



TYPES AND FUNCTIONS OF PRECEDENT NAMES IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE CINEMATIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract. The subject of this study is precedent names in the English-language cinematic discourse. The focus is placed on determining the functional potential of precedent names in this type of discourse. In this work, precedent names are considered as a kind of precedent phenomena: names of personalities, events and works of fiction. The study of precedent names has significance within the framework of cultural linguistics, cognitive science and intertextuality theory, as precedent names contain information about important cultural and historical phenomena, give insights into the mechanism of metaphorization, and serve to create intertextual connections. The frequency of their use in different types of discourse, especially in cinematic discourse, is steadily increasing, which explains the relevance of research in this field. Using the methods of discourse analysis, functional-semantic analysis, inductive analysis and continuous sampling, we examine the types of precedent names, source spheres and the functions that these lexical units perform in cinematic discourse. Such analysis makes it possible to establish the cultural significance of personalities, events, and other phenomena, as well as their reflection in such a mass art form as cinematography. Due to its mass appeal and depiction of various social groups, cinematic discourse is of particular interest within the framework of sociolinguistics in regard to such culturally significant units as precedent names. The analysis of the functions of precedent names allows one to establish their role in cinematic discourse, their artistic value, semantic potential and cultural significance. The analysis revealed which types of precedent names are most frequently used in the English-language cinematic discourse (anthroponyms and names of works of art); identified productive sources of precedent names (the sphere of art and the social sphere); and introduced a list of characteristic functions that precedent names perform in cinematic discourse (among which ludic and evaluative functions are especially prominent).

Keywords: precedent phenomena, precedent names, cinematic discourse, cultural linguistics, functions of precedent names, English-language films, onomastics

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ВИДЫ И ФУНКЦИИ ПРЕЦЕДЕНТНЫХ ИМЁН В АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОМ КИНОДИСКУРСЕ

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Аннотация. Предметом данного исследования являются прецедентные имена в англоязычном кинодискурсе. Основное внимание направлено на определение функционального потенциала прецедентных имён в данном типе дискурса. Прецедентные имена рассматриваются в работе как разновидность прецедентных феноменов: это имена личностей, наименования событий, художественных произведений. Изучение прецедентных имён имеет значение как в рамках лингвокультурологии, так и в рамках когнитивистики и теории интертекстуальности, поскольку прецедентные имена содержат в себе информацию о значимых культурных и исторических явлениях, позволяют проникнуть в механизм метафоризации и служат одним из инструментов создания интертекстуальных связей. Частотность их использования в разных видах дискурса, особенно в кинодискурсе, неуклонно растёт, что объясняет актуальность исследования. С применением методов дискурс-анализа, функционально-семантического анализа, индуктивного анализа и сплошной выборки рассматриваются виды прецедентных имён, сферы-источники и функции, которые выполняют данные единицы в кинодискурсе. Такой анализ позволяет установить культурную значимость личностей, событий, культурных и исторических явлений и их отражение в таком массовом виде искусства, как кинематограф. Благодаря массовости и изображению различных социальных групп, кинодискурс представляет особый интерес в рамках социолингвистики для изучения таких культурно значимых единиц, как прецедентные имена, расширяя представление об основных социальных тенденциях и о том, как они закрепляются в языке и преобразуются в речи. Анализ функций прецедентных имён позволяет установить их роль в кинодискурсе, их художественную ценность, семантический потенциал и культурную значимость. В ходе анализа было установлено, какие виды прецедентных имён используются в англо-американском кинодискурсе наиболее часто: антропонимы и наименования произведений искусства; были выделены продуктивные сферы-источники прецедентных имён: сфера искусства и социальная сфера, а также определён перечень основных и характерных функций, которые прецедентные имена реализуют в кинодискурсе. Исследование позволило сделать вывод о значимости людической и оценочной функций, благодаря которым прецедентные имена становятся эффективным инструментом речевого воздействия.

Ключевые слова: прецедентные феномены, прецедентные имена, кинодискурс, лингвокультурология, функции прецедентных имён, англоязычные кинофильмы, ономастика

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Introduction

Cinematic discourse, as one of the types of artistic discourse, is a complex multifaceted phenomenon. Cinematic discourse is of interest as a subject of study in linguistics, semiotics, and cultural linguistics. Such properties as generality (films, as a rule, are aimed at a wide audience) and creolized nature (combination of verbal and non-verbal sign systems) determine the significance of the cinematic discourse influence in the process of transmitting national values, culture and historical knowledge, and prove that cinematic discourse represents rich material for research. The subject of our attention is precedent phenomena, namely precedent names, which are widely represented in the English-language cinematic discourse and contain information which is culturally significant for the national linguistic and cultural community.

