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CRITICAL DISCOURSE, LINGUISTICS AND CINEMA

Mohammad Esmaeil Sheykhani,

Corresponding Author, student of Ph.D.in cultural policy studies of Imam Reza International University **Dr. Ebrahim Fayaz**,

Supervisor, associated professor of the department of antropology, University of Tehran **Dr. Ahmad Naderi**,

Advisor, assistant professor of the department of antropology, University of Tehran

Abstract. Few studies examine the relationship between critical discourse, linguistics, and cinema; applying micro- and macro-linguistic analysis as a method leading to defamiliarization of the natural discourse of a film. This study aims to analyze the nature of critical discourse and linguistics' attitude toward cinema, based on which it can be concluded that in cinema, signs in form of critical discourse analysis have significant positions and are defined in relation to other signs of that individual discourse. Signs, which are considered to be central points, are defined differently by other discourses after they are recognized for the first time. Therefore, it is possible to find out the competitions occur in determining the meaning. These competitions are detected through methods of rival discourses, which fixed contents into floating signifiers. Considering the critical comparisons in rival discourses, it can be concluded that each group, based on its specific approach, tries to define the central points and breaksdown the structures of those signs in the rival discourses.

Keywords: Discourse, Cinema, Central Signifier, Sign.

Introduction. Discourse analysis is a term, which initially was proposed by Zelling Harris in American linguistic constructivism. He believed that discourse analysis refers to a structural analysis beyond the surface level of a sentence. However, significant parts of communicational and semantic aspects of language usage in the structural analysis will be lost, if the context of language usage is not included and attention is just paid to structures without considering environmental issues, which affect language usage. Therefore, some linguists, who worked within the framework of functional linguistics, tried to propose a more comprehensive analysis with regard to the context. Eventually in the 1970s, other linguists from University of East Anglia of England, who were influenced by the

thoughts of French thinkers, such as Foucault and Pshv, came to realize that in functional discourse analysis, the content of context has not well-defined yet and many political and social issues, which interact with language, are going to remain unanswered. Consequently, these linguists introduced other contents including power and ideology in critical analysis. These contents were proposed through the foundation of critical linguistics, which itself provided the basis for the emergence of critical discourse analysis. The foundation of critical discourse analysis in critical linguistics can be sought in the pioneering work of "language and control" by Fowler, Hodge, Kress, and Theroux (Soltani, 2005, p.51).

Statement of the Problem. Critical discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary trend, which has emerged during the 1960s to the mid-1970s through some broad changes in some fields, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, semiotics, and etc., the concerns of which are systematic studies of structure, function, and processes of speech productions. According to Fairclough, although discourse analysis has developed in linguistics, it did not stop there; it took a critical form and entered the cultural, social, and political studies. Discourse analysis attempts to discover the relationship between the formation of ideology and speech by studying the apparent effects of speech, the structure of production, and the context in which a text or speech occurs, that is, factors outside the context (situational, cultural, social, etc.). Researchers of critical discourse do not only concern with their field, theories, and their patterns, but rather they pay attention to important social issues, such as inequalities based on gender, ethnic, class, religious, linguistic, etc.

Critical Discourse Analysis: Critical discourse promotes the level of discourse analysis debate. Due to the efforts of thinkers, such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Van Dijk, and Norman Fairclough, in terms of semantic inclusion, discourse analysis enters the social, cultural, and political studies and converts to a critical form, which is beyond the social and critical linguistics.

If one considers discourse analysis as a descriptive level, critical discourse analysis will alter that level to an interpretation and explanation one, which is not only describe and interpret the text but also answer the questions of why someone has to choose this specific text among all other possible linguistic alternatives? And why would individuals use particular expressions during a specific event?

Central Signifier: Within a given discourse, meanings of signs are partially stabilized around a single central point. Central point includes significant and important signs, in a shadow of which other signs are ordered and articulated. The central point gives meaning to other signifiers and preserves the semantic coherence of the whole discourse (Laclau and Moffe, 1985, p. 112).

