

# **A Contrastive Phonosemantic Study of Some Selected Hollywood Movies'**

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**دراسة صوتية- دلالية مقارنة لبعض عناوين الافلام  
الهوليوودية المنتقاة"**

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## Abstract:

This study is an attempt to reveal the effect of sounds on the meaning of the form (word) that they formulate. A contrastive phonosemantic study is made on four historical epic, action, and comic and romantic movies' titles to show how sounds can reflect meaning and associate with feelings, emotions and attitudes. The Universal Theory that Agrawal suggested is used as a model in this study. The results show that sounds are meaning-bearing elements. Furthermore; they reveal that the titles reflect the events of their movies.

**Key words:** Phonosemantics, Historical Epic movies, Action Movies, Comic Movies, Romantic movies, The Universal Theory.

## 1. Literature Review

Language is an essential tool that is used for conveying a message among people. This vital tool is constructed from sounds, and sounds compose words, then the words link together to form a large unit which is a phrase or a sentence. Sentences are associated with each other to formulate a larger section which can be called a text. The smallest elements of the language (i.e. phonemes) may or may not reflect meanings. Some linguists claim that sounds do not have any association with meaning of

## الملخص:

تتمحور هذه الدراسة المقارنة حول تطبيق نظرية العالم كومار اكراول في الكشف عن تأثير الاصوات في معاني عناوين بعض الافلام التاريخية الملحمية و الحركية و الكوميدية و الرومانسية المختارة التي انتجتها شركة هوليوود. تم التوصل الى العديد من النتائج بعد تطبيق النظرية المذكورة. حيث بينت النتائج ان الاصوات تحمل العديد من المعاني وان هذه العناوين تعتبر انعكاس لأحداث الافلام التي عنونها.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** المعنى الصوتي- الدلالي, الافلام التاريخية, الافلام الحركية, الافلام الكوميدية, الافلام الرومانسية, النظرية الكونية.

the forms that they construct, such as Saussure (1915), whereas others believe that sounds are meaning-bearing elements, such as Jespersen (1921) and Spire (1929)

How does a specific word describe a specific entity? What kind of relationship is there between a word and its referent? Is there any natural relation or association between the two? The Swiss linguist Feridnad de Saussure proposed two terms , they are: signified and signifier; the relationship between them is arbitrary. Signified is the mental representation of the idea or the object, whereas signifier is the sound of the spoken word of that mental aspect in the external world.

Linguists, such as Ohala, Jespersen, Jakobson, who adopted the idea about the natural relation of sound and meaning produced a new term which is phonosemantics. It can be understood clearly from its name “phonosemantics” that is a combination of phonology (the study of sounds patterns, and all systematic use of sounds within language) and semantics (the study of the meaning of signs, words and larger units). So, the aim of this field is meaning and how phonemes or sounds have the role or natural reflection of the meaning of larger units, such as clusters, syllables and words. The ruling idea in linguistics is that when deleting a phoneme (the smallest segmental unit of a language) from a morpheme , such as /pæt/ the remaining phonemic sequence becomes odd and meaningless. Phonosemantics looks to a phoneme as having a potential meaning.

Jespersen (1921, pp.400-401) demonstrates that high front vowel sounds represent smallness or something light, whereas low back vowel sounds stand for largeness or a dark thing. Some sounds reflect enjoyments, others refer to sadness, whereas, some of them represent smallness or size in general. The high front vowel sounds refer to smallness, such as /i/. Furthermore, low back vowels stand for large things, such as /ɑ/ Ultan (as cited in Rojczyk, 2011, p. 605) clarifies that high front vowel sounds are typically perceived as denoting smallness, whereas low back vowel sounds are perceived as reflecting largeness.

The Indian author P. Agrawal at the first page of his book *meaningfulness of sounds* (2016) says that “Every sound says something”. According to him, the sounds that a word consists of are not arbitrarily

listed within it, but naturally. Each sound stands for a message to be conveyed by the larger unit which is a cluster, syllable or a word. Moreover, Agrawal (2016, p.1) adds that “phonosemantics is a science which explains that every sound in the universe has a specific meaning allotted by nature. Under this hypothesis, it is believed that ..... When we speak or listen to any sound, we feel a corresponding emotion inside”.