As noted by researchers, precedent phenomena are a part of the process of conceptualization and categorization of the world, building a metaphorical model of reality [10], [14]. The precedent phenomena reflect the importance of values, phenomena of history and culture, attitudes, and their fixation in the national linguistic and cultural community's collective consciousness. The peculiarities of interaction between national mentality, culture and language are manifested through precedent phenomena and the way they function in speech. Moreover, precedent phenomena can reflect social tendencies, conveying them through language. Being mental facts, precedent phenomena contain significant information about the structure of the cognitive base of the national linguistic and cultural community, so their analysis is an important part of the study of foreign culture and an element of successful intercultural communication.

The analysis of the functioning of precedent phenomena in cinematic discourse is of particular interest due to such features as its creolized nature and generality. It should be noted that in the works of researchers cinematic discourse is usually a source sphere within the study of precedent cinematic texts (Viktoria Shalabodova, Eduard Budaev, Nina Basko, Nadezhda Globa, Mikhail Kosarev), and it is much more rarely considered as a target sphere. This determines the relevance of this paper.

The aim of this study is to analyze the functioning of precedent names in the English-language cinematic discourse. In the course of our work, the following tasks have been solved: distinguishing precedent names in the modern English-language cinematic discourse; determining the main types of precedent names; establishing the most productive source spheres of precedent names; and analyzing their functions.

Films and TV series from 2003–2023 serve as the material for this study, particularly the ones that have received prestigious nominations and awards (The Academy Awards, Golden Globe Award, and Emmy Award) and have got a high score from the audience (based on the sites IMDb, Metacritic and Rotten Tomatoes). For example, *The Office*, *Ted Lasso*, *Succession*, *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once*, *Tár*, and others. The awards and nominations, as well as high audience appreciation, show that these films and series are culturally relevant and popular, i.e. valued by a wide audience.

This study has been carried out using the following methods: continuous sampling, contextual analysis, discourse analysis, functional-semantic analysis and the inductive method.

Theoretical and methodological basis

The works of Yuri Karaulov, Viktoria Krasnykh, Dmitry Gudkov, Elena Nakhimova, Yuri Lotman, Yuri Tsivian, and Gennady Slyshkin are the theoretical basis for this study [3], [4], [2], [7], [6], [12], [9]. The definition of cinematic discourse proposed by Anna Zaretskaya is taken as the principal one: cinematic discourse is “a creolized formation, which possesses the properties of integrity, coherence, informative, communicative and pragmatic orientation, and media nature, and is created by a collectively differentiated author for viewing by the recipient of the message (film viewer)” [15, p. 32]. This definition reflects the main distinctive features of film discourse: the quality of being a creolized text and its media nature. In addition, Zaretskaya distinguishes audiovisuality, intertextuality, prospection and retrospection (temporal referentiality) as the principal features of cinematic discourse.

Iuri Karaulov, Viktoria Krasnykh, Elena Nakhimova and Svetlana Kushneruk single out the following distinctive features of precedent phenomena: the existence of an invariant (a primary source to which the speaker appeals each time a precedent phenomenon is used); quotability (emotional and cognitive significance, wide popularity); repeatability; and non-denotative use as a cultural sign [3], [4], [7], [5].

The focus of this study is on precedent names (hereinafter – PN), which Viktoria Krasnykh defines as “an individual name associated either with a widely known text, usually related to a precedent, or with a precedent situation; it is a kind of a complex sign, the use of which in communication makes an appeal not to the denotation (referent) proper, but to a set of differential attributes of the precedent name...” [4, p. 48]. PNs occupy a special position, as can be seen from Krasnykh’s definition, because they correlate with precedent texts (hereinafter – PT) and precedent situations (hereinafter – PS). PSs and PTs can be actualized in speech with the help of PNs, as the PS and the PT belong to verbalizable phenomena; in particular, the text (in the broad sense) is often actualized in speech by its name (title), or by the PN and its related attributes. Krasnykh notes that in such cases the PN functions as a “symbol-name”. Dmitry Gudkov also draws attention to this fact: the PN “is in close connection with the precedent text and the precedent situation” [2, p. 87].

Analysing the functioning of PNs in mass communication, Elena Nakhimova identifies the main types of PNs on the basis of the onomastics theory: anthroponyms, toponyms, event names, names of works of art, names of ships, companies, etc.; PNs that refer to events by means of a date are also highlighted [7].