Through horizontal and vertical cuts in surface and deep levels of a text, general and explicit meanings are first analyzed by decomposing text components from each other. Then, various textual and hypertextual layers in a mutual and simultaneous relationship are examined by macro and microstructure analysis. Expressions have been used in this definition, the explanation of which could be an appropriate start to describe how the process of discourse analysis works. First, a brief explanation of the surface and deep structures of a text are presented, then, horizontal and vertical cuts are explained. In the next step, synchronic and diachronic analyses are discussed along with the relationship of a text and its contained frameworks. A text generally is divided into surface and deep structures. Surface level contains perceptible, objective, and observable expressions and sentence structures, along with the relationships between different parts of statements, which establish through conjunctions. Deep level includes universal and obvious narrative structures, which have an abstract identity and do not contain tangible quality.

These two mentioned levels are called textual layers. Social and cultural structures, as well as knowledge and perceptual systems of audiences and the author of a text, are beyond these layers. Each deep structure is a framework for its surface level. In discourse studies, this topic is explained and referred to as mutual relationship between "text" and "frame". As a research method, discourse analysis faces two frameworks: textual and hypertextual frameworks. The relationship between a text and its framework is a relative one, that is, what is considered as a text or a framework varies in different circumstances and various layers of a text.

"Text" and "framework" have a close relationship with two concepts of "micro" and "macro". These are also relative concepts, which constantly change, that is, in relation to a class of characteristics, one component is considered to be "macro", and at the same time, it is "micro", compared to other elements.

Generally, it can be said that compared to the surface layer, any deep level of a sentence along with its characteristics is considered to be macro. On the contrary, the components of surface structure are considered to be micro when compared to deep layers. In discourse analysis, similar to micro and macro structures, a text and its framework are analyzed within a mutual and continuous relation. "Cut" is the key element to relate a text to its framework or describe the relation between microstructures with macro ones (Laclau and Moffe, 1985).

The cut is a method, which in one hand, enables analysts to separate a layer or characteristic from other layers or components, and on the other hand, helps them to establish a relationship among different elements of various structures. To simplify, "cut" in textual analysis is responsible for two functions, one is breaking down the elements from each other and the other is creating a connection among these components. In line with this discussion, two other concepts are arisen: "diachronic" and "synchronic" analysis. "Synchronic" analysis refers to studying two or several characteristics continuously and in relation to one another, while "diachronic" analysis concerns with an analysis of textual elements individually and apart from other characteristics. Horizontal and vertical cuts are methods, through which diachronic and synchronic analysis are possible. Horizontal cut is mainly applied to separate the textual layers from one another, however, vertical cut has two different functions: first, it separates one

characteristic of a layer from other components of the same layer, second, in case of implementation, it, along the text, links several characteristics with each other (Laclau and Moffe, 1985).

Cinema and Film. Cinema is a branch of art, in which a story is presented through a series of moving pictures (movie/film). A cinematic show called film consists of elements of the image (as a set of frames) and sound (dialogue, sound, and music). A film is based on a screenplay or scenario, and it is produced by a set of actors and actresses, director, cameraman and etc. Cinema is the newest branch of art known as the seventh art, which nowadays presents one of the most popular productions of art. The art of cinema was born in the late eighteenth century by the production of a video camera. The film is a term that generally includes moving pictures. The root of this term lies in the fact that historically the key element in recording media and playing moving pictures is a photographic film. Film production is taken place by recording the image of people or real objects through a camera or by creating them through animation techniques or special effects. Films consist of sets of individual frames. When these frames are displayed quickly and in succession, they create a delusion of motion in a viewer. The winks between images are not observable due to a phenomena called image retention, as a result of which a landscape remains in a memory after fading in a fraction of a second. Moreover, the element of communication is another factor, which leads to observation and perception of moving pictures. This psychological effect is known as beta motion.

