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SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF NON-COMMUNICATIVE FEATURES IN TITLE TEXTS OF TWO RENOWNED PAKISTANI DRAMAS THROUGH MULTI-MODALITY FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

The following study tends to analyze the non-communicative features in the title texts of two renowned Pakistani drama serials with the help of a multi-modal framework. In applied linguistics, the non-communicative analysis of semiotic signs through images has been introduced by Kress and Leeuwen (1996). The study attempts to analyze the representative symbols of two Pakistani drama serials through multi-modality. It shows the visual communication of title pages through various non-rhetoric techniques. The selected title pages demonstrate the submissive roles of women in Pakistani society depicted through nonverbal communicative techniques by scholars. Both of the renowned Pakistani dramas were picturized in the year 2019. The study is qualitative and interpreted. The title pages of these dramas have been taken from Google images. The actual thematic philosophy behind each Pakistani drama is examined with its title text that shows various modes of vision, the overall frame of the characters, and different modes of actions for characters on the title page, and it is perceived through specific subtle philosophic art. The results from the findings have shown that the title texts on the cover page of the drama serials tend to demonstrate the submissive role of women in Pakistani society through the nonverbal communicative techniques and the subtle perceptive male dominancy shown in each of the drama serials. They try to sketch current women's status in male-dominated Pakistani society. This study can help future researchers to give their contributions differently following this topic through semiotic analysis of Pakistan's film industry.

Keywords: Culture, Dramas, Framework, Pakistani, Semiotics

1. Introduction

The field of applied linguistics deals with the use of language in a given context. Therefore, to comprehend the real essence of applied linguistics in a context, the proper understanding of the extra-lingual elements is necessary. The signs are designed to compose spoken and written languages. Jakobson (1975) stated that every other object has its particular meaning in a context that is known to be in terms of either connotative or associative meaning. According to Morris (1938), Deely (1990), and Koch (1998), the system of semiotics that represents the signs and the contextual meanings with their interpretations are known as the stages in the process of sign recognition.

1.1.   Problem Statement

Cassirer (1923) defines the cultural position in the field of semiotics. It is one of its major subfields. The cultural aspect of semiotics is perceived to perform two basic functions. They are the system of signs in culture, and culture itself is a system of signs. The former shows that different types of signs give different connotative meanings in culture, whereas the latter states that the culture itself is a complex of signs. Herder (1784) and Tylor (1871) stated that the former function explains how the participants live in a culture of a complex system of signs.

1.2.   Research Aim

The study is aimed to find the semiotic representation in the title themes of Pakistani dramas. The nonverbal communicative techniques associated with title themes demonstrate the submissive roles of women in Pakistani society with multi-modality modes visualized.

1.3.   Research Questions

RQ1. How is the semiotic representation done through the title themes of Pakistani dramas?

RQ2. What specific nonverbal techniques are used to represent the submissive position of women in society through the title pages of three Pakistani dramas?

RQ3. What are the particular characteristics that are used to visualize the different modes of women in society?

1.4.   Significance of this Project

The role of this study is the presentation of semiotic analysis that tries to find different themes from the title covers of Pakistani dramas. This study touches on the new paradigm of research in Pakistan based on semiotic analysis. The role of Pakistani culture is presented in society through the visualization of titles from two renowned Pakistani dramas. They try to sketch current women's status in male-dominated Pakistani society. This study can help future researchers follow this trend of a topic in semiotic analysis of the film industry in Pakistan.

2.   Literature Review

2.1.   *Modern Trends in Research of Socially Structured Semiotics*

Socially structured semiotics is one of the semiotics that develops meaning through different strategies. It was pioneered by Halliday (1978). This approach has been introduced in a work of "Language as the Social Semiotics". Halliday introduces three major kinds of meta-functions in it. These are given below.

i. *Ideational:* It functions on a particular ideology in the World.

ii. *Interpersonal:* It functions on given surroundings that specify particular roles to people.

iii. *Textual:* It specifies the relation of signs with other different signs based on specific culture and situation.

Kress & Hodge (1979) tried to develop a critical paradigm in developing societal semiotics through a work named "Language as Ideology". The work of "social semiotics" (1988) presented different images and resources to study similar languages. According to them, the work of the traditional approach in semiotics is assumed with more relevant and fixed meanings from text. It is

decoded through a system of coding by analysts. It is an impersonal and universal code for all its users. The socially structured semiotics are not assumed to produce text that exactly codes meanings with its effects for authors to hope. It is a concise circle of struggles with improbable outcomes to study at a social level. The focus is on its effects to produce meaning. However, Hodge & Kress (1988) further stated that socially constructed semiotics are implemented to interpret the entire context and are not bound to the text of the context only. According to Kress & Leeuwen (1996), visually designed grammatical blocks explain particular forms of meanings with socially constructed experiences. Simpson & Mayr (2010) mentioned that the book, "*Language and Power*" is one of the nicest works that discussed the theoretical underpinnings of critical issues in analyzing discourse. The manipulation of philosophy accompanies it after the analysis of visual arts.

