

Semiotics and Critical Discourse Analysis of “The Hero; love story of a spy”

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Abstract

Critical Discourse Analysis is a wide discipline from the last few decades to study different aspects of the different discourses present in the society through movies, news papers, media etc. In the end of 1970, discourse as discipline was first used and studied mostly in Australia and UK (Mey 1985, Fowler et al.1979;). CDA counterparts in various disciplines like psychology, sociolinguistics and social sciences etc to develop them critically in 1970s (Birnbaum 1971; Hymes 1972; Fay 1987; Thomas 1993; Calhoun 1995; Turkel 1996; Singh 1996; Wodak 1996; Fox and Prilleltensky 1997; Ibanez and Iniguez 1997).

Semiotics is another major disciplines to study the critical effect of the different discourses present in the society through signs. Semiotics investigates signs and symbols and how they are used in a specific context to convey meanings to the listeners and viewers.

The present study is mainly focused on the dialogues and images of the movie The Hero; Love story of the spy. How Bollywood portrays the images of ISI (Pakistan Secret Intelligence) in the presence of their army. It is attempted to investigate whether there is any negative or positive effect of presentation of ISI in the movie on their viewers or is this movie a direct attack to malign the status of ISI in the world.

Key Words: Movie, CDA, Semiotics Vandijk modal, signs.

1. Introduction

CDA and semiotics play an important role to critically analyze any text, movie or image, and news paper. The purpose of this study is to study all those factors of the movie which help the viewers to develop biased opinion and how electronic media show different pictures of the society to develop the new discourse in any community. Media, electronic or print ,always play an important role in building different opinions in the society according to the need of time. That is why, media is considered “fourth estate” in all the democratic nations (Schultz 1998; Cf Jager & Link 1995). Most of the time, media change the point of view of the societies or individuals in such a way that they themselves are not aware that their point of view is changed (Kellner & share 2007).

By having all these points in view, the main purpose of the study is to locate all the factors of the movie “The Hero; love story of a spy” that how Bollywood presents the image of the Muslims and the Muslim army before the whole world and how unconsciously they change the point of view of their viewers.

CDA is basically used to printout or show the hidden ideologies and motivations behind the conversations or texts (Augustin 2009)

According to Meyer and Wodak (2009) the historical approach of CDA is established in the society in 1960s and later on it was followed in 1991 in Amsterdam in the month of January by a small symposium. On the basis of the support of the university names and Amsterdam Ruth Wodak, Gunther Kress, Teun van Dijk, Theo van Leeuwen , Norman Fairclough, got a chance to discuss the CDA in detail in those two days. A journal, Discourse and society (1990) by Van dijk had been published and was known as one of the starting

Journals on the discipline. Various books had also been published as well with same research aims.

In the world of today, CDA is an established discipline in the field of Linguistics and have been studied and applied at worldwide level. The present study is focused on the different images and conversation about ISI and how it can be portrayed, the study will explore all the historical aspects with reference of the movie.

2. Hypothesis

Negative image has been shown to the societies of ISI, Muslims and their religious concepts.

3. Research objectives

The research has following objectives:

- To study the hidden ideologies and meaning of the text by studying various images and dialogues.
- To mark all the hidden negative and positive discourses of the movie.
- To check how media create effects on viewers by using various techniques.
- To develop the critical approach of the viewers by giving them awareness about all the devices and techniques used by the producers and writers.

4. Research Questions

Following are the research questions of my study:

- How Muslims and ISI has been portrayed in the movie “The Hero: Love story of a spy”?
- What are basic signs and symbols which they used in this movie to give strength to their ideologies?
- What is character sketch of the hero (Hindu) of the movie and villain (Muslim) in the movie?

5. Delimitation of the study

Following are the delimitations of the study:

- The researchers only selected one movie to answer all the research questions.
- Only those dialogues have been specially analyzed which are about ISI.
- Only those images have been selected which import specific meaning to the text.
- Vandijk modal of critical discourse analysis has been used to analyze conversations.

6. Literature review

CDA is a wide discipline which covers various critical approaches into it. CDA gives various approaches to analyze different types of text. It provides us various models for various types of discourses in the society like news, movies and media, etc.

CDA normally answers all those type of questions which are about race, discrimination, class, gender and dominance etc. Wodak and Fairclough (1997 p# 271-280) gave a brief detail about the main points of CDA

- CDA confronts social issues
- Power correlation is discursive.
- Discourse form culture and society.
- Discourse is always historical and ideological .
- Discourse is explanatory and interpretive and in form of social action.