According to most individuals, the film is considered to be an important kind of art. The film has the ability to entertain, educate, enlighten and inspire the audience. Visual elements of cinema do not require translation, they grant global power of communication to a production of moving picture. Every film has the ability to attract global audiences, especially if it employs methods of translating speech, such as dubbing and subtitling. Additionally, films are the production of specific cultures. They reflect these cultures and are influenced by them.

It is possible to claim that the differentiation between the concepts of cinema and film seems to be identical with the difference between paired terms such as phenomenal/ phenomenon and type/ kind. In this sense, cinema can be introduced as a phenomenal, which under the influences of its processes, the phenomenon of a film is created. Therefore, cinema works as a process that the final production of which is a film (Afrashi, 2005).

The Nature of Cinema. Since the film is recognized as media, analysts seek its "nature" and unique and significant features of it. Some early film theorists such as Jean Epstein, who introduced the concept of "pure cinema", claim that pure cinema is free from other arts. Moreover, there were theorists and filmmakers, who proudly mention the links between cinema and other arts. Griffith claims to borrow the concept of cross-cutting from Dickens, and Eisenstein seeks the origins of cinematic arrangements in literature. He points out the change in the focal length of "paradise lost" by Milton and the parallel montage of the season of agricultural product market in Flaubert's novel, "Madame Bovary".

There are many definitions of cinema based on Flaubert's perspective. Other numerous definitions are presented according to other arts, including "sculpture-in-motion," by Vachel Lindsay, "the music of light" by Abel Gance, "painting-in-motion" by Leopold Survase, and "architecture-in-motion" by Eliflor leading to establish a link between cinema and those arts and identify significant differences among them, such as cinema was a painting, but a motion one, and it was a music, accompanied by light not notes. All these individuals agree on one fact: cinema is also an art. In 1933, Rudolf Arnheim expressed his concerns over the fact that cinema adherents have not fully embraced this art. He wrote: "cinema is, in every sense, an art, it uniquely entertains [audiences], in a glory and magnificent contest of beauty, it conquers all ancient arts, and [unlike other arts], the source of its inspiration is obvious and evident" (Arnheim, 1997, P. 5). The emphasis on differences and similarities of cinema with other arts legitimized this new media and showed that cinema is not less than other arts, but rather it should be evaluated by itself and with regard to its particular potential and aesthetics (Stam, 1941, pp.31-32). Germaine Dulac also compared cinema to "visual symphony":

Shouldn't cinema, which is a visual art, similar to music, which is an auditory art, lead us towards visual ideas consisting of motion and life? Shouldn't it lead us towards an eye-based artistic concept, which is a production of perceptual inspiration? And shouldn't it evolve our thoughts and emotions through continuity and creation, in a way that music does?

Cinema, Linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis. With the presentation of film debates, linguistics and semiotics appeared successfully and prominently as two new emerging branches. Without a doubt, the name of great scientists such as Ferdinand de Saussure, and generally European structuralisms, including Roman Jakobson, and Russian formalism and their followers are immortalized in this field. Concurrency, coincidence, and contiguousness of these two events lead to the major impact of linguistic and semiotic studies, particularly structuralism approach, on theoretical studies of film and cinema (Elsaesser, 2004, p.5).

Compared to other methods of cinematic studies, the semiotics of the cinema, which itself carries on the legacy of linguistic knowledge, has much less background. Somehow, the serious beginning of semiotics of cinema originated in a written text about the film of "Young Mr. Lincoln", which has been published in No. 223 of a film magazine called "Cahiers du cinema" in the 1970. Followed by it, attention has been paid to the issue of the semiotics of cinema in Europe, and after almost two decades, this topic has entered to American academic circles (Homayounpour, 2004, M.A. thesis). Christian Metz is one of the most famous researchers in the field of semiotics of cinema whose essays on implication have been published in his book "film language: a semiotics of the cinema". Several issues, such as the phenomenological approach to film, syntagmatic analysis of the image track, problems of film semiotics, and samples of semiotic analysis of several films have been discussed in this book by Metz.

