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## Patterns of dispreferred verbal disagreement in dialogues from American and Serbian films<sup>1</sup>

Starting from the definition of verbal disagreement as a dispreferred second turn in a conversation, this paper aims at establishing the predominant patterns of such comments and answers found in a selection of dialogues from three American and three Serbian films. The dialogues were extracted from the scripts of the US films *Crash* (Paul Haggis, 2004), *Noel* (Chazz Palminteri, 2004) and *Playing by Heart* (Willard Carroll, 1998), as well as of the Serbian titles *Žena sa slomljenim nosom* (Srđan Koljević, 2010), *Ljubav i drugi zločini* (Stefan Arsenijević, 2008) and *Bure baruta* (Goran Paskaljević, 1998). Characterized by the interlocutor's action-environment restriction and an inherent involvement of conflict and clash of interests, a verbal oppositional stance may take the form of a straightforward disagreement or it may be mitigated, so as to avoid or soften the effects of a more direct disagreeing comment. When it comes to mitigation, various downtoning strategies are applied in order to weaken the force of a dispreferred assessment. This leads to a broad division of disagreements into mitigated and unmitigated ones, whose distribution in the six films will be described and analysed in this paper. The scripts of the three American and three Serbian films lend themselves well to comparison of the kind, since the plots have many features in common (turn-of-the-millennium urban setting, interwoven stories and characters with deep social and psychological traumas burdening their lives). By means of describing

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and exemplifying certain patterns of verbal disagreement in the comparable contexts of the chosen films, applying the method of qualitative analysis, the paper aims at comparing and contrasting various aspects of the phenomenon at the more general levels of the two languages (English and Serbian) and their two cultures (American and Serbian).

**Key words:** dispreferred verbal disagreement; face-threatening act; mitigated disagreement; mitigating strategy; straightforward disagreement; directness; indirectness; individualistic culture; integrative culture.

## 1. Introduction

Linguistically expressed *disagreement* in oral communication, defined as “a verbal oppositional stance to an antecedent verbal (or non-verbal) action” (Kakavá 1993: 36), typically restricts the addressee’s action environment by creating “a slot in which an answer to the subject of the disagreement is expected” (Locher 2004: 94). In addition to the addressee’s action-environment restriction, disagreement is characterized by inherent involvement of conflict and clash of interests, as well as a more or less obvious exercise of power on the part of the speaker.

Authors in the fields of pragmatics and discourse analysis, especially those involved in politeness studies, mostly agree on viewing disagreement as one of the least desirable reactions – second turns – to the interlocutor’s assessment (e.g. Leech 1983; Pomerantz 1984; Brown and Levinson 1987; Holmes 1995; Locher 2004). The preference structure of agreement seen as preferred and disagreement as dispreferred is, in fact, “the one in effect and operative for the vast majority of assessment pairs. ... Across a variety of situations conversants orient to their disagreeing with one another as uncomfortable, unpleasant, difficult, risking threat, insult, or offence” (Pomerantz 1984: 77).

In line with this statement, the speech act of disagreeing poses a potential threat to the other person’s *face* – his or her public self-image (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61, based on the initial discussion of the notion by Goffman 1967). Disagreeing is thus a face-threatening act and, as such, should be avoided or, at least, minimized before the other person’s face becomes endangered. Eliminating or softening the force of a disagreeing assessment seen as a face-threatening act is, hence, one of the primary goals of successful communication. This was especially stressed by Leech (1983), one of whose politeness submaxims states: “minimize disagreement between self and other”, accompanied by the adjacent submaxim: “maximize agreement between self and other” (Leech 1983: 132). Likewise, Brown and Levinson (1987: 66) consider disagreement to belong to “those acts that threaten the



positive face-want, by indicating (potentially) that the speaker does not care about the addressee's feelings, wants, etc. – that in some important respect he does not want the hearer's wants". Hence, they formulated the two subcategories of positive politeness: "seek agreement" and "avoid disagreement" (Brown and Levinson 1987: 112–117).