Researchers distinguish many possible source spheres of precedent phenomena. For example, Gennady Slyshkin singles out folklore, literature, politics, advertising, music, humorous folk genres and history [9, p. 72]. Adam Suprun and Olga Semenets also distinguish mythology, science, fine arts, sports, medicine, etc. [11], [8]. Svetlana Kushneruk divides the source spheres into two wide areas: the sphere of arts and the social sphere [5, p. 13]. Such approach seems effective, as it is impossible to distinguish every existing source sphere of precedent phenomena, taking into account the variety of human activity. Thus, it is necessary to present them in the form of illustrative categories. This study of source spheres is based on the classification presented by Elena Nakhimova:

1. The social sphere, which is divided into such spheres as politics, economics, education, entertainment, medicine, war, crime, and sports.
2. The sphere of arts, which includes such areas as literature, theatre and cinema, fine arts, music, architecture, mythology and folklore.
3. The sphere of science, which includes, in particular, the following areas of the humanities and natural sciences: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography, and linguistics.
4. The sphere of religion, which includes precedent phenomena that go back to religious texts [7, p. 89–90].

An analysis of the functions that PNs perform in cinematic discourse is important, as such analysis makes it possible to determine the purpose of precedent phenomena, why authors refer to them and what they mean, both within individual texts and within the entirety of cinematic discourse. For a detailed analysis of PN functions, it is necessary to take into account the features of the discourse analysed.

Researchers distinguish different functions of precedent phenomena. In particular, analysing political discourse, they distinguish such functions as the identifying, evaluative, ideological and aesthetic ones [1], [13]. Studying humorous discourse, Gennady Slyshkin singles out the persuasive, ludic and cryptographic functions [9, p. 85–104]. However, no study has been found that would include a list of functions of precedent phenomena specifically in cinematic discourse.

In our opinion, in order to systematize the functions that precedent phenomena perform in cinematic discourse, it is important to take into account several factors. Firstly, the screenplay, which is an integral part of cinematic discourse, is similar to a play in its form, so it can be said that the verbal basis of a film (just as that of a play) is primarily the dialogues between the characters: cinematic discourse tends to “imitate” everyday-life discourse, as a work of cinema usually contains a representation of interactions between people. Secondly, a work of cinema is a work of fiction; thus, we may conclude that cinematic discourse also contains elements of artistic discourse. It is necessary to take these features into account

when analysing cinematic discourse, as the functions of precedent phenomena can be considered both as part of the imitation of everyday discourse, represented by a film dialogue between characters, and as part of the overall picture, as elements of the structure of a cinematographic work.

Thus, based on the works of the researchers (primarily, Vera Latysheva, Yulia Gunko, Elena Nakhimova and Gennady Slyshkin), as well as on the results of our research, we identify the following functions of PNs in cinematic discourse:

1. The pragmatic function. PNs are used to exert influence over the recipient, to influence his or her opinion. One of the varieties of this function is the persuasive function, when a PN serves as a way of appealing to an authority, some kind of a model, used to convince the interlocutor.

2. The evaluative function. PNs are used to express evaluation: the characters' attitude to each other, the characters' attitude to the situation, the author's attitude to the characters, etc. It can also be noted that PNs are of evaluative nature and emotionally coloured, because emotional colouring and connotation are among the main features of precedent phenomena as such, but the interest in this case lies in their use in discourse: for example, in the speech of characters. It is important to determine the kind of evaluation, the situations, in which it occurs, and with the help of which PNs it is expressed.

3. The aesthetic function. PNs serve as a way to create an image, to enhance artistic expressiveness, as a way of aesthetic evaluation of the world.

4. The cryptographic function. With the help of PNs, it is possible to draw a boundary between "familiar people" ("our people") and "strangers". Belonging to the first group is manifested in the recipient's ability to understand the reference to a PN and in their ability to adequately use references to PNs in the speech. PNs are used to detect commonality between participants in the course of communication.

5. The ludic function. This function is related to the phenomenon of language play as well as humour. PNs are used to create a comic effect, as an element of language play, and as a way to involve people in conversation and/or make them laugh. It may be achieved by violating the form of PNs, which leads to the formation of puns and paronomasia.

6. The euphemistic function. PN functions as a euphemism, a way to subtly convey a vulgar and/or aggressive meaning.

7. The image function. PNs serve as a way of creating a character's image. With the help of PNs, it is possible to create a speech portrait of a character, to denote their sphere of interests, level of education, familiarity with culture, etc. A subvariety of this function is the function of self-presentation, when the speaker represents himself by appealing to a PN.