In addition to the mentioned books, which concern with generalities and principles of the semiotics of cinema, attentions should be paid to two books of the famous researcher of the field of communication, Arthur Asa Berger. One is "media analysis techniques" (2000), a chapter of which has devoted to semiotic analysis of television medium, and the other is "narratives in popular culture, media, and everyday life" (2001), in which the author, in addition to addressing different narrative perspectives in cinema, has discussed several case studies with semiotics approach in television shows and commercial advertisements.

The book of "from pictorial signs to the text: toward the semiotics of visual communication" by Babak Ahmadi is the only compiling sample in this field. In his book, Ahmadi collected abstracts of articles and works of writers, such as Bordwell, Branigan, Metz, Stam, and Flitterman. As it is obvious, all previously mentioned works concern with essentials and principles of semiotics, however, an analysis of the entire works of a filmmaker based on this method cannot be found among them. "In this regard, two methods of criticisms will be applied. First, introvert criticism, which semiotic approach will be used in it. That is, each visible cinematic sign (visual, auditory) is introduced as a signifier, the signified of which implicates a special concept in one or more than one level. And the second is extrovert criticism. It is worth mentioning that symbols illustrated in the film, in term of value, are equal to signs. Eventually, this method will lead to encoding the work and reveal the hidden meaning in it.

Four categories should be considered in the analysis of the semiotic contents of any work (Berger, 2000, pp.30-31):

- 1. Identify the way meaning creates and transfers in the context of a text, particularly in a narrative one, which is an issue of interest.
- 2. Discover signs, which appear as a combination of signifier and signified.
- 3. Reveal the relations between signs, how they are combined with each other, and consequently, identify how these compounds become qualified, in other words, describe the implication networks within a text.
- 4. Read the coding system of the text and define the directions and level of semantics.

In American and British semiotics, the term media refers to various communicational tools, such as book, radio, cinema, and fashion. Everyone agree with McLuhan on this point that first, script, then, print and press, and today television alter our culture. Though, accepting his analysis, which according to many scholars is somehow brief and even debatable, may not be easy. However, McLuhan's analysis at least has the privilege of freeing up the subjects that have so far been monopolized by philosophers and politicians. McLuhan divides media into cool and hot ones. These words are used to refer to what is called information "temperature" in technical language and "description" of a photo in photography. The greater amount of data in a given message, the more compact the essence of information and the hotter message will be created and vice versa.

The message temperature should not be confused with the referenced content. Coolness or hotness of a message is subjected to the amount of elements a message provides to decode a given signified- regardless of the poverty or richness of that signified; a photo or cinematic film is hot, but a television image is cold since the points and pixels formed that image is less.

Speech is cooler than the script, and the ideographic script is cooler than thealphabet. Folk and cliché art, such as western film, cartoon, crime novel, singing, and etc., which are "plain", "ancient", and "vulgar", actually are not an art, but rather an amusement. These arts "have a symbolic function whose purpose is to represent emotional positions and tendencies, which are compactly encoded and ornamented with a meaning, which missed out of a real-life" (Elsaesser, 2004, p.13)

According to Metz, "the raw material" of the cinema is those information channels, attentions are paid to which when watching films (Afrashi, 2005). These channels are:

- 1. Filmed pictures
- 2. Graphic designs
- 3. Recorded speech
- 4. Recorded music
- 5. Noise or recorded audio effects

Semiotic of cinema is an analyst, which concerns about the media resulted from a mixture of material. In semiotic of cinema, the goal is to create a comprehensive pattern, which explains how a film is conceptualized and how this concept is transmitted to viewers (Afrashi, 2005).

Considering what Andrew quoted from Metz's opinions, it is possible to propose an analysis of the filmstructure through theoretical tools of structuralism approach. According to Metz, cinematic raw material consists of five information channels, which are distinct semiotic systems, including semiotic system of graphic designs, semiotic system and music, and the system of natural sounds; the way the reasonable and moderated performances of these semiotic systems can be determined based on theoretical scheme of syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes will be the structural analysis of semiotic system of the film (Afrashi, 2005).