Dispreferred disagreeing assessments will here be discussed on the basis of a selection of dialogues extracted from the US films *Crash* (Paul Haggis, 2004), *Noel* (Chazz Palminteri, 2004) and *Playing by Heart* (Willard Carroll, 1998), as well as the Serbian motion pictures *Žena sa slomljenim nosom* (Eng. *The Woman with a Broken Nose*, Srđan Koljević, 2010), *Ljubav i drugi zločini* (Eng. *Love and Other Crimes*, Stefan Arsenijević, 2008) and *Bure baruta* (Eng. *Cabaret Balkan*, Goran Paskaljević, 1998).

## 2. US and Serbian film dialogues as linguistic material

The chosen works belong to the category of multiprotagonist (inter-action) films, whose characters appear in a series of seemingly unrelated episodes, amidst circumstances leading to certain critical moments in their lives. The US films offer a vivid depiction of the present-day middle class in the two largest and most vibrant American cities – Los Angeles and New York, whereas the Serbian stories portray the gloomy urban reality of contemporary Belgrade. The plots each involve up to twenty characters whose intricate relationships and ambivalent feelings have one common denominator – they all stem from the same cultural milieu and share a common core of expected patterns of social and linguistic behaviour. The characters in the selected US and Serbian films, whose verbal behaviour provides the linguistic data for this study, speak contemporary varieties of English and Serbian, respectively. Thus, the selected dialogues lend themselves well to the kind of comparative analysis which is the topic of this paper.

The selected dialogues as units of analysis were chosen taking into account the criterion of comparability in terms of the extralinguistic factors considered relevant in discussions of politeness strategies: age and gender of participants, degree of familiarity, social status, the distribution of power between the interlocutors, etc. The situations that were selected for the purpose of this analysis mostly involve participants engaged in social relations with a high degree of familiarity between them, such as conversations between partners of opposite gender involved in intimate relationships or between colleagues at work who know each other well. The selected parts of their conversations are loaded with conflict and revolve around



topics on which they hold opposing views expressed through potentially face-threatening speech acts of disagreement. It is, however, necessary to stress that in a paper of this format it is impossible to offer detailed accounts of all relevant contextual parameters and that the descriptions and conclusions to follow will be given bearing in mind the author's knowledge and awareness of them.

Finally, an important remark has to be made as regards the acceptability of film scripts as a viable source for linguistic analysis. Dynel (2011) summarizes the dichotomous nature of film scripts: it is not spontaneous but should appear to be so, a fact which led some scholars to the conclusion that if film discourse is fabricated, it must be anti-empirical (Schegloff 1988, Emmison 1993). In this paper, however, an opposing standpoint will be adopted, since "character's verbalisations are constructed to resemble realistic language use" (Georgakopoulou 2000, cited in Dynel 2011: 43), therefore being "a canonical approximation of spontaneous talk in interaction" (Boxer 2002: 18). In other words,

... whether reproduced by actors portraying characters or produced by ordinary language users in real life, utterances serve the same, albeit diversified, communicative interpersonal functions. ... Film discourse presents numerous features typifying real interactions, while its "naturalness" shows in that it can be interpreted with theories proposed for ordinary communication, and the workings of linguistic theories verified in analyses of fictional talk. (Dynel 2011: 44)

The above-cited claims are convincing enough to allow for the subsequent, more general, culture-based comments in the concluding remarks. As a step in that direction, the following section will take a brief look at some of the most common ways of expressing dispreferred verbal disagreement in the two sets of dialogues.

### 3. Patterns of dispreferred disagreement in the selected dialogues

Not surprisingly, in all analysed scripts,<sup>2</sup> there were approximately three times more situations in which the participants expressed verbal disagreement with each other's assessments than there were agreeing remarks. This is only natural, as disagreement, being one of the primary exponents of what is known as *the dialogue of*

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<sup>2</sup> Altogether, 178 disagreeing assessments were found in the three US scripts and 153 in the Serbian ones. The conclusions on the frequency of certain mitigating strategies that are given at the end of this section were made bearing in mind both the length of the six films and the number of words uttered, i.e. the ratio between these two factors.