8. The structural function. PNs denote the compositionally significant moments of a film: they act as a title, focus the audience's attention on the climax, indicate the denouement, etc.

9. The chronotopic function. PNs act in cinematic discourse as markers of temporal reference and designate where the action of the film takes place.

10. The prognostic function. When PNs are part of the title of a film (filmonym) or of an episode in a serial, they allow the audience to surmise the main theme, protagonists, tone, genre, and even the main plot of a cinematic work.

It is also important to note that, in discourse, these functions are implemented in a complex way, and a PN usually performs several functions at once, but there is often one leading function.

Results of the study

Types of precedent names. The conducted research has detected the use of the following types of precedent names in cinematic discourse: anthonyms, names of works of fiction, toponyms, numerals, and ship names.

1. Anthonyms occur more frequently than other types of onyms in cinematic discourse. For example: "*You have any idea the people who have walked on these boards before you? **Geraldine Page. Helen Hayes. Jason Robards. Marlon Brando.** And now Riggan Thomson*" (*Birdman or The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance*, 2014). The character lists famous actors who have played on the Broadway stage to accentuate the importance of an event in the life of another character, whose name he adds at the end.

In some cases, not just a name but an adjective derived from it is used. This is usually the case with PNs that have partially become common nouns. For example, the narrator says that it is impossible to know what was going on in the minds of the main characters: “*We can’t just snap into a **Shakespearean Soliloquy** that dramatises every feeling and emotion. That’s just not the way the world works*” (Vice, 2018). The characters then utter lines that are a stylised allusion to Shakespeare’s chronicles: “*My sweet Richard. Danc’d nimbly round the King’s heart thou hast. Even while clamoured I for more, more! Parched maw craned towards the drip, drip of imaginary waters. But I say to you now, rest, retire. Thou hast honoured thy vows to wife and crown*”. Here, an appeal to Shakespeare’s chronicles is made by a variety of means: archaic verb forms (*hath, hast*) and pronouns (*thou, thy*) are used; the character calls her husband Richard despite the fact that everyone is used to calling him Dick, which in this case refers to Richard III. Moreover, iambic pentameter, in which Shakespeare’s chronicles are written, is used. However, the central adjective is Shakespearean and the appeal is primarily to the PN, behind which there are several PTs. In this case, the name symbolizes the writer’s entire oeuvre with a focus on his historical chronicles, as the film deals with the themes of power, the desire for power and political intrigue.

In *The White Lotus* series (2021 – present): “*I come from a long line of cancerous, disease-prone men. It’s just very disturbing for it to be in my balls and for them to get so big like this. It’s very **Gogol***”. In this case, the precedent name Gogol is also used as an adjective, referring not just to the writer himself, but to grotesque situations from his works; we can even assume that the character is referring to the novel *The Nose*, in which a ridiculous and startling body transformation also occurs. However, the appeal is not to a PT or a PS, but to the PN of the writer.

2. The names of works of fiction – literary, cinematographic and musical – are also common. For example, the protagonist of the *Ted Lasso* series (2020–2023), while at a psychotherapy session, comments: “*It’s like we’re on an episode of **The Sopranos**, without all the gratuitous violence, which is a good thing. But a lot less spaghetti and clams too, which is a bad thing*”. In doing so, he draws the comparison with the attributes of the PT, *The Sopranos* series, but the central part is the PN, which is used to appeal to the PT, and in particular to the psychotherapy scenes from the series.

In the *Succession* series (2018–2023), one character refers to another who has recently got a position in a prestigious company: “***Talented Mr. Greg***”. Using a transformed PN (the filmonym *The Talented Mr. Ripley*), the speaker alludes to the film character, thus calling the new employee a fraud and an impostor, which the main character of the film *The Talented Mr. Ripley* also was. In this case, too, a PN of a character is used, and not just a PN, but a precedent name-filmonym, because such use adds an ironic tone (the speaker calls the employee *talented*, but does not consider him to be really capable of anything).

3. Noteworthy are the cases where toponyms are used as PNs, in particular the names of countries and cities, as well as the cases where the name of a company is used. For instance, in *Succession* one of the characters describes his father as “*a human **Saudi Arabia***”, thus saying that he is influential and can act independently. In another scene of the same series, a character’s father says “*Four more years – we’re **Procter and Gamble** of the news*”, using in this case the PN of the company to say that he is going to make his company, a media conglomerate, as big as the one he refers to.

