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**Key words:** political discourse, socio-political vocabulary, realia, borrowings.

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### **Melodrama Dialogues in American Cinematic Discourse**

The article presents an attempt to analyze film dialogue in American melodrama, classify American melodramas as loosely connected group of texts on the bases of their topical, semantic and stylistic markers, define the functions of dialogue in melodramas and effects of interaction between expression and repression on the melodramatic texts in American cinematic discourse.

**Key words:** melodrama, cinematic discourse, film dialogue, melodramatic mode.

Melodramas have long been associated with women viewers and excessive talk. Although the genre's special variety of dialogue sometimes comes up, few film scholars have given the topic their full attention. This may be because so much of their emphasis has been focused on illustrating the ways in which the genre covertly formulates a «devastating critique of the ideology that supports it» [3, p. 85]. «Reading against the grain» of the films, exploring the texts' freighted contradictions in terms of their portrayals of social class, sexuality, and gender roles, results in scholars themselves sabotaging the language of love – that is, questioning and ironizing the sentiments so baldly expressed in these texts. Peter Brooks's study of theatrical melodramas and their influence on the novel is the only source that takes dialogue in melodrama seriously [2].

The definition of melodrama as genre is quite contested. According to Robert Lang: *Courtship, marriage and family as major preoccupations of bourgeois society, found their way into almost every film made, and when they were the main subject of a movie, the movie was (and is) generally and simply called a melodrama* [6, p. 49]. This use of the term, however, has been criticized by Russell Merritt and Rick Altman [7, p. 24–31; 1, p. 24–33].

The melodramatic mode has actually deeply influenced all of American cinema [9]. While the melodramas of the 1930s and 1940s often featured a female star and were told from her perspective, the 1950s were an era of «family melodramas» that focused on a larger group of characters, including males, such as Nicholas Ray's *Rebel without a Cause* [32], Douglas Sirk's *Written on the Wind* [49], and Vincente Minnelli's *Some Came Running* [36]. Melodrama's development after 1960 has not been thoroughly studied. During the past five decades, melodramas have varied widely, but the challenge of the illness or death of a loved one has remained a particularly popular formula, as in *Love Story* [26], *Beaches* [13], and *Longtime Companion* [25]. So too has the costume/historical setting, often in the guise of an adaptation of a prestigious novel, witness *The Color Purple* [41] and *Out of Africa* [30].

In this article we will focus our attention on film dialogue in melodramas in American cinematic discourse. American melodrama privileges one possible function of film dialogue, a particular variety of character revelation – the open discussion of emotions [2, p. 41]. The desire to express all seems a fundamental characteristic of the melodramatic mode. Nothing is spared because nothing is left unsaid; the characters stand on stage and utter the unspeakable, give voice to their deepest feelings, dramatize through their heightened and polarized words and gestures the whole lesson of their relationship [2, 4].

Thus, in *Camille* [15] after witnessing the wedding of their friends, Armand and Marguerite have the following exchange:

*Armand: You mean you'd give up everything for me?*

*Marguerite: Everything in the world. Everything. Never be jealous again. Never doubt that I love you more than the world, more than myself.*

*Armand: Then marry me.*

*Marguerite: What?*

*Armand: I married you today. Every word the priest said was meant for us. In my heart I made all the vows. To you –*

*Marguerite: – and I to you.*

*Armand: Then ...*

*Marguerite: No, no, that isn't fitting. Let me love you, let me live for you, but don't let me ask any more from heaven than that. God might get angry [15].*

And it is not just love that is so boldly spoken. In *Leave Her to Heaven* [23], Ellen directly admits her feelings toward her unborn child: *I hate the little beast. I wish it would die.* In *Shanghai Express* [34], Madeline talks openly to Captain Harvey about her own trustworthiness: *When I needed your faith, you withheld it. And now, when I don't need it and don't deserve it, you give it to me.*

Cathy's blatant avowal of identity with Heathcliff, in the excerpt from *Wuthering Heights* [50], is thus not unique to that film but characteristic of the whole genre. Characters in these films are not embarrassed to declare their love, their devotion, or their reasons for living. According to Brooks, melodramas portray a victory over psychological repression [2, p. 41].