*conflict*<sup>3</sup>, leads to the further development of the plot, unlike agreement, which is a weak plot-steering device in dramatic discourse. Instances of verbal disagreement in the two sets of dialogues have broadly been divided into those representing *mitigated* and *unmitigated* opposing remarks, although it is necessary to stress that the distinction between the two classes is not always clear-cut.

### 3.1. Mitigated verbal disagreement

*Mitigated verbal disagreement* is a case of disagreement whose potential face-threatening force has been softened or, even, minimized by means of employing *mitigating strategies* for avoiding straightforward disagreement (Panić-Kavgić 2010). The following classification into nine strategies<sup>4</sup> that soften the force of a disagreeing assessment is based on Locher (2004: 113) and Panić-Kavgić (2010: 434–439):

- the use of *hedges* – “cautious notes expressed about how an utterance is to be taken, used when giving some information”, as defined by Yule (1996: 130) – and/or *discourse markers* – “sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk”, as seen by Schiffrin (1987: 31):
- (1) <sup>E</sup> *I'll never know everything about Mark... But I know some things about him now that I never knew before.*  
*I think*<sup>6</sup> *we don't need to know everything about the people we love.*
  - (2) <sup>E</sup> *That's not a good enough reason.*  
*Then I guess I should think of a better one and get back to you.*
  - (3) <sup>S</sup> *Četvrtog.* [On the fourth.]<sup>7</sup>  
*Pa tad beše Tito umro?* [Didn't Tito die on the fourth?]  
*Pa šta onda?* [So what?]  
*Pa šta ja znam, možda bude bedak.*<sup>8</sup> [Well, I don't know, it just might give us the blues.]

<sup>3</sup> A comprehensive discussion on types of dialogues in dramatic discourse is to be found in Katnić-Bakaršić (2003).

<sup>4</sup> Each mitigating strategy will be exemplified by appropriate English and Serbian adjacent pairs, in which the second turn represents an instance of dispreferred disagreement.

<sup>5</sup> The superscript symbols <sup>E</sup> and <sup>S</sup> stand for ‘English’ and ‘Serbian’, respectively.

<sup>6</sup> Examples of particular mitigating strategies within their sentential contexts are given in bold type.

<sup>7</sup> English translations of Serbian examples are provided in square brackets.



- the use of *modal verbs*, as markers of putative, hypothetical or tentative meaning:
  - (4) <sup>E</sup>*I'm seriously starting to think that you're jealous of Karen. Hardly. I'd just like to see you get through a meal without calling her or anyone else. And you **might** mention that we'd appreciate it if next time they didn't send a gang member.*
  - (5) <sup>S</sup>*Pegla se, nije ništa strašno.... [It can get fixed, it's not that bad...]  
Nisi **smeo** da bežiš. **Morao** si da sačekaš policiju... [You shouldn't have tried to run away. You should've waited for the police...]*
- giving objections in the form of a *question*, thus resorting to both formal and semantic indirectness:
  - (6) <sup>E</sup>*Don't act like you know something about me, okay?  
**What do you think those kids need...to make them believe, to give them hope? You think they need another drug-dealing cop or do you think they need a fallen black hero?***
  - (7) <sup>S</sup>*Kasno je, Mane... [It is too late, Mane...]  
**Pa šta je kasno? Šta? Trebalo je da ginem ovde, šta?** [What is too late? What? Should I have got killed here, or what?]*
- offering *objective* explanations and reasons for disagreeing, by means of providing unbiased information on relevant causes, consequences or circumstances:
  - (8) <sup>E</sup>*Suspects are two black males, approximately twenty years of age.  
That's not it. That's not the vehicle, John. **The plates don't match. The driver's gotta be forty. Nobody jacks a car and takes it to Studio City.***
  - (9) <sup>S</sup>*Otkud ja znam kako je bilo pod Turcima?! [How should I know what it was like under the Turks?!]  
Kako ne znate, gospođo, kako je bilo pod Turcima? **Pa petsto godina smo bili pod Turcima!** [Madam, what do you mean you don't know what it was like under the Turks? We did spend five hundred years under the Turks!]*

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<sup>8</sup> It is not always easy to distinguish between hedges and discourse markers, which can, but need not perform a function similar to that of a hedge. Locher (2004: 337) claims that "a discourse marker can be a hedge, but does not necessarily have to be one". For the purposes of this analysis, they will be viewed and grouped together, based on their functional similarity, since both hedges and discourse markers can act as face-threat mitigators.



