precedent unit. Contextual specification narrows an established meaning to a particular addressee or situation, whereas semantic expansion extends its applicability or associated implications. A new context therefore does not automatically establish a new cultural meaning. Likewise, symbolic reinterpretation concerns what a reference represents, while evaluative reorientation concerns the attitude expressed toward it. Keeping these distinctions explicit prevents every contextual difference from being classified as equivalent evidence of transformation. It also makes the strength of an interpretation dependent on the specific change demonstrated.

The relationship between form and communicative intention further explains why transformation cannot be identified through lexical comparison alone. A preserved formula may serve a different immediate purpose, while modified wording may maintain a recognizable cultural connection. Nevertheless, an emotional use of a religious formula may itself be conventional in everyday communication. The analysis of «Astapyralla» therefore supports a situated interpretation relative to its literal religious formulation; it does not establish that the film created a new meaning. Claims about semantic innovation would require comparison with broader usage. Similarly, formal modification requires an identifiable source formulation, and evaluative reorientation requires evidence of stance rather than cultural familiarity alone.

Regarding RQ3, the revised scene analysis indicates that visual and acoustic resources contribute to both the continuity and transformation of precedent units. The four multimodal codes clarify how these contributions differ. Specification identifies contextual narrowing without necessarily implying a change in established cultural content. Reinforcement shows how convergent resources support an interpretation or preserve a source connection. Symbolic expansion accounts for additional cultural implications produced through the relationship between screen representations. Taken together, these codes make it possible to separate the type of audiovisual contribution from the type of change the precedent unit undergoes. These relationships explain why multimodal continuity and verbal transformation can coexist: a familiar melody may maintain the connection with a source even when the lyrics change. The multimodal code and the transformation category consequently describe different aspects of the same occurrence.

Having established what the codes capture, it is also necessary to consider the scale at which their supporting evidence appears. The examples also indicate that the relevant evidence operates at different scales. The shared frame in «Zhauzhurek Myn Bala» supports interpretation within a local exchange, whereas the relationship between the two poets in «Akyn» develops across connected storylines. This difference matters methodologically: an utterance-level analysis may identify the reference but leave its broader narrative contribution unexplained. Bateman and Schmidt's (2012) approach to multimodal film analysis provides a basis for relating concrete audiovisual organization to larger filmic discourse structures. In the present study, the appropriate analytical span therefore depends on where the evidence supporting the interpretation occurs.

Just as the span of evidence varies, so does its strength, and this variation calls for care in how the codes are applied. Counter-interpretation requires particular caution. In «Astapyralla», emotional delivery qualifies a strictly literal reading centered on seeking forgiveness, but does not establish opposition to the formula's religious associations. Its classification is consequently a limited pragmatic interpretation. A shift in communicative intention and a contradiction between semiotic channels are different claims, and the former should not automatically be treated as evidence of the latter. This qualification strengthens the application of the four codes by allowing differences in evidential certainty rather than presenting every relationship as equally unambiguous.

These distinctions in scale and certainty also have a theoretical basis, which becomes clear when the analysis is situated within inferential pragmatics. Inferential pragmatics helps explain why audiovisual evidence matters: linguistic meaning contributes to an interpretation that also depends on contextual assumptions and evidence of communicative intention (Grice, 1975; Sperber & Wilson, 1995). Applied

here, this perspective suggests that image, vocal delivery, and music can guide the selection of culturally relevant associations. However, the study examines interpretive possibilities supported by filmic evidence. The crowd's grief during the announcement of Stalin's death represents reception within the film; conclusions about actual viewers' emotions, recognition, or political attitudes require independent reception research. The study's broader implication is that precedent unit analysis benefits from distinguishing cultural reference, communicative function, transformation, and audiovisual realization while examining their relationships. This approach makes classifications more open to scrutiny because each interpretation must specify both the cultural connection and the contextual evidence supporting it. It may also inform subtitling by identifying which communicative and cultural relationships a translation needs to preserve, although translation effectiveness was not tested. The purposive sample and primary-function coding limit broader quantitative conclusions. Future research should combine clearer source documentation, independent coding, and systematic audiovisual annotation with reception studies. Such work would help determine which interpretations are consistently supported across analysts and which cultural associations are recognized by different audiences.

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Ethics Declaration

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