4. The *Succession* series also contains the designation of a PS with the help of a date (a numeral): e.g. a character says that the atmosphere around her feels “*very **1933***”, referring to the year Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, which is a way of saying that she foresees something terrible.

5. There are also PNs of ship names, but this is not a common PN: the Titanic and the Mayflower are used the most: “*It doesn’t matter who you are, it doesn’t matter where you’re from! Whether your family came over on **the Mayflower** or on a f-cking inner tube from **Haiti!***” In this case, using the PN the Mayflower and the name of the island Haiti, the protagonist of *The Wolf of Wall Street* (2013) speaks of the origins and ancestry of his employees, stating that his brokerage house is a place for everybody, regardless of origin, whether the employee is a descendant of the Europeans who came to America or has come from one of the poorest countries in the world. The PN *the Titanic* is found in the following example from the *Hannibal* series (2013–2015): “*...a cocktail created by Escoffier. Served to first-class guests on **the Titanic** during their last dinner*”. In this case the appeal to the *Titanic* and the fate of its passengers is used to make

the audience draw an association between the fate of the characters (to whom Hannibal refers with this phrase) and the passengers of the *Titanic*: in the general context, knowing that the protagonist is a murderer, the audience expects the guests to die.

Source spheres. In the course of this study, the following source spheres have been identified: the social sphere (with subdivision into politics and history), the arts (with cinema and music as the most common ones), science and religion. In the films examined, the most productive source spheres are the sphere of art and the social sphere.

1. A prominent example of the use of PNs from the social sphere is *Succession*, which deals with business and politics, so the characters in the series use many PNs from such source spheres as politics, economy and war: “LOGAN: *Why shouldn't we do all the news?* / ROMAN: *Well, Kim Jong-pop, because that's not how the things work in this country*”. In this example, the character hints to his father that he is trying to become a media dictator if he wants to control the news on many channels. In another scene, while destroying documents that could bring the company into trouble with the law, the character utters: “*It feels like a Watergate sort of scenario and I never studied that specifically but I feel like...*”, referring to the Watergate scandal. In the scene when one of the characters learns that part of the board of directors is going to propose a vote of no confidence against the CEO, he utters the phrase: “*Troops are taking Saddam's Palace*”, using the PN *Saddam Hussein* and thus comparing the CEO to Saddam Hussein and referring to the military conflict in Iraq.

2. The field of art is the most productive one: the names of works of art, characters, writers, musicians, actors, etc. are often used in cinematic discourse. For example, the protagonist of the *Ted Lasso* series often uses PNs of musicians and directors for comparisons: “*Ice cream is the best. It's kinda like seeing Billy Joel perform live. Never disappoints*”; “*You beating yourself up is like Woody Allen playing the clarinet. I don't want to hear it*”; “*I hope y'all drank a lot of water today 'cause y'all are gonna be so dehydrated, that you're gonna look like one of them trees from a, from a Tim Burton movie*”. There are also references to PNs from folklore, and particularly to the Cinderella story: the story of the football team from the series is compared to “*the Cinderella story*” several times.

In *Ford vs. Ferrari* (2019), a character shows images of Sophia Loren, Monica Vitti, Steve McQueen and a scene from a *James Bond* film to prove the prestige of racing and the marketing potential of the participation in racing for the Ford company. In this case, PNs from cinema symbolize prestige and a rich life. The verbal use of PNs is amplified with the use of images.

The creolized nature of cinematic discourse allows to refer to PNs in various ways, not only through verbal and visual means: for example, references to PNs from the source sphere of music are often made not only by mentioning the music piece itself, but also by including the composition in the film's soundtrack. For example, in *Tár* (2022), the main character mentions a moment from the ballet *The Rite of Spring* by Igor Stravinsky discussing the nature of murder, and the piece from the ballet is used in the film. The filmonym *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery* contains the PN of the musical composition “Glass Onion”, which has partly become an idiomatic expression, denoting something obvious that is presented as a mystery or seems mysterious. The song is also played during the closing credits of the film.

3. The sphere of science is not as productive as the sphere of art, but notable examples of the use of PNs from physics and chemistry can be found in *The Big Bang Theory* series (2007–2019). For example, a character apologizes to his neighbour in this form: “*Penny, just as Oppenheimer came to regret his contributions to the first atomic bomb... so too I regret my participation in what was... at the very least, an error in judgment*”, referring to the creator of the atomic bomb. Further, he makes another reference to the discoverer of radium: “*Some mistakes, such as Madame Curie's discovery of radium, turned out to have great scientific potential even though she would later die a slow, painful death from radiation poisoning*”.