## 2. Previous Studies

### 2.1 The Role of Sound Symbolism in Language Learning

Monaghan, et al.(2012, pp.1152-1162) conducted a study which dealt with the role of sound symbolism in language learning. Participants were given sixteen non-words, some words contained high front vowels, others comprised from low back vowels. The onset and coda positions were occupied by some consonant sounds, such as /b/, /m/, /n/, and /l/. The participants were asked to link these words to rounded or angular shaped items. The results showed that most of the participants connected the rounded shaped item with words that contained the low back vowels and the angular shaped items were linked to words that included high front vowels.

### 2.2 Early Sound Symbolism for Vowel Sounds

Spector & Maurer (2013, pp.239-241) believed that children associate some vowel sounds with certain shapes. They did their study on a group of children that were in the age of 2.5-year-olds. Pairs of nonsense words were used, each with the sound /i/ or the sound /ɔ/. The toddlers were asked to point at the rounded or jagged shapes. They concluded that children at this age are sensitive to sound symbolism of vowels.

### 2.3 The Natural Motivation of Sound Symbolism

Kwon (2015, pp.1-254) tested the role of sound symbolism in guessing meaning using Korean and English nonsense words. He tested a naive people by asking them to associated Korean words with their

meaning in English and vice versa. The participants were Korean and English-speaking participants. The study concluded that people can understand or guess the meaning of ideophonic words or iconic words even they cannot speak the words of that language in question.

## **2.4 What sound symbolism can and cannot do: Testing the iconicity of ideophone from five languages**

Dingemans et al. (2016, pp.117-133) tested the potential of the ideophonic words from five languages: Japanese, Korean, Semai (west Malaysia), Siwu (local language in Ghana) and Ewe (Togo). Eighty-two Dutch listeners participated in that test. The participants heard the ideophonic words and asked to associate them with listed meanings. The study concluded that people can correctly guess the meaning of the ideophonic words from languages they do not speak. Thus, the study clarified that the ideophones across the five languages have iconic properties.

## **2.5 The Two Meaning of Sound Symbolism**

Elsen (2017, pp. 491-497) clarified in his study that there were natural relationships holding between a sound and its referent. The study is about analyzing the association of science fiction and fantasy titles and their phonosemantic reflections. More than ninety students were chosen in this test. They were asked to associate some titles with beautiful lady names, ugly monster, kind creatures and powerful magician. The results showed that words that contained the sound /a/ were linked to beautiful ladies' names, whereas the words that contained a final consonant were linked to male names. Furthermore; back vowel sounds, such as /k/, /g/ and /ŋ/ sounds were connected with monster names.

## **3. Methodology**

In this study, an attempt is made to explore phonosemantics within some selected movies' titles that Hollywood has produced to clarify the

association between sounds and the meanings in the formulation of the titles. Pramod Kumar Agrawal who is a science scholar and works in the field of philosophical aspects of science, suggested in his books “Theory of Phonosemantics” in 2010 a general theory called “the Universal Theory”, this theory will be the model for this study. Universal Theory looks to sounds as meaning-bearing elements within the constructing of the words. Agrawal says in his book *The Meaningfulness of Sounds* that every sounds says something (2016, p.1).

The steps to apply the Universal Theory are: Listing the example words (titles of the movie), providing dictionary meaning for the example word, then the pronunciation after that checking the semantic value and all these steps lead to the final result which is the phonosemantic meaning.