CDA according to Vandijk deals at two level, micro and macro. All the other features or characteristics fall into one of these two features. It means that there is a special gap between these two approaches that is why, we distinct them separately and that was on the base of sociological construct (Knorr-Cetina and Cicourel 1981; Alexander et al. 1987).

Media in today's world play an important role in the whole world. All the new technologies their development, film and entertainment industries and computer encourages the efforts among the largest corporations of the world to control the new or consolidated information (Hamelink,1997).

Semiotics is also another major discipline to analyze images. Semiotics basically deals with signs and signifier how they create special meanings in the text. The movie here is analyzed according to Vandijk modal of CDA and signs through semiotics analysis to show how various signs and signifier have been used, how media converts the thinking and approach of a layman by presenting such activities on their TV, news papers and social media sites.

The study also locates all those features which help to emerge a new discourse in the society in such a way that common men are unfamiliar when and how unconsciously their approach changes. The role of media is also discussed.

Movie "The Hero: Love story of a spy" is an Indian movie released in 2003 and Pakistan intelligence ISI has been portrayed in this movie and the character of head of ISI in the movie: Ishaq Khan" is also present. The Kashmir border issues, Nuclear weapons and Indian spy are involved in it.

7. Research Methodology

Semiotics deals with signs. Ferdinand de Saussure divides language in to two categories which he named as Langue and Parole. In all languages, sign is considered the smallest unit through which we can convey our meanings. Sign is basically an identity kit which we set for all other things on different basis have various criteria.

Ferdinand de Saussure gave three basic terms to understand the concept of language i -e sign, signifier, and signified. Sign is basically the name, signifier the sound, and signified the image which is present in our mind. All these terms have arbitrary relationship with one other. Ferdinand de Saussure gives more emphasis on synchronic analysis.

CDA is also a wide discipline to critically analyze any text. Vandijk 2004 modal of critical discourse analysis has been used to study this phenomenon. Vandijk gave 27 ideological strategies and one of the most representing one is 'euphemization' and 'derogation'. The classification of the terms is very helpful when we implement it i-e negative other representations and positive self representation and both these features fall into the realm of macro- strategies Vandijk (2004).

A rhetorical device Euphemization is used to build positive self representation. All the dominant powers use these types of terminologies to build their positive image and portray the negative images of other communities without knowing the reality.

Van Dijk model of cognitive analysis, which is later converted in ideological analysis, consist mainly of three levels. The first level which is called social analysis is basically concerned with the discourse analysis in connection with society and person. On the other hand, discourse analysis is concerned with textual interpretations of lexical items which are always connected to social structure. While in cognitive analysis, we interpret the goals, beliefs, likes, disliking and overall mental process.

8. Analysis

8.1 CDA analysis

Indo-Pak relations are very crucial from 1947 onwards when Pakistan came into being. Both the nations are unable to create a soft corner for the other. Their relations, links, and hatred is presented through media, either electronic or print. Movie "*The hero; Love story of a spy*" (2003), presents the feelings of Hatred of one nation for the other and displays

how unconsciously media install the images of both nations into the mind of viewers with constructed reality.

Most of the dialogues in the movie are tinted with the tendency of hatred for the secret agency of Pakistan i-e ISI, the very 1st dialogue, “when additional head of ISI Ishaq Khan makes a killer plan”, shows that they are importing a negative image of Pakistan as according to the macro strategies of Vandijk modal, Euphemization is present in it which means that they are importing the negative image of the other and indirectly positive image of their own selves. Like in the dialogue, the name of the country is also present with the word 'Killer' importing the negative image in the minds of viewers without knowing the reality. Even the viewers are not familiar with the whole story but still, the feeling of negative image is constructed in the minds of viewers and this phenomenon is also present in many other dialogues of the movie as well.

The other dialogue between the character of Ishaq Khan and head of Mujahedeen from Kashmir i-e “Had the general not pleaded America at the cost of Pakistan's solidarity, Talibans wouldn't have been defeated” is uttered through Pakistanis or Kashmiris. This utterance shows their negative thinking about Pakistan. The dialogue creates such a image in the minds of viewers that Pakistanis are themselves admitting that the act by the General was rational ultimately creating highly negative image at worldwide level.