- giving *personal* or *emotionally coloured* reasons for disagreeing, thus indicating that the speakers “cannot help feeling the way they do” (Locher 2004: 127):

(10) <sup>E</sup>*You're snapping at me!*

*I'm not snapping at you! I am angry.*

(11) <sup>S</sup>*Što mi zavidiš? To je užas.* [Why do you envy me? This is horrible.]

*Ne, ne. Drugo je užas. To je totalno suprotno od užasa, veruj mi.* [No, no. Something else is horrible. It's the complete opposite of horrible, trust me.]

- *changing the topic* by shifting to another one, which is (seemingly) irrelevant to the current discussion:

(12) <sup>E</sup>*I want the locks changed again in the morning.*

*You want... Why don't you just go lie down? Have you checked on James?*

(13) <sup>S</sup>*Naša je stvar! Dok te ja izdržavam naša je stvar!* [It's our business! As long as I support you, it's our business!]

*E, vidi, čale, stvarno žurim...* [Hey, look, pops, I'm really in a hurry here...]

- *shifting responsibility*, “a strategy that allows interactants to portray themselves as not responsible for what they are reporting” (Locher 2004: 130), labelled as “point-of-view” distancing by Brown and Levinson (1987: 204–206):

(14) <sup>E</sup>*Well, you seem to know me a lot better than I know you.*

*You know that's not true.*

(15) <sup>S</sup>*Nikad se ti nećeš promeniti. Mogao si da ostaviš poruku, pismo...Bilo šta. Bilo šta...* [You're never going to change. You could've left a message, a letter... Anything. Anything...]

*Ti znaš da ja mrzim rastanke.* [You know I hate goodbyes.]

- using *in-group identity markers* and/or *first-name address* – a positive-politeness strategy aimed at indicating an informal relationship between the communicators and increasing the degree of friendliness and familiarity:

(16) <sup>E</sup>*Well, none of this means you can't love.*

*Joan, it means exactly that.*



- (17) <sup>E</sup>*Why are you gettin' all bent outta shape?*  
*I'm not gettin' bent, man.*
- (18) <sup>S</sup>*Sto četrdeset... [Hundred and forty...]*  
*Jovane... Sto dvadeset je izgravirano! [Jovan... It showed hundred and twenty, exactly.]*
- (19) *Sutra ideš kod mog šefa i kaži čiji si. [Tomorrow you go see my boss and tell him whose son you are.]*  
*Nisam ja, stari, za to. [I'm not cut out for that kinda thing, old pops.]*
- **downtoning** the effects, intensity or importance of a recent action or statement:
- (20) <sup>E</sup>*I'm seriously starting to think that you're jealous of Karen.*  
*Hardly. I'd just like to see you get through a meal without calling her or anyone else.*
- (21) <sup>S</sup>*Jesi pogledao moju bubu?! [Have you taken a look at my Beetle?!]*  
*Pegla se, nije ništa strašno... [It can get fixed, it's not that bad...]*

The above-mentioned mitigating strategies are often combined and are frequently found within one talk exchange, having a cumulative effect and demonstrating the interlocutors' permanent intention and resolute stance to avoid direct confrontation at any cost. What follows is a talk exchange from *Crash*, between Cameron, a successful Afro-American Hollywood director and Fred, his co-worker and assistant on the set. The cause of the following string of disagreeing comments, downtoned by various mitigating strategies, is the supposedly "white" accent of one of the characters in the film they are shooting.