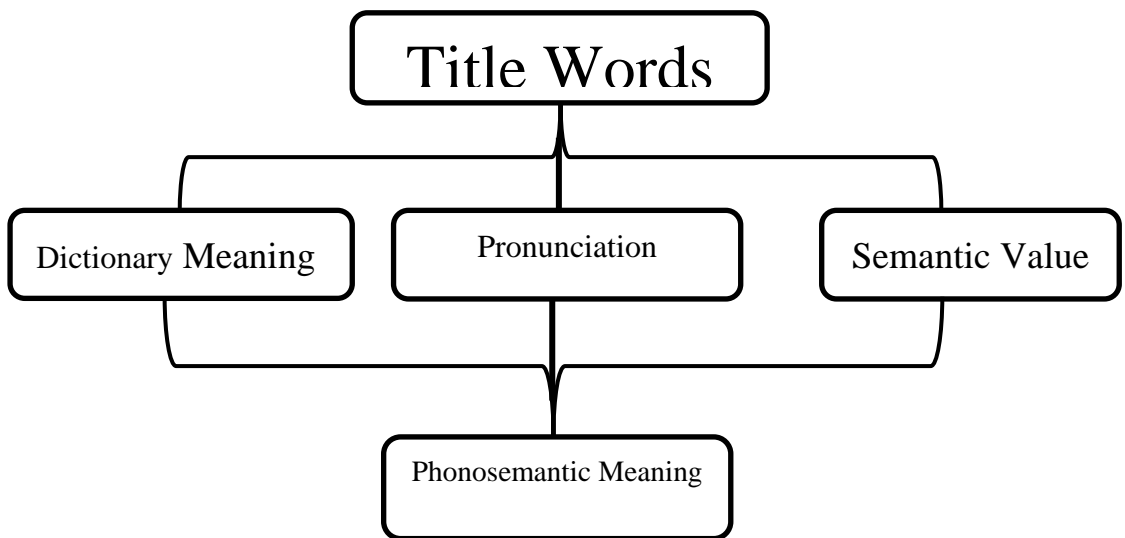


Figure (1) The model Application

Agrawal mentions in his books and essays about the application of this suggested theory that some notes should be taken into consideration when someone apply this theory:

- 1- There is a specific psychological feeling for each phoneme. These feelings are explained in literary meaning. Agrawal believes that

the development of languages takes place by converting feelings into sounds.

- 2- Language is a stream of psychological messages that convert into intellectual messages, so grammar does not attach any attention.
- 3- The focus in the description is on the phonemes only without focusing on the effect of stress, tunes or intonation.
- 4- This theory does not deal with function or grammatical words, such as “the”, “but”, it deals with content or lexical words only, since grammatical words have little identifiable meaning.
- 5- There is not any description for diphthongs and triphthongs, they can be analyzed according to their elements. For example, the sound /ei/ can be described with the features of the sounds /e/ and /i/ (Agrawal, 2010, 2014, 2016, 2020).

All the descriptions that Agrawal mentioned in his previous books and essays are rewritten in a clear way that can be understood easily in his last essay “Psychological Model of Phonosemantics” in 2020. He (2020, pp.12-15) provides a description for each sound within its group, such as submitting appearance, acquiring identity, and so on. Each sound has many descriptions or meanings, and to apply the theory, the researcher can use the description that fits the purpose of the study.<sup>1</sup>

As it is mentioned in the preceding foot note, the chosen description depends on the purpose of the study to reach the meaning. If the same sound is used more than once in the same title, then the chosen description or meaning starts from the first description and moves towards the following. For example, if the title contains two /w/ sounds, so the first /w/ sound will be described as “invisible existence” whereas the second one can be read as “acceptable existence”. It is worth mentioning that Merriam Webster Dictionary is the one which is used in providing the dictionary meanings in the application of the Universal Theory in this study and the phonemic notation is the one that is suggested by Peter Roach (2009). All the following semantic values for sounds in the table are taken from Agrawal essay *Psychological Model of Phonosemantics* 2020.

<sup>1</sup> Personal communication with the founder of “The Universal Theory”. Agrawal states that each sound psychologically can have many intellectual meanings and the choice of the representation depends on the purpose of which is needed.

#### **4. Historical Epic Movies**

This section is about movies which mix historical events and heroic actions. Maltby (1995, pp.107–112) says that most of the movies that Hollywood produces are mixed movies, they are not rigorous, but multi-generic movies, such as musical-comedy movies and action-historical ones. Neale (2000, p. 22) states that historical movies are those movies which reflect historical events or legendary actions and their titles are linked to their heroic characters. Thus, a historical Epic movie is a movie that shows past events, focusing on heroic characters. This genre of movies is one of the most celebrated cinematic productions. Actions, love stories and other themes are attached to heroic actions of the main characters in each movie.

##### **4.1 “Robin Hood”**

This movie tells the story of Robin, a young man from Loxley Britain who loves a girl named Marian. They are in love until the Sheriff ordered him to join the army to fight against Saracens. He spent four years in the war before his return. After his coming, he found that his land was ruined by the Sheriff who claimed that Robin passed away to seize his lands. People were struggling by gathering taxes, so Robin used a new name for him “Hood”. The town people under the leadership of Robin Hood held the Sheriff and returned their money. Finally, Robin Hood got married from his beloved Marian. The movie is written by John Watson and directed by Kevin Reynolds in 1991. It won and was nominated for many Oscar and other awards. Many versions of the same story have been produced with the same title.



Table (1) Application No. One

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Robin</b>	a kind of birds or a person name	/rɒbɪn/	/r/ intelligence, /D/ accept hidden ability, /bɪ/ visibly acquired, /n/ fullness of identity
<b>Hood</b>	covering of the head and neck	/hʊd/	/h/ big, /v/ inside existent, /d/ had

After the application of “The Universal Theory”, the resulting phonosemantic meaning for the first part of the title is {existence that is full of intelligence and that is able to hide}. The second part can be interpreted semantically as {the big person that had identity}. So, the final phonosemantic meaning is a person who has intelligence and identity to stand against his enemy.