Studies of semiology can be viewed from different perspectives, since cinema is also a kind of media. Semiology and linguistic studies can be divided into three general periods. The first one refers to the attempts taken place to match the minimum units of cinema and film with minimum language units, such as phoneme, morpheme, and sentence; the initial text can actually be placed in this level. At this stage, "language system" or langue is accepted for cinema.

Cinema is considered to only have language faculty/language (In other words, "power of the film") without any language system after the failure of this reconciliation. In this stage, there is no need to reconcile as before.

However, it can be said that in the third stage, other linguistic approaches are used in studies of cinema, including "generative grammar", "cognitive grammar", "semantics", "pragmatics", "text analysis", "discourse analysis" and etc. Actually in this stage, in addition to phoneme, word, and sentence in linguistics, other subjects, such as text and discourse are raised as well. Now, cinema has its particular language to analyze, which can be used by semiotic and linguistic tools (Elsaesser, 2004, p.7). It is worth mentioning that film or cinema has a multilayered linguistic system. On the one hand, the level of speech, image, music, and sound are considered to be important in cinema; and each of these levels has its own elements and components, which are linked through relations and structures or, special syntaxes. On the other hand, in the higher layer, each of these levels is connected to each other through syntagmatic relations, and in fact, forms the elements and components of the surface structure. Special syntagmatic and syntactic relations also exist among these components, explaining of which may be possible in montage editing or even before imaging (Elsaesser, 2004, pp.5-7). What was first created a connection between film studies and linguistic was not this issue that from the beginning, cinema combined images with language, whether in form of speech (when playing a film) or script (intertitles), but rather this fact that in relation to signification and implication, some theoretical and philosophical subjects were the motivation of paying attention to language. Again, the question is how the creation of reality in form of images and photos can provide a significant and meaningful statement about the same reality? As Christian Metz states, "we should understand how films are comprehended" or we should "comprehend the global images as a speech about the globe" (Elsaesser, 2004, p.13).

Fairclough in his three articles, which have been published in 1985 to 1989, tries to propose an analytical framework for studying the relationships between language, power, and ideology, which was called "critical analysis". The title of his first article is "critical and descriptive goals in discourse analysis". In this article, he distinguishes between critical discourse analysis and a dominated critical perspective. He states that this perspective is similar to the descriptive tendency, which he introduced and criticized in discourse analysis. He believes that in this approach no attention has been paid to the explanation of the method of social development of speech practices and their social impacts.

Also, in this article, he criticizes the concept of "background knowledge", which complicates the ideological processes of discourse, as well as the concerns with "goals", which are based on an unsupportable and weak subject-oriented theory. Moreover, he criticizes the negligence to relations of power, such as those appearing in raising the level of a conversation between identical individuals to a level of an idealized sample for common linguistic interaction purposes (Fairclough, Trans., 2000, p.20).

The other approach, that is critical perspective, claims that natural implicit statements with ideological origins are found in many discourses, which play a role in defining the place of people as social agents. Not only these natural statements include aspects of speculative meaning (for example, implicit statements required to comprehend the coherent integration of sentences), but also they contain assumptions about social relations, which are the basis of interactive acts (such as turn-taking system in conversation or politeness). These assumptions have become completely natural and people are not aware of their existence; they do not know how others use these assumptions in relation to them, and they have no idea how they, themselves, use these items in relation to others (Fairclough, Trans., 2000).

The second paper is "discourse representation in media discourse". In this paper, Fairclough discusses relative trends in the representation of discourse (speech tendencyand patterns) in the media. These discussions are based on an analysis of a set of papers cited in newspapers. He believes that generally a reporting discourse cannot easily be distinguished from the report, itself. Moreover, in his opinion, attentions are usually paid to speculative meaning (content) of reporting discourse, and its texture and intrapersonal meanings are neglected. The paper discusses the point that the delicate details of a text are coordinated with social structures and those types of relations of power, media interact within which. It also brings up the issue that with the assistance of hiding dominance relationships, it could be confirmed that popular language of people and their actions contain transparency and clarity, which results in ideological impacts (Fairclough, Trans., 2000, p.22).