- (22) <sup>E</sup>FRED: *Yeah. Listen. I think* (hedge) *we need another take, buddy.* (in-group identity marker)  
CAMERON: *That looked pretty terrific* (objective reason), *man.* (in-group identity marker)  
FRED: *This is gonna sound strange* (hedge), *but* (discourse marker) *is Jamal seeing a speech coach or something?* (hedge)  
CAMERON: *What do you mean?* (question)  
FRED: *Have you noticed, uh* (discourse marker)... *This is weird for a white guy to say* (hedge), *but* (discourse marker) *have you noticed he's talking a lot less black lately?*(shifting responsibility + question)  
CAMERON: *No, I haven't noticed that.* (direct, unmitigated disagreeing response)





FRED: *Really?* (question) *Like*, (discourse marker) *in this scene, he was supposed to say: “Don’t be talkin’ ‘bout that.” And he changed it to: “Don’t talk to me about that.”* (objective reason)

CAMERON: *Wait a minute. You think because of that, the audience won’t recognize him as being a black man?* (question) *Come on!* (in-group identity marker)

FRED: *Is there a problem, Cam?* (question + first-name address)

CAMERON: *Excuse me?*

FRED: *Is there a problem, Cam?*

CAMERON: *No, we don’t have a problem.*

FRED: *I mean* (hedge), *‘cause all I’m saying is* (hedge), *it’s not his character. Eddie’s supposed to be the smart one, not Jamal* (objective reason), *right* (hedge)? *You’re the expert here.* (shifting responsibility) *But to me* (hedge), *it rings false.* (personal reason)

The results of the analysis of mitigated disagreeing assessments corroborate the results of an earlier pilot study carried out on a smaller sample of US and Serbian film dialogues in recent multi-protagonist films. Namely, as initially proved by Panić-Kavgić (2010), there are approximately three times more instances of mitigated disagreement in the US film scripts than in their Serbian counterparts. When it comes to modes of mitigation, in the English dialogues there were considerably more examples of hedging (the English vs Serbian ratio being 55:20), using modal verbs (28:11) and offering objective reasons for disagreeing (52:22). Using in-group identity markers and first-name address, giving objections in the form of a question, shifting responsibility, changing the topic and downtoning the effect of a recent action or statement were, roughly, equally frequent in both sets of dialogues. Finally, it is only when it comes to giving personal or emotionally coloured reasons that the strategy was found to be more visible and frequent in the Serbian dialogues (39:21).

Rounding off the discussion on mitigated disagreement and proceeding with examples of unmitigated opposing responses, it should, however, be pointed out that the extent to which the force of a face-threatening act has been softened by employing one of the mitigating strategies depends on whether a particular case of disagreement is perceived as weak or strong, according to the division of disagreements seen as dispreferred answers, which was proposed by Pomerantz (1984).



### 3.2. *Unmitigated verbal disagreement*

Reiterating the point that the boundary between mitigated and unmitigated disagreeing assessments may sometimes be fuzzy rather than easily recognizable, three types of situations emerge in which it is more plausible to say that there was no clear intention to soften the force of a potentially face-threatening act. In such cases, which were almost twice as numerous in the Serbian scripts as in the US films, the interlocutor's reaction is given in the form of:

➤ a *short direct* remark of *opposite orientation*:

(23) <sup>E</sup>*There's no such word.*  
***There is now.***

(24) <sup>E</sup>*Two guys? Nah, he was looking at me, not you.*  
***Nah, he was looking at me too.***  
***Nah, he wasn't looking anywhere near you.***

(25) <sup>S</sup>*Ništa, idem ja s tobom. [Well then, I'm going with you.]*  
***Nećeš. [You're not.]***  
***Reći ću sve Milutinu. [I'll tell everything to Milutin.]***  
***Nećeš. [You won't.]***

(26) <sup>S</sup>*Onda idemo, imamo dete. [Then let's go, we have our child.]*  
***Ja ne idem, rekla sam ti. [I'm not going, I've told you.]***

➤ an *ironic* or *sarcastic* remark:

(27) <sup>E</sup>*Hannah, it was 25 years ago, and it wasn't an affair.*  
***Oh, don't insult my intelligence.***

(28) <sup>E</sup>*You need to calm down right now.*  
***What I need is a husband who will not just stand there while I am being molested!***

(29) <sup>S</sup>*Poslednja pionirka što je Titi predavala štafetu. Znači, carica Mostara do rata. Mis Neretve '88. A vidi sad. [The last pioneer who gave Tito his birthday-pledge baton. The empress of Mostar before the war. The Beauty Queen of the Neretva in '88. And look at me now.]*  
***Sad si mis [hotela] Jugoslavije. [Now you're the Beauty Queen of the Yugoslavia Hotel.]***

(30) <sup>S</sup>*Šta je bilo? Nešto si mi čudna... [What happened? You look somehow strange...]*



*A ti si super. [And you're so cool.]*

➤ a **short rude question**:

(31) <sup>E</sup>*You have a serious problem.*

**Oh, I got a problem?** *What's he doing in the apartment?*

(32) <sup>S</sup>*Stani, čoveče, neko je skočio! [Stop, man, somebody's jumped off the bridge!]*

**Ko je skočio? Šta lupetaš?!** *[Who jumped? You're talking nonsense!]*

(33) <sup>S</sup>*I sve, al' treba da kreneš od šminke. [And everything else, but you should start from your makeup.]*

**Šta pričaš ti?** *[What are you saying?]*

The above examples are clear instances of unmitigated dispreferred responses and, as such, should be regarded as face-threatening and impolite. When it comes to the first (and, for that matter, most frequent) of the three listed classes, one of the conspicuous features of examples (23)–(26) is their directness. It is a property that, however, should not automatically be regarded as a sign of impoliteness, especially when it comes to certain dialogues in Serbian – a fact that is discussed in Panić-Kavgić (2012) and that is to be touched upon in the final section.

The concluding remarks will summarize the findings of the analysis and discuss their theoretical – linguistic and cultural – implications.

#### 4. Conclusions

The results of the analysis show that characters in the US films, by amply applying the aforementioned mitigating strategies, demonstrate a greater need to please the interlocutor – to save the other person's face and, to an extent, conceal one's true intentions that could damage the other person's public self-image. The use of hedges and discourse markers, modal verbs, giving objective or emotionally coloured reasons for disagreeing, changing the topic, shifting responsibility and down-toning the effects, intensity or importance of a recent action or statement are all hallmarks of what is known as a **high-considerateness individualistic culture**, generally characterised by greater indirectness, typically expressed through more mitigation. On the other hand, based on the behaviour of the analysed Serbian characters, it appears that there is a lesser need to please the other participant in a talk exchange by concealing one's true intentions. As exemplified in the previous section, the dialogues in Serbian show less mitigation and consequently, a higher degree of directness.



Any far-fetched conclusions regarding the politeness value of the above observations have to be taken with caution, though. Namely, it is a well known fact, especially in the post-Brown/Levinsonian framework (most notably – Watts 2005, initially 1992), that indirectness does not necessarily imply greater politeness and, vice-verse, that directness is not always a sign of impoliteness. In line with this observation, Perović (2009: 215) reaches a similar conclusion when it comes to Serbo-Croatian and English: “The difference between the two languages does not concern the degree of politeness, but the degree of indirectness. Speakers of Serbo-Croatian, observing the norms regarding the polite forms of their own language, are rather polite, but are less indirect”.<sup>9</sup>