There are several examples of PNs from the sphere of history: in *The Office* (2005–2013), a character compares his colleagues to the Founding Fathers and merges character names with historical figures: “*If the people here were our Founding Fathers, the Revolutionary War would have been delayed 10 years because Stanley Washington was napping. And Phyllis Hancock was still signing the Declaration, and*

Kevin Jefferson was distracted by a butterfly". In this case, PNs of historical figures and the name of the historical event are used. In *Succession*, in the scene where the characters are trying to change the head of the company by a vote of the board of directors, one of them compares it to the "*storming of the Bastille*".

4. The central religious text of Western culture is the Bible, so most PNs of the source sphere of religion are primarily associated with the PT of the Bible. PNs can be used to reinforce the serious tone of a scene. For example, a character of the *Hannibal* series uses PNs to emphasise the importance of his words: "*Sermon-on-the-Mount important. Ten-Commandments important*". However, PNs from the Bible can also be used to create a comic effect: "*When Mary was denied a room at the inn, Jesus was born. When Michael was denied a room at the inn, we don't know what happens because that story hasn't been told yet*". In this case, a character of *The Office* uses the PNs *Mary* and *Jesus*, referring to the PS of the birth of Jesus Christ, and compares it with an everyday situation. It is also worth noting that films with the filmonym *Babylon* have been nominated twice for The Academy Awards: in 2007 and in 2023.

As it can be seen, the source spheres depend on the subject matter of the film, but it can be argued that the art sphere and the social sphere are the most productive ones.

Functions. Based on the material analysed, the pragmatic, evaluative, aesthetic, cryptographic, ludic, euphemistic, image, structural, chronotopic, and prognostic functions of PNs have been singled out. The most frequent functions in the films examined are the ludic and the evaluative ones. The following examples illustrate these functions of PNs.

1. The pragmatic function. An example of this function is a situation when a character wants to convince another character of his point of view, and so uses a PN as an appeal to an authority: in *Tár*, the main character complains about her writer's block, while her interlocutor refers to Mozart and Beethoven and their works: "*ANDRIS: It's all pastiche. We all have the same musical grammar. Just look at Beethoven Five. The third movement's theme has the same sequence of intervals as the opening theme of the final movement of Mozart forty. <...> If you examine the sketchbooks he used, twenty-nine bars of Mozart's finale appear, copied out by Beethoven*". He argues that even the great composers borrowed what other great composers had already created, so you cannot make anything unique without using something old.

2. The evaluative function. Often, characters use PNs to evaluate other characters: "*But then there's this new guy. Very cool, very Will Smith-esque...*" (*The Office*). The character of the series utters this phrase to express his admiration for the new boss, while using a nonce word *Will Smith-esque*, which emphasises his attitude.

"*He is good, he is my little R-2 unit*" (*Succession*). In this case, the character utters this phrase after changing his mind about his employee, believing that he will be as useful as the robotic helper R2-D2 from the *Star Wars* movie saga.

"*Baby Jane over there...*" (*The White Lotus*). By comparing a woman to a character from the film *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, the speaker expresses a contemptuous assessment, as the heroine he is comparing to Baby Jane seems to him just as ridiculous, inadequate and creepy.

"*Did you see how fast she moved? ... Like a little female Jewish Jesse Owens*" (*Jojo Rabbit*, 2019). In this case, the phrase is uttered by Hitler, which adds to the irony, since the African-American athlete Jesse Owens won the 1938 Olympics in front of Hitler. Thus, on the one hand, the character's agility is humorously appreciated, but on the other hand, given the context and the speaker's personality, the viewer understands that this evaluation is based on contempt for both the character and the athlete.

3. The aesthetic function. In the film *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once* (2022), the heroine travels through different parallel universes. The creators use several PNs to represent these parallel worlds. For example, they use the transformed title of the cartoon *Ratatouille* – "*Raccacoonie*", which is based on a pun: the heroine confused which animal is involved in the cartoon (a raccoon instead of a rat). As the story progresses, it turns out that there is a universe where the plot of the original cartoon is reproduced, but a raccoon is involved. The name of the leading actress itself is a precedent one, because in one of the parallel universes, the heroine is an actress, and to illustrate her life path the film uses footage from her real life and scenes from the movies with Michelle Yeoh. In this way, with the help of PNs, the creators construct fantasy worlds that contain familiar elements.