#### 4.2 “Braveheart”

This movie tells the story of Scottish people when they rebelled against the king of England Edward 1. Alexander III was the king of Scotland, when he died the kingdom of England wanted to make them under its leadership. So, the Scottish people stood against that conquest and they were led by a brave man called Wallace. The Scottish men and women lost their lives due to their refusal that Edward I becomes their king. Wallace represented freedom for the people of his homeland, but at the end he was executed. The movie was produced by Hollywood in 1995 and it was directed by Mel Gibson and was written by Randall Wallace . This movie is an Oscar Winner (1996), BAFTA winner (1996), Academy of Science Fiction & Fantasy & Horror Films nominee (1996), American Cinema Editor winner (1996) and many other awards.

Table (2) Application No. Two

The tile	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>brave</b>	A person who has mental or moral power against danger	/breiv/	/b/ security, /r/ fineness, /e/ straight, /ɪ/ noticeable existent, /v/ storing (having)
<b>Heart</b>	the muscular part of human and animals bodies	/ha:t/	/h/ achieving, /ɑ/ entity, /t/ doing

The phonosemantic meaning of the first part is {storing (having) security and fineness that are noticeable straight in existence}, whereas the second part can be represented as {achieving and doing life to existence}. The final phonosemantic meaning for this title is the one who has power and identity against enemy.

### 4.3 “Gladiator”

It is a historical epic American movie produced in 2000 and it won many Oscars. The story of this movie is about a Roman fighter whose family were murdered and he was sent to slavery. Maximus who was a general in the army was chosen and called as Rome keeper by the emperor “Marcus Aurelius”, but Maximus was refused and punished by the new emperor. So, he was obliged to fight in a gladiator game where he died. He was one of the most faithful soldiers in Rome. The movie was written by John Logan and William Nicholson, and was written directed by Ridley Scott in 2000. This movie is a winner of Oscar (2001), BAFTA Awards (2001), Screen Actor Guild Awards (2001), Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Films Awards (2006) and many other awards.

Table (3) Application No. Three

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Gladiator</b>	a fighter who uses weapon against others or animals. In ancient Rome, this term stand for the person who engages in a combat with other person or a wild animal	/glædiətə/	/g/ clear, /æ/ visibility, /d/ old, /l/ visibly noticeable existent, /e/ display, /i/ noticeable existent, /t/ towards occupying space with free fluency, /ə/ existence

After applying “The Universal Theory”, the following phonosemantic meaning is obtained {the person who is clear and having or occupying power }

#### 4.4 “The Patriot”

The story of this movie dates back to old periods when an American man who was called Benjamin fought the British army to free his people and homeland since America was a British colony. At the beginning of the story, Ben was not against the British occupation, but after the death of his son, he decided to revenge. The American people under the leadership of Ben got a French support to fight the British army, and they won the battle and killed the British leader “Tavington”. After Tavington’s death , America put the steppingstone for their life and the downfall for Britain. This movie was written by Robert Rodat, and was directed by Emmerich in 2000. The Patriot won the American Society of Cinematographer award in 2001and it was nominated for the Oscar, then Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Films Awards.

Table (4) Application No. Four

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Patriot</b>	The one who loves and supports her or his country	/peɪtriət/ or /pætriət/	/p/ protection, /eɪ/ visibly indicated, /tr/ activated, /ɪ/ visible, /ə/ existence, /t/ towards occupying space with free fluency

The phonosemantic meaning of the above analyzed title is {visible existence (person) who has a power and provides protection}.

## 5. Action movies

Neale (2000, p.46) declares that action or “action-adventure” is genre of movies which encompasses a variety of other movies kind, such as science fiction, thriller and war movies. He adds that action movies are linked to physical action, chases and explosions. So, action movies are a movie genre in which the protagonists face many difficult circumstances and actions like fighting and violence within the events of the movie. The hero or the main character in such a movie faces many hard situations and his life may be threatened; he usually struggles against dangerous villains.