As already highlighted by Panić-Kavgić (2012: 582) and as proven by the qualitative analysis carried out in this paper, it is of utmost importance to stress that it is not always easy, and, for that matter, sometimes not even possible, to draw a clear line of demarcation between the individualistic and integrative, the direct and indirect, between mitigated and unmitigated disagreement and, last but not least, between what is considered to be an instance of socially acceptable and unacceptable linguistic behaviour in a given culture. Therefore, it is only a matter of tendencies rather than definite conclusions that a certain culture and its society are termed as being predominantly individualistic or integrative in their nature. Cultures at large and their members cannot simply be labelled as predominantly polite or impolite, which is an issue accommodated in Watts’s model (2005, initially 1992). The case is, rather, that they belong to a culture which, when it comes to linguistic forms of politeness, here observed in instances of dispreferred disagreement with the interlocutor, tolerates a degree of directness possibly different from another culture. Hence a final remark as regards the preferable model of politeness in a certain culture, when it comes to degrees of mitigation: it seems that Watts’ conceptual and terminological views (2005, initially 1992), based on a division of verbal behaviour into *politic* vs. *non-politic* (i.e. socially acceptable vs. unacceptable), are more ade-

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<sup>9</sup> Perović (2009), a Montenegrin linguist, refers to her native language and culture, which is the object of her comparison with English and its norms, as Serbo-Croatian. For the sake of clarity, it should be added that the article containing the above quote (here translated into English by Panić-Kavgić) was originally published in 1997, when Montenegro still formed part of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Regardless of the subsequent dissolution of the former Serbo-Croatian language, one of whose results was the emergence of the Montenegrin language, the conclusions put forth in the above citation still have valid cultural and linguistic implications for both Serbian and Montenegrin. Namely, the cultural and linguistic patterns of (im)politeness and (in)directness in communication, despite superficial differences, remain very similar or, some would argue, much the same.



quate and appropriate, at least in the case of more direct cultures such as the Serbian one, than the older dichotomy of *polite* vs *impolite*, which, among other claims, over-stresses the importance of indirectness in polite interaction.

This observation has important theoretical implications for further work in the fields of politeness and facework in Serbian, especially because virtually no research has been conducted within Watts's framework into the verbal behaviour of native speakers of Serbian. When it comes to analysing politeness phenomena in Serbian, as well as to contrasting them with their counterparts in another language, the above conclusions could spark interest in more recent models in politeness research, at the same time bearing in mind Brown and Levinson's seminal work, much of which is still the foundation of many present-day studies, as is the case in this paper.

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### **OBRASCI NEŽELJENIH RAZMIRICA U DIJALOZIMA IZ AMERIČKIH I SRPSKIH FILMOVA**

Rad se bavi jezičnim sredstvima kojima se izražava neslaganje sa sugovornikom na primjerima dijaloga iz triju američkih (*Crash* (Paul Haggis, 2004), *Noel* (Chazz Palminteri, 2004) i *Playing By Heart* (Willard Carroll, 1998)) i triju srpskih filmova (*Bure baruta* (Goran Paskaljević, 1998), *Ljubav i drugi zločini* (Stefan Arsenijević, 2008) i *Žena sa slomljenim nosom* (Srđan Koljević, 2010)). Na temelju ograničenja koje takva raddnja postavlja na sugovornike te inherentnog sukoba i razlike u mišljenjima, neslaganje se može izraziti izravno, ili može biti ublaženo da bi se ublažili učinci direktnijeg sukoba. Glede ublažavanja, koristi se nekoliko različitih strategije. To vodi do široke podjele razmirica na ublažene i neublažene. rad se bavi distribucijom tih strategija u navedenih šest filmova. Scenariji američkih i srpskih filmova pokazuju se prikladnim za usporedbu, budući da im je zajedničko nekoliko elemenata radnje (vrijeme radnje na prijelazu stoljeća, isprepletene priče i likovi oterećeni psihološkim i socijalnim traumama). Opisom i oprimjerenjem niza obraza-



ca verbalnog neslaganja u usporedivim kontekstima izabranih filmova primjenom metoda kvalitativne analize, radom se želi usporediti i suprotstaviti niz vidova navedenog fenomena na općenitijoj razini kako dvaju jezika (engleskog i srpskog), tako i dviju kultura (američke i srpske).

**Ključne riječi:** neželjeno verbalno neslaganje; čin ugrožavanja obraza; ublažena razmirica; strategije ublažavanja; izravna razmirica; individualistička kultura; integrativna kultura.