According to Vandijk model of cognitive analysis, we interpret goals, beliefs, likes, dislikes and overall mental processes. through this dialogues “we must expose Pakistan at any cost who supports terrorist on one side and on the other side, presents good in-front of the whole world.” It is very clear the dislikes of Bollywood and through media they unconsciously add their approach in the mind of viewers.

Vandijk also talks about the choice of words in his CDA model. As in the dialogue “who gave you headship of ISI you don't deserve to be a tail.” the choice of words is highly unethical, rude and idiotic and it also shows their hatred for Pakistan as well as for Pakistani intelligence service. And it is made to seem that the whole ISI is unable to do anything in front of one spy of India. The scene setting at this time also shows the corrupt face of Pakistanis as the head of ISI gave a briefcase full of money to the Indian spy just to save his face value in the video.. It also shows that the Pakistan plotted such activities in Kashmir and in India. If Indian spy presents them in front of UNO, it will be highly shameful for them.

According to Vandijk, social analysis, is basically concerned with society and person. This dialogue “You are head of ISI, use your head even for a single time.” shows their personal biasness as well their choice of word and character of Ishaq Khan is given to such a man who doesn't deserve it. It shows their personal grudge towards ISI and Pakistan as well. As also in the dialogue “Ishaq, in few days we will get the parts of the bomb. How will you launch them? Will you throw by your hands.” they openly mock at the head of ISI.

To save their face value and to seek their revenge, they plot such activities which are not even close to reality like their prediction “Ishaq you are dead”. This dialogue shows the sense of revenge as also in this Dialogue “what do you think Ishaq? are you safe there? never, you will die the death of humiliation”. At the end of the movie even the Head of ISI dies and only one Indian spy brings about his end. It seems that they are importing the positive image of them as they did such a good act for the whole world and saved Kashmiri brothers from Pakistanis. According to the Vandijk modal of CDA euphemization, ‘derogation is present which means that positive images of one own self and negative image of others in a unconscious way.

According to the Vandijk modal of cognitive analysis it is clear that beliefs, likes and dislikes etc. are involved in it. Like in the dialogue “You can’t touch them because your country is pledged in the pocket of whites”. Or in this one as well “The one who did so many mistakes is Pakistan, and the one who forgave is India”. These dialogues show their dis-likeness as well as their beliefs about the Muslims, because in movie, the concept of jihad is also portrayed in a negative sense.

On the basis of all the dialogues shown above it is clear what they think about Pakistan and ISI, their approach about Pakistanis and Kashmiri. They present themselves the best protectors of Kashmir. They are trying to prove that the ISI, the secret agency of Pakistan is nothing but a sponsor of terrorism.

8.2 Semiotic Analysis

Semiotics is one of the major branches of Linguistics. Even some theorists called linguistic a branch of semiotics. Semiotics is present in our daily life, conversations and in all other things. Semiotics basically deals with the signs, signifier and signified. The movie “The Hero: Love story of spy hides many signs in it. The films represent the culture and norms of the societies. The movie “The Hero: love story of a spy is basically a mixed culture movie, Pakistani, Kashmiri and Indian culture.

In this section of the analysis, researchers will discuss all those aspects which are misrepresented in the movie and all those aspects which are not even a part of that culture as in the very 1st image shown below.