In his third paper, "language and ideology", he proposes that understanding the concept of language-ideology relationship should be taken place within the research framework about socio-cultural and discourse transformation. Instead of considering the issues related to the truth of ideology, in the discussion of the concept of ideology, Fairclough follows Gramsci and emphasizes on impacts of the truth of ideology. He also considers characteristics of a text as ideological characteristics if they affect the relations of powers (confirm or weaken these relationships).

He considers ideology as a concept existed in structures (discourse-related conventions) as well as in events. He believes that, on the one hand, conventions, which apply to real events and gained common structural entities within "orders of discourse", are ideologically used in certain ways. On the other hand, ideologies occur during events in actual discourse and change. As Gramsci states, an order of discourse may include "an ideological set" or combinations of ideologies, both of which, that is, ideological set and order of discourse may be rebuilt during events in discourse. The possibility of emergence provided for these discourse reconstructions is due to contradictions existed in social actions, which are caused a doubt in people. People combine conventions existed in discourse with modern procedures to get free of this restriction, and subsequently, heterogeneous compounds of form and meaning appear in texts.

He has studied orders of discourse in institutions such as education, as well as greater social formation including the areas of hegemony and the fight for hegemony (ideological fight). In this process, the form of

ideological action of special discourse practices might be changed- for example it may be transformed to a form of advice and recommendation, whether in shape of opposing hegemony in the form of resistance against impersonal institutions, or in shape of proponent of hegemony in form of a deceptive personification within the framework of such entities. The paper ends by specifying a role for ideological analysis and criticism of discourse within the framework of social conflict (Fairclough, Trans., 2000, p.24). In 1997, Van Dijk published a paper titled as "discourse as social interaction". In this paper, he analyzes the discourse of a lecture presented by one of the conservatives in the parliament of the United State in the 1991. He proposes that: if discourse becomes an action, it must be shown precisely that under which condition this transformation occurs, and which types, levels, or domains of action have been suggested in the discussion of discourse. In a critical discussion of discourse on the reproduction of social inequalities, no concept is more obvious and evident than the notion of power. However, this matter requires a profound analysis of the nature of power; what kind of power is involved in discourse, how power is applied, expressed, and reproduced in speech and writing. The same issue applies to sociological-cognitive correlative of power, that is, ideology, which is the basis of common group representations. In analyzing these concepts, it is necessary to be aligned with levels of group and social analysis, and considering some of the secondary characteristics of discourse as well (van Dijk, Trans., 2010, pp.144-145).

Social and individual levels are related to each other, due to the fact that language users speak in a position of a member of a group, as well as an individual, and they comprehend the speech of others. Each speaker is unique as his secondary discourse. In addition to social similarities, which recognize speakers as members of a group, personal differences, heterogeneities, and disagreements must be expected (van Dijk, Trans., 2010).

Conclusion. Based on studies of linguistics and critical discourse, signs are very important. In a discourse framework, each sign is defined in relation to other signs existed in that discourse. In fact, signs in any discourse turn into a central signifier, and within the framework of critical discourse, floating signifiers are recognized and defined according to this central signifier. Other discourses are trying to fixed contents into floating signifiers, and turn them into a central signifier; this pattern has also been observed many times in the history of cinema, in this sense that, a discourse appears in the history of cinema, and selects a central signifier as its axis, and then by fixing meaning into floating signifiers of that discourse, the rival discourse of cinema have performed defamiliarization of that discourse.

In fact, from this point of view, the history of cinema can be defined as a history of competition among multiple discourses. The mutual point of these discourses of cinema is the fact that they use floating signifiers of other discourses and convert them to a text.

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