### 5.1 Jaws”

The story of this movie is about a sheriff, seafarer and a marine biologist who gather to kill a white shark that unleashed a chaos on the beach. Many people have been killed by that shark on the beach which was their main place for living. One of the victims is a boy whose mother puts out a bounty to the one who catches or kills that savage animal. These men put their trap which was an air tank. They succeed to let the shark inter the tank and they shoot it. The movie was produced in 1975. It was written by

Peter Benchley, and then it was directed by Steven Spielberg. It won three Oscar awards.

Table (5) Application No. One

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Jaws</b>	bony structures in the mouth. It usually bears teeth on their oral margins	/dʒɔ:z/	/dʒɔ/ acceptable availability of strength, /z/ lively expression

After the application of The Universal Theory, the phonosemantic meaning of the title can be read as {a thing that indicates strength}.

## 5.2 “Rocky”

The movie is about Rocky Balboa who is a boxer. He trains all the day to win the championship of heavy weight. One of the most difficult and the final match to win the golden belt was against another very strong boxer who was called Apollo. Apollo does a marvelous match and defeats Rocky many rounds, but the final round Rocky drubs his competitor and wins the match. The movie was written by Sylvester Stallone, and John G. Avildsen was the director. This movie was produced in 1976. It was the Oscar award winner in (1977), also it was nominated for many other awards, such as the BAFTA and the Grammy awards.

Table (6) Application No. two

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Rocky</b>	difficult to impress or affect. It can also refer to the one who is physically upset or mentally confused	/rɒki/	/r/ fullness of acquired concentration, /D/ hidden, /k/ alertness, /I/ noticeable existence

The phonosemantic meaning which can be obtained for the above analyzed title is {existence who is full of concentration and the one who has a hidden alertness}.

### 5.3 “Star Wars”

There are many movies under the same main title (Star Wars) about different actions against an enemy who threatens the galaxy that have been produced. The first movie was produced in 1977. It was written and directed by George Lucas. This version won more than five Oscar awards. The story of this version is about a man who is called Luke Skywalker. This man is supported by Jedi knight and other robot creatures to rescue the Princess “Leia” from Darth Vader and to save the galaxy.

Table (7) Application No. Three

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Star Wars</b>	a natural luminous body in the sky	/sta:(r)/  /wɔ:(r)z/	/st/ expressed activation, /a/ entity, /r/ forcible full of intelligence

	struggles or competition between opposing forces		/w/ acceptable existence, /ɔ/ availability of existence, /r/ forcible full of intelligence, /z/ lively expression
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The phonosemantic meaning that can be associated with the above analyzed title is as follows { existence that is full of intelligence and expresses activity}, this is for the first part “star”, whereas the second one means {actions when existence (person) uses his intelligence forcibly}. So, the final meaning can be read as actions that result when an existence uses his intelligence since he/ she fights against active existences.

### 5.4 The Lord of the Rings

This movie is about the story of a lost ring which is found and fate brings the small Hobbit Frodo to destroy that ring to rescue the world. Frodo must make a quest to the Cracks of Doom to destroy the ring. That ring belongs to the Lord of the dark Sauron. Three fellows join Frodo in his journey. They face very bad conditions in their march, such as mountains, forests, snow, darkness and rivers. The main aim behind their journey is to finish the reign of the lord of the dark after the destruction of the ring. The movie was written by Fran Walsh, and then it was directed by Peter Jackson in 2001. It was the Oscar award winner, the BAFTA award winner, and the Screen Actors Guild award winner, in (2002). Also, it was nominated for many other awards, such as the Amanda award, the Norway award in (2002) and the American Cinema Editors award in (2002).

Table (8) Application No. Four

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
Lord	One who has power and	/lɔ:d/	/l/ expandable, /ɔ/ acceptable of

<p><b>Rings</b></p>	<p>authority over others. a circlet usually of precious metal worn especially on the finger</p>	<p>/rɪŋz/</p>	<p>availability of existence, /d/ state  /r/ identified, /ɪ/ visibly existing existent, /ŋ/ emotionally strong, /z/ lively expression</p>
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After the application of the Universal Theory, the phonosemantic meaning that can be associated with the above mentioned title may read as follows {an existence who has a state and power to gain availability}. The second part can be read as {existence which is visible and indicates a strong emotion}. The final title meaning can be read as an existence who has power and a stronger emotion than others.

## 6. Comic Movies

A comic movie is that genre of movies which focuses on making audience laugh during the show of the movie. This kind of movies tends to end happily. Colman (2014, p. 41) says that comic movies aim to make the audience laugh by providing jokes to entertain them. Allen & Smith (1997, p.370) state the comic movies are full of exaggerated situations and language.