In the animated series *BoJack Horseman* (2014–2020), PNs are used to create a world of anthropomorphic characters: many PNs are transformed and contain puns related to the animal theme, e.g. “*Twin Beaks*” instead of *Twin Peaks*, “*Emu Thurman*” instead of Uma Thurman (and her ex-husband Ethan Hawke, whose name was not changed as it sounds similar to hawk), “*A Bleatcar Named Desire*” instead of *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

4. The cryptographic function. In cinematic discourse, it is performed as an appeal to the past works of directors, screenwriters, and actors included in new works. If viewers manage to decipher the appeal to such PNs, they feel a sense of belonging to a group (in this case, fans of the director, actor, etc.). For example, *Succession* contains references to the sitcom *Peep Show*: these series share the same author, Jesse Armstrong. One of the secondary characters in both shows is named *Stefan Strauss*. This name is a precedent for a narrow audience, which is closely familiar with these shows.

5. The ludic function. This function is carried out in various ways.

(a) A combination of puns and PNs, and puns based on PNs: “*Well, fellas, I am more stumped than Paul Bunyan’s local forest*” (*Ted Lasso*). In this example, the protagonist uses the participle *stumped*, meaning baffled and formed from the root *stump*. Paul Bunyan is a hero of American folklore, a lumberjack, so not only the meaning of the participle, but also the inner form of the word *stumped* is actualized. The other example includes one of the characters, who appears dressed as the David Bowie character *Ziggy Stardust*. Another character says, “*Let me guess... Piggy Stardust*”, to which he replies, “*Rashers to rashers, oink to oinky*”, humorously referencing “*Ashes to ashes, dust to dust*”. The transformed PN of *Ziggy Stardust* is amplified by a visual reference to the character’s appearance and a transformed precedent utterance.

(b) Mixing different source spheres of PNs: “*He’s like Mozart and I’m like Mozart’s friend. No, I’m like Butch Cassidy, and Michael is like Mozart. You try and hurt Mozart, you’re gonna get a bullet in your head, courtesy of Butch Cassidy*” (*The Office*). In this example, the character uses the PN from the source spheres of music (*Mozart*) and crime (*Butch Cassidy*).

(c) Incorrect use of PNs can also be a way to create comic effect: “*GARY LINAKER: It was moment after moment like this. A real David versus Goliath match, but where Goliath just curb-stomped David in the back of the skull like in that Ed Norton movie. / THIERRY HENRY: Moonrise Kingdom? / GARY LINAKER: I think that’s it, yeah, man. / THIERRY HENRY: Yeah. Well, for me, the match was a real Cinderella story. If her glass slipper broke and sliced her Achilles tendon*” (*Ted Lasso*). In this case, journalists use several PNs at once to describe the success of a football team, not only mixing up the source spheres (the Bible, cinema and folklore), but also using a PN incorrectly. The characters wrongly ascribe an episode from one film (*American History X*) to another film (*Moonrise Kingdom*). The comic effect is produced by incongruity: the first film is about neo-Nazis, while the second one is about the love of two teenagers, and the only thing uniting them is the PN of Edward Norton.

(d) Incorrect use of the form of a PN: “*COLM: Do you know who we remember for how nice they were in the 17th century? Yet we all remember the music of the time. Everyone, to a man, knows Mozart’s name. / PADRAIC: Well, I don’t, so there goes that theory. <...> I don’t give a feck about Mozart, or Borvoven, or any of them funny name feckers*” (*The Banshees of Inisherin*, 2022). In this case, one of the characters is engrossed in the music, while the other cannot pronounce Beethoven’s name correctly, which is used as a way to defuse the tense dialogue. A less obvious detail is that the musician incorrectly refers to Mozart as a 17th century composer.

(e) Rhyming combinations containing PNs: “*Bingo, Ringo!*”; “*Now don’t you fret, Boba Fett*”; “*What’s the word, Larry Bird*”; “*Yes sir, Steve Kerr*”, etc. (*Ted Lasso*). The main character of the series uses PNs to create a positive playful atmosphere, yet the PNs do not carry any meaning in the context of the dialogues and are only used because of the rhyme.

6. The euphemistic function. PNs performing this function are used to soften a statement: the speaker does not pronounce an insult or obscenity, and the message remains disguised. For example, in the animated series *BoJack Horseman*, the main character’s mother describes her son’s work with the phrase “*Well, it wasn’t Ibsen*”, thus saying that he has no such talent as Henrik Ibsen. In the series *Mad-*

men (2007–2015), a character invites the wife of an acquaintance to an event: “*Ride the horse in, like Lady Godiva*”. He knows that the woman is an equestrian, but apparently also refers to the fact that, in the legend, Lady Godiva rode a horse with no clothes on.