Dialogue in melodramas functions to reveal feelings, and it does so through a heightened, even overblown, rhetorical style. Marguerite cannot say, as Gershwin's lover does, *I'm stuck on you, sweetie pie*; she has to say, *Never doubt that I love you more than the world, more than myself.* Doctor Steele in *Dark Victory* [17] tells Judith Treherne: *I want you to find peace. Tragic difference is that you know when you are going to die and we don't. But the important thing is the same for all of us: to live our lives so that we can meet death, whenever it comes. Beautifully, finely [17].*

In *The English Patient* [42], Count Almásy, claims that because of the death of his lover, *You can't kill me. I died years ago.* Melodramatic rhetoric tends toward the inflated and the sententious. Its typical figures are hyperbole, antithesis, and oxymoron: those figures, precisely, that evidence a refusal of nuance and the insistence on dealing in pure, integral concepts.

Dialogue in melodramas is ornate, literary, charged with metaphor. In *Stella Dallas* [38], trying to describe Helen's upper-class grace to her mother, Laurel calls her *a flower in Maine.* In *An Affair to Remember* [12], Terry and Nickie realize that this may be their last chance for love: *Winter must be cold for those with no warm memories, We've already missed the spring [12].* They decide to reunite on the top of the Empire State Building, because the skyscraper *is the nearest thing to Heaven we have in New York [12].*

Melodramatic rhetoric is so distinctive that one can recognize it easily when it migrates to other genres. *Network* [28] is a black social satire, yet the famous scene in which Louise Scumacher, a cast-aside wife, lambastes her husband's selfishness gains its power from its resort to the language of melodrama – direct revelation of emotional states, coupled with its charged metaphors: *This is your great winter romance, isn't it? Your last roar of passion before you settle into your emeritus years. Is that what's left for me? Is that my share? She gets the winter passion, and I get the dotage? What am I supposed to do? Am I supposed to sit home knitting and purling while you slink back like some penitent drunk? I'm your wife, damn it! And if you can't work up a winter passion for me, the least I require is respect and allegiance! I hurt! Don't you understand that? I hurt badly! [28].*

During the 1930s and 1940s, upper-class, “transatlantic” diction and phraseology held sway. Most of the characters are supposed to be well-off, socially prominent, perhaps even foreign aristocrats. British actors and British accents are legion: Clive Brooks stars in [34], Herbert Marshall in *Blonde Venus* [14], Leslie Howard in *Intermezzo* [21], Joan Fontaine in *Rebecca* [31], Greer Garson in *Random Harvest* [33], James Mason in *The Seventh Veil* [44]. These characters rarely resort to slang or informal speech. Rather than representing contemporary urban vibrancy, their roles are deliberately set in past eras; formal or antiquated speech patterns predominate. The fact that many of these films are adaptations of nineteenth-century novels and plays intensifies their tendency to use «dated», as opposed to contemporary, phraseology.

In later decades, ethnic and lower-class accents become more common, as in Elia Kazan's *A Streetcar Named Desire* [10], but upper-class speech is still notable in melodramas, as are British performers, witness *Shadowlands* [35]. Moreover, since the 1950s, numerous melodramas have been set in the South and Texas. Southern accents can be heard to varying degrees in *Written on the Wind* [49], *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* [16], *The Long Hot Summer* [43], *Home from the Hill* [18], and *Steel Magnolias* [37]. The Southern accents operate similarly to «transatlantic» and British diction, in that they have a “dated” aura and bring to mind a past of landed aristocracy.

Melodramas are marked not only by a certain style of dialogue, but by talkativeness. The drama of melodramas lies primarily in the development of interpersonal relationships – there are few, if any, scenes of silent physical action. On-screen time is devoted to discussing the characters' feelings or decisions – melodramas convey the sense of a «debating society» where the action lies in the thrashing out of contesting viewpoints, or even in philosophical discussions of the nature of love or duty. And since physical movement – in the sense of chases on horseback, machine-gun shoot-outs, and even slapstick pratfalls – is generally denied, these films' excitement lies in their dialogue exchanges, which recurrently enact a suspenseful jockeying for power. In American cinematic discourse melodramas actually hinge around the not said, the words that cannot be spoken.