### 6.1 “Dumb &Dumber”

The movie presents the story of two stupid men named Harry and his close friend Lloyd who together make a cross-country journey to return a briefcase to its owner. Mary is a lady who forgot her briefcase in the station and the duo faces many mishaps and finally they reach Colorado, the place where Mary is. At the end, they stick in a very bad situation after a hilarious trip. The movie was written by Peter Farrelly and Bobby Farrelly, and then it was directed by them as well in 1994. It won many awards, such as The



Key Art Award in (1994). It was nominated for many awards, such as The Razzie Award in (1995).

Table (9) Application No. One

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Dumb</b>	stupid person	/dʌm/	/d/ had, /ʌ/ disclosure of existent, /m/ substance
<b>Dumber</b>	the one who is more stupid than others	/dʌmə(r)/	/d/ had, /ʌ/ disclosure of existent, /m/ substance, /ə/ existence, /r/ fineness

The phonosemantic meaning that can be suggested to the first part of the above title is {the one that has a material (funny thing) to be revealed}. The second part can be seen as {the one that has a material (funny activities) to be shown}. So, the final phonosemantic meaning for the analyzed title is two existences who show material (funny or silly) for others.

## 6.2 “The Mask”

This movie is about the story of a bank clerk who wears a mysterious mask to make a lady named “Tina” loves him. Stanley Ipkiss did his best to convince ladies to love him, but he failed. He finds a mask and wears it, and that mask puts him in very funny situations. Finally, Ipkiss convinces Tina to be his girlfriend. The movie was written by Mike Werb, and then it was directed by Chuck Russell in 1994. It was nominated in (1995) for many awards, such as the Oscar and the BAFTA.

Table (10) Application No. Two

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
Mask	a cover or partial cover for the face used for disguise	/mɑ:sk/	/m/ unavailable identity, /ɑ/ entity, /s/ outside expression, /k/ getting fear

The phonosemantic meaning that can be obtained from the above analyzed title is {a thing that indicates an outside expression and it is used to make the existence unclear, it also can be fearful}.

### 6.3 “Liar Liar”

This movie is about a lawyer who bases his career on lying. Fletcher Reede is that lawyer who lies in all aspects of his life . On the birthday of his son Max , he lied because he promised Max to attend his birthday party, but he didn't. Max's birthday wish was that his father can speak the truth even for only one day. When Reede speaks true things, he faces many problems as a lawyer. The movie was written by Paul Guay and Steven Mazur, and then it was directed by Tom Shadyac in 1997. It won the ASCAP Film and Television Music awards in (1998) and three other awards. Furthermore, it was nominated for more than three times for awards, such as the Young Artists award in (1998).

Table (11) Application No. Three

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
Liar	the one who tells lies	/laɪə(r)/	/l/ emotion, /a/ entity, /ɪ/ evident, /ə/ existence, /r/ intelligence

After the application of The Universal Theory, the following phonosemantic meaning can be connected to the above analyzed title {the one who uses his intelligence to play with the emotions}.

### 6.4 “Meet the Parents”

The movie tells the story of a male nurse who meets his girlfriend’s parents before proposing. Greg Focker a Jewish man who wants to marry his beloved, but she first asks him to meet her father. He meets her father who was a former CIA man and he has a lie detector. So, Focker finds himself in many funny situations during his visit. The movie was written by Jim Herzfeld, and then it was directed by Jay Roach in 2000. In (2001) it won the American Comedy Award and the ASCAP Film and Television Music Award. The movie was nominated in (2001) for the Oscar Award and the Golden Globe Award.

Table (12) Application No. Four

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Meet</b>	to come together with especially at a particular time and place	/mi:t/	/m/ eagerness to be acquired, /i/ exposing existent, /t/ achieving time
<b>Parents</b>	people who bring up and care for another	/peərənts/	/p/ towards adopting the identity, /e/ indicated, /ə/ existence, /r/intelligence, /ə/ existence, /n/ fullness of identity, /t/ tendency, /s/ clear

The phonosemantic meaning of the first part can be read as {the state of eagerness to acquire and expose things with others}. The second part can be read as {existences who are full of identity and have the tendency of adoption}. The resulting meaning is exposing things with existences who have the tendency of adoption.

## 7. Romantic Movies

A romantic movie is a term that refers to those movies that show love affairs between the characters of a story or a movie. Altman (1999, pp. 30-31) says that Hollywood uses music with romantic movies to indicate amusement and enjoyment. Cawelti (1976, p. 41) mentions that while adventure stories central character are males, the central figures of the romantic stories are women. He adds that romantic works focus on love affairs and their development between men and women.