Figure A & B

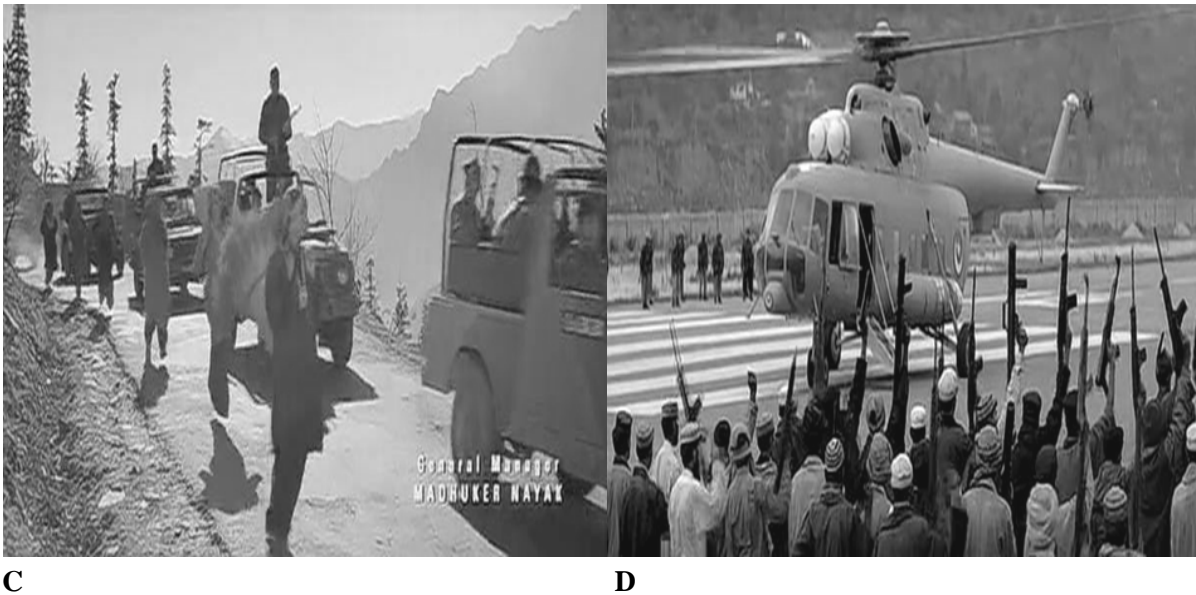


In this image, the Kashmiri girls are dancing with the Indian army in a very frank style. The way they are dancing is not a cultural aspect of Kashmir. The people of Kashmir are very strict and conservative about their girls. They never allow them to dance with males, even they don't have any legal relationship with them, but still they are dancing with them in public places.

The man standing behind the dancers is wearing an Islamic cap on his head but still dancing. Islam never allows such a broad approach where girls and boys can dance. The same phenomenon is also present in image c where Kashmiri girls are dancing and their same dress code in pink color signifies their mutual understanding. Signs signifies that they have such norms in their society. The steps of their dance are highly professional which seems like they are already well familiar and it is their daily routine.

The mutual understanding of the actors shown in the images signifies that Indians and Kashmiris have very friendly relations with one another. It seems like they want peace over there and Pakistanis irritates them. Indirectly, this phenomenon is imported into the mind of viewers and intends to prove Pakistan and ISI, being a selfish agency and country that victimizes Kashmir. Kashmiris' intentions are shown towards India and they consider Pakistan their enemy in this movie, but reality is far away from this phenomenon what is projected on the screen.

Figure C and D



In the image c, it is very clear that the Kashmiri girls are walking and dancing along with the Indian army jeeps. Their moods and way of walking and their smiles towards the army seem like they are not frightened. They are very frank and friendly with each other. They are looking at the Indian army jeeps with positive attitude. The way they behave is also against the culture of Kashmir. Kashmiries never allow their girls to be frank and have a positive attitude towards males. Their cultural values are protected and strict in this regard. They are very conscious for their girls. All the signs signify those characteristics which are not a part of that culture and are imported here to create a negative image of Pakistan and Kashmir in front of the whole world.

In image D the head of ISI, which, according to the Indian spy is in jail but in real he is not. Him, comes to the Kashmir, where mujahadeen are also present. Mujahedin and ISI collaborations signify that they are for each other and always ready to help others. The guns which they raise at the arrival of the ISI head signify the warrior spirit and cruel nature of ISI, Pakistanis and Kashmiries.

The sign of Pakistani Flag on a helicopter signifies that they have special links between themselves and all their technologies are mutually used.

On the basis of above all pictures, images from the movie, it is clear that they propagated that the community of layman in Kashmir is with the Indian army and the Mujahideen or according to the Indians, the terrorists are with Pakistanis. They present themselves a very calm and peaceful nation and Pakistanis as a terrorist sponsored state and a corrupt nation.

9. Conclusion

According to the CDA and semiotic analysis, it is clear that the Bollywood movie “The hero: Love story of a spy” is pictured with the motto to humiliate ISI and Pakistan in front of the whole world. The Kashmiries-is being with Indians because they are very humble and sweet in their nature.

On the other side, Pakistanis and Kashmiri mujahedin are presented as terrorists. The movie seems highly against ISI and mujahadeens. ISI is considered one of the best secret agencies of the world, but here in this movie, it is presented as of the devil’s party having no sense what to do and how to do. All the signs signify the cruel nature of ISI as a sponsor of terrorism. This study clearly proves the hatred of India for Pakistan by presenting those aspects which are far away from reality.

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