In most melodramas, the driving tension of the plot stems from one character keeping some secret, a secret that the viewer knows. But the characters don't have the benefit of our wise perspective. Sometimes they find out at the story's end; sometimes they never know. In the absence of such crucial information, the characters blunder around in the dark, doing and saying the most terrible things. In no other genre is the viewer's superior knowledge of the narrative so influential in our understanding of the double-layering behind individual speeches. Melodramatic dialogue is suffused with the tension and pathos of dramatic irony.

Generally the need for secrecy is explained by: 1) the impossibility/undesirability of going against social mores regarding illegitimacy, sexuality, divorce, or social class; or 2) the willingness of the secret holder to sacrifice herself for another's good, or 3) the secret holder's belief that love or recognition has to come completely unbidden, granted without prompting. Frequently, the pressures are conflated, so that in *Camille* [15], Marguerite gives up Armand because it would be better for him, because of the pressures of bourgeois respectability. These films thus clearly lend themselves to interpretations seeing them as supporters of conventional morality, as parables of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation for women.

Viewers knowledge about the secret, and viewers identification with the characters, creates great suspense and an almost physical release from the sensation of choking as when, at the very last second of *To Each His Own* [47], the light dawns on Jody's (somewhat dense) son and he approaches her, *I think this is our dance, Mother* [47]. Yet in a significant number of texts, the silence is never broken on-screen. In *Stella Dallas* [38] melodrama's thematic work is actually completed off-screen – that is, we viewers are the ones called upon to recognize and admire the heroine's quiet virtue and self-sacrifice.

The struggle between expression and repression has had numerous effects on the filmic texts. Music plays a particularly large role in supplementing dialogue in melodramas in American cinematic discourse. In this genre, scoring is particularly likely to be used under conversation as *music appears in classical cinema as a signifier of emotion... Music is seen as augmenting the external representation, the objectivity of the image-track, with its inner truth* [4, p. 79]. Music speaks the love the characters cannot express, or the pain they are trying to hide. In *All That Heaven Allows* [11], when Cary gives in to the pressure exerted by her children and goes to break off with her lover, Ron, the sound track sadly plays a *D flat minor Schumann* melody from the Opus 12 *Fantasiestücke* titled *Warum?*

Melodramas have their own hallmark «sotto voce» scenes where the character's real meaning is spoken only under his or her breath, illustrating the extent to which speech is rendered impossible in certain situations. Thus, in *Imitation of Life* [20] when Annie has traced her runaway daughter, Sarah Jane, to her hotel room Sarah Jane's showgirl friend bursts in, and, because Annie is black and Sarah Jane has been passing for white, the showgirl mistakes Annie for the hotel maid. Sarah Jane does love her mother and does want to acknowledge her, but she is in full flight from a society that immediately assumes that any black woman must be a maid or a Mammy. To maintain her ability to pass as white among her acquaintances and co-workers she must cooperate with the fiction that her mother was her servant. These irreconcilable pressures lead to the sotto voce «Mama», a word that has to be spoken but cannot be spoken out loud.

Moreover, it is partially because of the pressure between speech and silence that women's films are so particularly prone to use voice-over narration. As *Letter from an Unknown Woman* [24] so clearly illuminates, the pressure to make oneself known, which may be blocked on the level of inter-character conversation, may surface at the level of voice-over speech to the eavesdropper-viewer. Stefan Brand does not know Lisa until the film's final moments, but the viewers have recognized her all along.

The use of dialogue for speaking explicitly about feelings among the characters is equally marked in American melodramas. In *Now, Voyager* [29] Dr. Jaquith boldly tells Charlotte's mother: *My dear Mrs. Vale, if you had deliberately and maliciously planned to destroy your daughter's life, you couldn't have done it more completely.* Charlotte tells Jerry about her past: *I'm the fat lady with the heavy brows and all of the hair. I'm poor Aunt Charlotte. And I've been ill. I have been in a sanitarium for three months. And I'm not well yet* [29].