### 7.1 “The Sound of Music”

The movie is about a young lady who is sent by her convent to be a governess for the children of a widowed naval officer. Maria fails to be a nun after she falls in love with George Trapp the officer. George asks for the help of the convent to send him a governess after the failure of many other previous governesses for his mischievous children. At the end of the movie, Maria finds herself in a love affair and fails as a nun. The movie was written by Russel Crouse, and then it was directed by Robert Wise in 1965. It was the Oscar award winner, the Golden Globes Award winner and the Photoplay Award winner, in (1966). Furthermore, it was nominated for many awards, such as the New York Critics Circle Award in (1965) and the BAFTA Award in (1966).

Table (13) Application No. One

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Sound</b>	the sensation perceived by the sense of hearing	/savnd/	/s/ expressible, /a/ existence with existent, /v/ hidden, /n/ eager to acquire, /d/ activated.
<b>Music</b>	the art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination, and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity	/mju:zik/	/m/ eagerness to be acquired, /j/ evident, /u/ accepting existent inside, /z/ continuous aliveness, /i/ visible, /k/ towards clarifying the features with open consciousness

The phonosemantic meaning of the first part is {an existence which is hidden, activated and acquired by others}. The second part can be read as {an existence which is eager to be acquired by others since it is characterized by a continuous aliveness and it shows clarification for the inside features}. The meaning that can be attached to the above analyzed title is an existence that indicates aliveness and which is eager to be acquired by others.

## 7.2 “Pretty in Pink”

The story of this movie is about a poor girl in a high school. Andie comes from a poor town and she is not popular in her school. She loves her childhood sweetheart boy “Duckie”, then, she meets a new friend called “Blane” a playboy and from high a rank class. Her friends say that she will not be able to complete her relationship due to social class differences, but the couple (Andie and Blane) confront such differences

and love each other. The movie was written by John Hughes, and then it was directed by Howard Deutch in 1986. It won the BMI Film award and the TV award in 1987.

Table (14) Application No. Two

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Pretty</b>	appearing or sounding pleasant or nice	/prɪti/	/p/ towards acquiring the identity with support, /r/ sensation, /ɪ/ noticeable existent, /t/ occupying, /i/ evident
<b>pink</b>	a color which is bluish red to red in hue	/pɪŋk/	/p/ towards acquiring the identity with support, /ɪ/ noticeable existent, /ŋ/ confusing, /k/ hesitating

The phonosemantic meaning that can be obtained for the first part is {an existence which has evidence that it has sensation}. The second part can be read as {existence (color) which is confusing and hesitating}. So, the final meaning can be read as an existence who has sensation and wears a confusing color.

### 7.3 “Say Anything”

The movie tells a love story between high school students. Lloyd Dobler wants nothing more than winning the heart of his beloved Diane Court who was aloof girl. The couple meet at the graduation festival and Dobler hopes to speak to Diane who is a beautiful girl, but she is protected by her wary father. Therefore, she cannot have a love affair with anyone because of her father. The movie was written and then directed by the same man who was Cameron Crowe in 1989. It won the Chicago Film Critics

Association Award in (1990) and was nominated for the DVD Exclusive Award in (2003) and the Satellite Award in (2009).

Table (15) Application No. Three

The tile	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Say</b>	to express in words	/seɪ/	/s/ clear expression, /e/ indicative existent, /ɪ/ noticeable existent
<b>Anything</b>	anything whatever: any such thing.	/enɪθɪŋ/	/e/ indicative existent, /n/ act of acquiring, /ɪ/ noticeable existent, /θ/ towards offering the appearance with established display, /ɪ/ noticeable existent, /ŋ/ lively

The phonosemantic meaning that can be associated with the first part of the above analyzed title is {expressing noticeable things (words)}, whereas the second one can be read as {offering and displaying any indicative thing}. The final title is the state of providing a noticeable thing.

#### 7.4 “Sense and Sensibility”

The movie presents the story of three sisters with their mother who live a difficult life after the death of their father Mr. Dashwood. Mr. Dashwood left all his fortune to his son from his first wife. So, the second wife with her three daughters live in a misery. But, later on they are taken by their cousin Elinor kindly. He supports them and they live happily. The movie was written by Emma Thompson, and then it was directed by Ang Lee in 1995. It was the Oscar award winner in (1996) and the BAFTA award winner in (1996). It was nominated for many awards, such as the

Chicago Film Critics Association award in (1996) and the Chlotrudis award in (1996).

