

PORTRAYAL OF SCHOOL CONFLICTS AND RESOLUTIONS IN FOUR ARMENIAN AND JAPANESE TV SERIES

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Introduction

- For my project, I decided to compare the conflict and resolution portrayal in Japanese and Armenian TV series.
- Research subjects: **Comedy**
 - Great Teacher Onizuka (*Japanese*)
 - Golden School (*Armenian*)
- Research subjects: **Drama**
 - Class 3-A: Mr. Hiiragi's Homeroom (*Japanese*)
 - The Last Teacher (*Armenian*)

The Series

Great Teacher Onizuka

- Production: 2012
- Description: The story centers around class 2-4 on their journey to accepting the death of a former classmate and getting over their distrustfulness of the faculty thanks to their new teacher Onizuka, a former bike gang leader.



Golden School (Voske dproc)



- Production: 2017
- Description: A thief that hid his stolen jewelry in a construction site comes back after completing his prison sentence to find that a school was built above his treasure. Thus, he decides to infiltrate the school as a history teacher to find the gold, in the meantime getting close to the students and teachers.

Class 3-A: Mr. Hiragi's Homeroom (3-nen A-gumi)

- Production: 2019
- Description: A classroom is taken hostage by a teacher who wants to reveal what led to his former student to commit suicide. Aside from traditional bullying in the classroom, the story also focuses on the effects of mass media and its influence on people's behavior.



The Last Teacher (Verjin Usucich)

- Production: 2019
- Description: The story revolves around a class where a major incident is reported a month before their graduation, leaving some of the students on the verge of expulsion. However, the newly appointed teacher, Mr. Mamyán, does everything in his power to help solve the students' issues.



Research questions and Methodology

Research Questions

- What are the differences in the portrayal of school issues and conflict resolution in Armenian and Japanese TV series?
- What is the teacher's role, and how does it connect to the resolution of the conflict, as presented in the TV series?

Methodology

- Film analysis
 - Semiotic and contextual analysis
 - SPEAKING model (Setting, Participants, Ends, Act, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, Genre)
- Separating the scenes of conflict and resolution, as well as those of the main teachers
- Character analysis of the bullies, victims, and teachers

Analysis **(Characterization)**

Portrayal of the victims



- Portrayal of the conflicts seems more severe in Japanese series (suicide, bullying, etc.)
 - Most of the victims were students that excelled in some field
 - The victims in the **Japanese series** are usually isolated, but in the **Armenian series**, even if most of the class is rude to them, they have friends by their side.
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Portrayal of the bullies



- In most of the series, especially the Japanese ones, the **bullies** are portrayed as quite antagonistic. However, most of them usually do redeem themselves after a speech by the main teacher.
 - **Reasons for bullying** included envy, jealousy, and retaliation
 - In the Armenian series, the bullies mainly used insults to taunt the victims. Although, there were a few instances where students fought with each other.
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Portrayal of the teachers



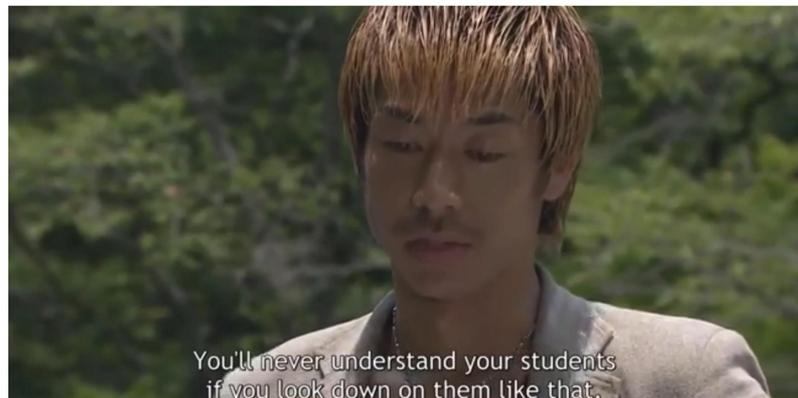
- The main teachers in the **Japanese** series usually use violence combined with a speech to solve the issue, while the **Armenian** teachers try to solve it relying mainly on their speech.
 - The **teachers** are usually new, and do not conform to the rules of the other teachers.
 - Most of the main teachers try to understand the students on a **personal level**.
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Analysis (Camerawork)