The most salient point of contrast between *Terms of Endearment* [39] and 1940s women's films is the openness about sex. The lovers' desire for each other is what cannot be known, cannot be shown, and cannot be spoken, although it may be hinted at by numerous indirect means [2]. The language is equally uninhibited, from Flap's calling Emma his "*sweet-ass gal*," to Emma's discussion of how wet Flap makes her, to Garrett's reference to Aurora curtsying on his face. Much of the film's comedy stems from its sexual references and scenes; Jack Nicholson's trademark wolfishness is heavily exploited. Aurora says things like: *I'm totally convinced if you marry Flap Horton tomorrow, it will be a mistake of such gigantic proportions it will ruin your life and make wretched your destiny; .....Grown women are prepared for life's little emergencies, .....I think that is extremely rude, noticing other women when you're with me; .....A moth to flame. This affair is going to kill me* [39].

Whereas we accept such rhetoric in classic women's films because it is the norm there, here, because Aurora is shown to be out of step with everyone else, the elevated diction sparks laughs. As the film progresses, Aurora is brought down off her verbal high horse, to the point where she adopts a phrase of Garrett's about how *fan-fuck-ing-tastic* sex can be [39].

The film's male characters also have difficulty finding the terms of endearment. In their farewell on the airport sidewalk, Aurora casually tells Garrett she loves him, and he departs into the terminal, but Aurora calls him back for an answer to her declaration.

*Aurora: I was curious. Do you have any reaction at all to my telling you I love you?*

*Garrett: (A sardonic aside) I was just inches from a clean getaway.*

*Aurora: Well, you're stuck. So face it.*

*Garrett: I don't know what else to say except my stock answer.*

*Aurora: Which is?*

*Garrett: I love you too, kid* [39].

*Terms of Endearment* is hardly the only film of recent decades to mix melodrama and comedy. *Steel Magnolias* [37] presents a similar *mélange*, as do *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* [19], *Why Did I Get Married Too* [48], *Jumping the Broom* [22], *Think Like a Man* [45] and many others. Kathleen Rowe argues that romantic comedy and melodrama are shadow genres to one another [8, p. 112].

What makes genres fascinating is the way they change. The alterations in the status of women, the relative acceptability of divorce and single parenting, have made the plots of the women's films of the 1930s and 1940s impossible nowadays, and the overall trends toward informality, explicit sexuality, and cynicism have rendered the emotional dialogue of *Camille* or *Now, Voyager* problematic. As Barbara Klinger points out, because of their romanticism and their stylistic excess, older melodramas have become fodder for camp readings, [5, p. 132–156] and a camp sensibility finds it impossible to take such dialogue straight.

But this style of dialogue is still allowed to surface in costume films and adaptations, such as *The Age of Innocence* [40], where the time period requires that a grand passion suffer barriers and repression or *The English Patient* (Anthony Minghella 1996), in which Hannah tells Almasy: *I always wear it [the thimble]. I've always worn it. I've always loved you.* Melodramatic dialogue gives *Titanic* [46] the over-the-top romanticism that made the blockbuster so satisfying to young girls.

*Moonstruck* [27] is an attempt to condemn melodrama's model of female self-sacrifice in favor of the more progressive approach of comedy. Kathleen Rowe is attracted to this film's blatant alternation of the two modes, with the triumph here not of the melodramatic, as in *Terms of Endearment* [39], but of the comic.

Thus, dialogue in American melodrama functions to reveal feelings; melodramatic rhetoric tends toward the inflated and the sententious, its typical figures being hyperbole, antithesis, and oxymoron;

dialogue is ornate, literary, charged with metaphor. In American cinematic discourse melodramas are marked not only by a certain style of dialogue, but by talkativeness and there are few, if any, scenes of silent physical action. Melodramas, which are so logophilic, so unrepressed in terms of their extravagant and naked rhetoric, actually continually dramatize the repression of speech, the impossibility of using words to gain one's desire or to win recognition. The struggle between expression and repression has had numerous effects on the filmic texts.

All in all in American melodramas dialogue keeps on changing with times featuring diverse semantic, topical and stylistic parameters, the integration of dialogue with the rest of the filmic text being apparent.

To our mind, further research of melodrama dialogue in American cinematic discourse from cultural perspective looks very promising.