Table (16) Application No. Four

The title	The dictionary meaning	Transcription	Semantic value
<b>Sense</b>	discerning awareness and appreciation	/sens/	/s/ expressible, /e/ indicated, /n/ eager to acquire, /s/ clear expression
<b>Sensibility</b>	awareness of and responsiveness toward something, such as emotion	/sensəbɪlətɪ/	/s/ expressible, /e/ indicated, /n/ eager to acquire, /s/ expressible, /ə/ existence, /b/ bonding, /ɪ/ evident, /l/ fullness of available expansion of emotion, /ə/ existence, /t/ tendency, /ɪ/ noticeable existent

The phonosemantic meaning that can be associated with the above analyzed title is {clear and indicated existence that links to expressible things} this is for the first part. The second part can be read as { an existence which has evidence that it has an expandable emotion}. So, it can be said that the final title can be read phonosemantically as an existence which indicates expressions and emotions.

## 8. Discussion of the Results

High front vowel sounds indicates smallness, whereas the use of low back vowel sounds refers to largeness. Historical epic movies' titles and action movie's titles are full of low back vowels, since there movies are connected with harshness, activities and quickness, whereas most of the romantic movies titles are constructed from high front vowels that indicate



smoothness and enjoyment. Soft, and cheerfulness are sound formulated most of the comic movie' titles.

Consonant sound, or a consonant cluster can stand for a specific meaning or feeling. The historical epic movies' titles are full of sounds and sound clusters that refer for aggression, harshness and hatefulness, such as the /-st/ sound cluster which indicate noise and violence.the action movies' titles, such as the title "Star War" reflects action events for its movie. The presence of the sound /k/ stands for harshness and activity; thus, the title "Rocky" constructs has the /k/ sound. The title (jaws) end with the sound /z/ which indicates harshness, so when this sound comes at the end it attracts much attention. The title (rocky) starts with the /r/ sound that attaches to movement and noise. So, sounds that indicates action and movements are presence within the formulation of the action movies' titles.

The selected comic movies' titles share many sounds; these shared sounds can reflect meanings and feelings. Some sounds stand for brief activities, such as the sounds /d/ and /t/. Others represent movement and noise, like the sound /r/, a liquid in motion, such as the sound /l/. These shared sounds can be called form indicatives as Mustafa mentions in his book "Indication of Form" (2017, p.18). He believes that all artistic works have some shared features even these shared features have a little effect. The formulation of the selected comic movies' titles is full of high front vowels which can refer to kindness and cheerfulness.

The study of the sounds which formulate movies' titles can reveal the role of the sounds in that structure. The romantic movies' titles are composed of sounds that can reflect soothing feelings and softness in the structure of the title, such as the sounds /s/ and /l/. The presence of other sounds might refer to singing and music, such as the sound /n/, /m/ and /η/. Thus, the sounds that indicate music and joyfulness are presented within the formulation of the above selected romantic titles.

## 9. Conclusions

Many movies' titles are analyzed in this study which aims to elucidate the relationship between sounds and meaning, and to check whether sounds have an effect on the meaning of the words they construct or not. Titling the movie is an important process in movies industry, since a title can lure the audience to watch the movie and can be commercially successful. Among the most important results that the study came up with are the following:

- 1- Most of the analyzed epic historical movies' titles are formulated from sounds that refer to action, aggression, and harshness, whereas the action movies' titles which are selected in this study are formulated with sounds that indicate quickness and activeness. Furthermore; the sounds that formulated romantic movies' titles indicate softness and music, whereas the comic movies titles are constructed from brief activity and liquid motion.
- 2- Many sounds that stand for music, softness and smoothness are used in the construction of the selected romantic movies' titles; furthermore these titles are full of high front vowel sounds which indicate cheerfulness and kindness.
- 3- Repetition of sounds, syllables or even words, and other stylistic devices, such as alliteration, assonance and consonance are used by the movie makers to make the movies' titles funnier and to attract the attention of the audience.
- 4- Consonant sounds are the meaning-bearing sounds, when they are combined with vowels, they get the space to provide meaning. Many consonant sounds are used in the construction of the selected movies' titles, but the sound /r/ is the most used sound within the formulation of the selected titles. The consonant /r/ is used in the contexts (titles) that indicate movement and noise. The other sounds that are used many times are /t/, which indicates brief activity and the sound /s/. The /s/ sound refers to smoothness and softness.

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