Great Teacher Onizuka

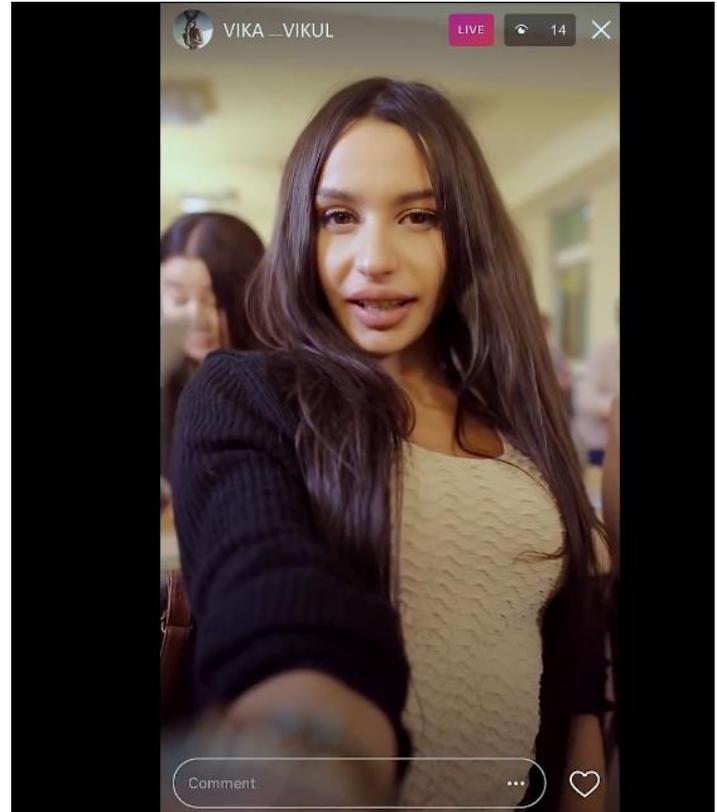
- Many cuts, especially for action scenes.
- The main teacher may be shown from different angles, until his figure is fully revealed.
- Close-ups of lips or objects are used to emphasize certain words or actions
- When trying to teach a lesson to someone who does not want to listen, Mr. Onizuka is shot from a lower angle.
- When the student is open to listening to him, the scene is calmer, and slowly comes closer to them.
- Usage of Dutch angles is done mainly to insinuate an uncomfortable atmosphere or a hidden darkness.

Great Teacher Onizuka (episode 3 and 6)



Golden School

- A sitcom, utilizes a laughing track
- Most of the lighting is quite bright, unless showing a secret place or nighttime.
- Angles are rarely used, with the camera mostly staying still.
- Interesting shot compositions include a two-panel shot for phone conversations and the phone screen of an Instagram live stream.



Golden School (episode 2)



Mr. Hiiragi's homeroom

- The present has more of cool-toned atmosphere compared to the flashbacks which are mostly warm-toned.
- Most of the scenes with the students are shot in a closed space (the classroom), but once they get to the truth and overcome the darkness within them, they go outside (the roof) and become free.
- Action scenes are usually shot with different angles and a shaky camera.



The Last Teacher

- Before the main incident happened, a Dutch angle was used to hint that something was going to happen.
- The spread of the rumor was shown through a montage of different students and teachers discussing it.
- When Mr. Mamyan, the main teacher, is lecturing the students regarding their conduct, he is shot from a low angle, while the student is shot from a high angle. However, once they are on the same page, the shot is done from a neutral angle.
- The shot composition can also show the relationship between two characters, such as their attachment to each other.

The Last Teacher (episode 7)



Limitations and future research

Limitations

- Small number of selected works
- The primary teachers are all male

Avenues for future research

- Increasing the number of works and discussing female teachers
- Adding interviews with the target audience (high schoolers) from both Japan and Armenia regarding their perception of the shows and of cultural differences result in different interpretations.

Thank you!