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**Ніколенко Андрій** Діалоги жанру мелодрами в американському кінодискурсі. У статті зроблено спробу проаналізувати мовний ряд американської мелодрами, дати класифікацію американської мелодрами як слабо пов'язаних між собою груп текстів через призму тематичних, семантичних і стилістичних маркерів і визначити функції діалогу в мелодрамах, а також вивчити ефекти взаємодії між виразом і репресією на

кінематографічні тексти мелодрами в дискурсі американського ігрового кіно. Аналіз американської мелодрами показав, що мовний ряд у таких кінофільмах у дискурсі американського ігрового кіно виконує функцію розкриття почуттів; мелодраматична риторика прагне до завищеної і повчальної тональності, використовуючи такі фігури мови, як гіпербола, антитеза, оксюморон. Кіноперсонажі в дискурсі американської мелодрами характеризуються красномовством, рясним використанням літературної мови і метафоричної мови.

**Ключові слова:** мелодрама, кінодискурс, діалог кінофільму, мелодраматичний стиль.

**Николенко Андрей. Диалоги жанра мелодрамы в американском кинодискурсе.** В статье сделана попытка проанализировать речевой ряд американской мелодрамы, дать классификацию американской мелодрамы как слабосвязанных между собой групп текстов сквозь призму тематических, семантических и стилистических маркеров и определить функции диалога в мелодрамах, а также изучить эффекты взаимодействия между выражением и репрессией на кинематографические тексты мелодрамы в дискурсе американского игрового кино. Анализ американской мелодрамы показал, что речевой ряд в таких кинофільмах в дискурсе американского игрового кино выполняет функцию раскрытия чувств; мелодраматическая риторика стремится к завышенной и нравоучительной тональности, используя такие фигуры речи, как гипербола, антитеза, оксюморон. Киноперсонажи в дискурсе американской мелодрамы характеризуются красноречием, обильным использованием литературного языка и метафорической речи.

**Ключевые слова:** мелодрама, кинодискурс, диалог кинофильма, мелодраматический стиль.

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*Ніна Печко*

### **Дискурсні передумови неадекватного розуміння пропозиційного змісту**

У статті досліджено інтерпретаційні відхилення в англомовному дискурсі. Автор аналізує причини непорозуміння пропозиційного змісту, зумовлені дискурсно-релевантними чинниками, а саме: формою дискурсу, змістовою організацією та супутніми лінгвокогнітивними чинниками. Розглянуто різні випадки непорозуміння пропозиційного змісту, пов'язані з якісним та кількісним відтворенням цього смислового елемента в ментальній реальності інтерпретатора, і здійснено спробу типології таких випадків.

**Ключові слова:** дискурс, інтерпретація, непорозуміння, пропозиційний зміст, ментальна репрезентація, імпліцитність, інформаційна недостатність.

**Постановка наукової проблеми та її значення.** Дослідження засад інтерпретаційної діяльності належить до базових проблем сучасної *когнітивної* лінгвістики. Тому ідея з'ясування механізму розуміння та інтерпретації дискурсу має велику передісторію й характеризується різновекторністю та багатоаспектністю вчень (Г. І. Богін, В. Г. Борботько, Т. К. Виноградов, Б. Л. Юмдін, О. С. Кубрякова, В. В. Красних, Н. А. Шехтман, М. Dascal, R. Gibbs, G. Green, D. Sperber й ін.). Водночас новітня методологія, сформована сучасними концепціями лінгвокогнітивного та дискурсного напрямів, створила належні умови для ґрунтового аналізу *інтерпретації* як комунікативно-когнітивного явища, та його негативного вияву – *непорозуміння*. Останній трактуємо як певний тип інтерпретації дискурсу, у результаті якого реципієнт отримує неповну або неправильну репрезентативну модель мовленнєвого повідомлення.

**Мета** цієї розвідки – окреслити основні дискурсні характеристики, що призводять до неадекватного відтворення *пропозиційного змісту* (ПЗ) адресатом, скласти типологію таких випадків на матеріалі англомовних художніх творів.

**Виклад основного матеріалу й обґрунтування отриманих результатів дослідження.** Основною дискурсною ознакою, що призводить до непорозуміння, є низький інформаційний потенціал пропо-