7. The image function. PNs that a character uses in speech can tell about his hobbies, for example, the protagonist of the *Ted Lasso* series often uses the names of musicals: *West Side Story*, *Oklahoma*, *Once*. In other cases, the incorrect use of the PN indicates that the character is uneducated: “*It’s like Jaws if everyone in Jaws worked for Jaws*”. In this case, a character in *Succession* thinks that the shark’s name in the movie *Jaws* is Jaws. This function of PNs serves as a tool for portraying characters’ interests, education, background, occupation and social status.

8. The structural function. PNs can be a means to build composition and to structure the storyline of a film. In *Breaking Bad* (2008–2013), the episode considered to be the climax of the whole series is called “Ozymandias”, referring to Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poem about the futility of striving for power. The episode recounts the final stages of the protagonist’s ruined life. In this case, the PN reinforces the meaning of the climax.

9. The chronotopic function. PNs recreate the atmosphere and the features of cultural and historical development of a certain period and place (city, country). In the film *Licorice Pizza* (2021), the PN of Jon Peters is used, while other PNs are slightly transformed (“*Lucille Doolittle*” instead of Lucille Ball and “*Jack Holden*” instead of William Holden). These personalities are associated with the period of the 1970s and with Los Angeles; by using them in the film, the author recreates the cultural atmosphere of that time.

10. The prognostic function. This function is particularly evident in filmonyms and episode titles: for instance, the episodes of the cartoon series *Rick and Morty* (2013 – present) are transformed PNs: “*Lawnmower Dog*” (instead of *The Lawnmower Man*), “*Total Rickall*” (instead of *Total Recall*), “*Rick Potion #9*” (instead of *Love Potion #9*), “*The Rickshank Rickdemption*” (instead of *The Shawshank Redemption*). Generally, the episode titles give the audience a clue as to what the episode is about: e.g. in “*Lawnmower Dog*”, one of the main characters artificially increases the intelligence of a dog, while *The Lawnmower Man* is about a scientist who artificially increases the intelligence of a mentally challenged man.

However, the prognostic function is not only observed in the filmonyms and episode titles. *The White Lotus* has a detective element, posing the questions “Who is the killer?” and “Who is the victim?” to the viewers. The series contains several clues for the audience to answer the questions in advance. Some of the clues include PNs: one of the characters says to the heroine, “...*after hearing the story of your love life, we decided you were like a tragic heroine in a Puccini opera*”. Giacomo Puccini’s operas such as *Madama Butterfly* and *Tosca* end up with the death of the female protagonists. Another scene features the following dialogue between the same heroine and a hotel manager: “*TANYA: I’m Monica Vitti. / VALENTINA: Monica Vitti’s dead, but yes*”. It is noteworthy that the characters appeal to the PN of Monica Vitti, but in the first case the character focuses on the actress’s distinctive features such as her appearance and Italian origins (the second season of *The White Lotus* takes place in Italy), while in the second case the hotel manager’s use of PN emphasises the fact that Monica Vitti is already dead. Thus, with the help of PNs, the protagonist is compared several times to women who have died, which serves as a foreshadowing of her own death.

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the study.

1. PNs are often used to appeal to PTs and PSs, and there are also cases of using an author’s PN to appeal to the author’s entire oeuvre. In some cases, the use of PNs is accompanied by an appeal to the PN’s attributes and distinctive characteristics, with the help of audial and visual means, but the PN, most often an anthroponym, is central.

2. The most productive source sphere of PNs is art, in particular cinema and music. Nevertheless, this criterion depends on the specific cinematic work that is analysed, as the themes dealt with in the film are of particular importance.

3. The functions of PNs in cinematic discourse can be studied from different perspectives: the role of PNs in the interactions between the characters of a film, the importance of PNs for the artistic integrity of a film, and the use of PNs as a way to build a connection between the author and the audience. Image and chronotopic functions are of particular interest for sociolinguistic studies, as these help to depict characters from different social groups and to highlight social trends of specific historical periods.

4. PNs that have occurred several times, such as Mozart, Monica Vitti, Babylon, and Marlon Brando, are also worthy of special attention. In addition, we can notice that there are many examples of the use of PNs in TV series such as *Succession*, *Ted Lasso* and *The Office*. This can be explained not only by the difference in the running time (a series, naturally, is usually longer than a feature film), but also by the desire to get closer to everyday-life discourse (*The Office* belongs to the subgenre of mockumentary, and *Succession* contains elements of documentary-style cinematography). Moreover, genre features and an individual style of a filmmaker play a special role, which could be the subject of a separate study.

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