2.2. *Specific Elements of Socially Constructed Semiotics*

Posner (1985) explained the elements to design the approach of semiotics. The approach to the author deals with various elements. The elements include norms, values, and traditions of the specific culture. The signs in meaning usually convey those meaningful patterns unclear to the present audience. Therefore, to properly convey the meanings of signs in culture, the three important components are codes, procedure, and the media. Posner & Reinecke (1977) stated earlier that the normal range of routine for particular things is processed through signs. This process is known as 'sign-process'. Every system is marked with signs, particular meanings and its audience. They are conveyed to the specific community through the process of sign. This process is multi-layered in nature. It does vary from one community form to another. One of the sign systems conveys meanings to others who share a similar system. Saussure (1916) defined a system of signs with the help of signifier and signified. The signifier

is an uttered word; the signified is an image or meaning formed in the mind. Noth (1990) stated that the signifiers are specific culturally-based relations developed between them. The relation tries to give meanings to the process of sign. The elements of the sign are signified and the signifiers. They process the entire system of signs. Keller & Ludtke (1997) defined different kinds of codes that give different layers to meaning that process the meaning of the sign. They are conventional, natural and artifact. The natural forms of codes are inherent. They could transfer from one generation to another in the form of codes and can be changed. The conventional forms are codes that can be established to promote traditional values. Cavalli, Sforza & Felfman (1981) and Nyiri (1988) explained these codes. The inherent codes are *natural*. These codes transfer from one generation to another, but these codes could be changed due to maturation. *Conventional codes* are established to promote traditional norms. Erikson (1966) and Ebil-Eibesfeldt (1979) stated about the pseudo-state of speciation. It is the entire community of different species, each possessing a separate culture. The other significant component in the sign system is the media. The sign process conveys the same manners in a shared code of medium. The culturally structured semiotics of the system are processed through the same code with the assistance of a specific medium. The transference of media is conveyed through particular meaning. Posner (1985) gave four different types of media. They are physical, sociological, biological, and technological media-related codes. Ponzio (2004) stated about the physical type of media. It is the physical build-up of the elements in chemical composition to transfer the signs. The second is the biological form of media. The biological medium is through sensory capabilities in humanity. The third is technological-based resources. The resources can be microscopes, cameras, etc. The richest form of media is sociological. It is also known as a cluster that includes the other mediums. Giesecke (1988)

and Baltzer (2001) include websites, clubs, broadcasting systems, etc.

3. Research Methodology

The approach of this research is qualitative. The design is interpretational. It interprets the title covers of renowned Pakistani dramas. The mixed approach of semiotic purpose to find the hidden meanings from the visualization log of pictures are taken from the Google Image and analyzed.

Data Collection

The cover titles of three Pakistani famous dramas of last year are taken to analyze. The dramas depict the domestic and societal issues of the woman faction in Pakistani society.

4. Theoretical Interpretations of Semiotic Approaches

According to Bignell (2002), the images in visual form do have signs to interpret many subtle meanings. Different components convey meanings in the shape of signs. The present study follows lingual and non-lingual elements to interpret the title cover logos of two Pakistani dramas that have been taken to analyze through the model of Kress. Kress & Leeuwen (2006) represented visual images that have meanings in non-verbal-based components. Therefore, Hodge & Kress (1988) stated that societal semantics is a complex relation of culture with semantics.

5. Analysis

5.1.1. *Drama Serial Muqaddar (Destiny)*

The title cover of a Pakistani drama named "*Maqaddar*" is given in Figure 1 (see appendix). The producer of the drama named the drama with a title, "*Muqaddar*" (Destiny) in one word. The literal meaning of this word means the destiny of someone. This word affirms the life of two women shown in the drama's title cover logo. They are standing behind their male in a servile position. The word '*muqaddar*" shows a sign of positivity for the male gender in society. This creates a sense of dominance that the male creates to rule on the female gender in society. The adjectives

tend to communicate with the signs of images. The drama's title deals with the entire philosophy behind this story. Simpson & Mayr (2010) stated that the logo fascinates the intellectual capabilities of the public and attracts the victims to explore. In this respect, Halliday (1994) remarked that adding materials to represent textual vision is known as the conjunctive. The example of adjuncts in conjunctive form represents the philosophy behind a word or phrase in the title. The case is similar to the title '*Muqaddar'*. The title represents the hold of men on women's decisions in Pakistani society. This predetermines the different roles of females and males in society. The modes of life for both males and females are shown with distinct marks of differences between them. The restrictions bound the lives of the female gender to pay their concern to household purposes. Therefore, '*Muqaddar'* is a positive adjective representing males in society. They are strong and mold the decision powers of females that could serve their purposes. In contrast, '*Muqaddar*' has a negative adjective attached to the females that tends to distort their constructive image in society. Therefore, Beasley & Danesi (2002) stated that image construction is one of the ultimate goals to create an appropriate mirror image of the entire work. It embeds the consciousness in society. The lives of both males and females live on mythical characters' logos.

5.1.2. *Drama Serial Kesa Hai Naseeban (How is the fate?)*

The title cover of the renowned Pakistani drama "*Kesa Hai Naseeban*" is given in Figure 2 (see appendix). The phase is linked with the Pakistani customs shown in this play. It depicts the societal norms of Pakistan. The girl in a dress bride with her beaten face is seated between the decent boy on her right, and the aged lady with a strong face maintains their outfit and seems in a better position than the girl. The phrase, "*kesa hai Naseeban"* (How is the fate?) presents an event of the unsuccessful married life of a beautiful girl. The phrase is in Urdu. The phrase is

interrogative and inquisitive in its form. It tends to inquire the public about the fate of married girls who have an unsuccessful married life. It attracts the public's attention to the helpless girls of society who do not possess any authority after their marriage, in case her in-laws are dominant in relation. The drama's title has a deep and straight connection with the actual theme of the entire play. The identity in symbols of the title has been associated with the inquisitive nature of this play. The text depicts the negative connotation of meaning with the image of a beaten, beaten-faced girl. The symbol of the title given to the drama arouses the public's curiosity to explore this story's entire theme further. The conversation style in the form of interrogation is distinctive to highlight disjunctive syntax. Delin (2000) defines this strategy in logos with text components without a subject and verb. The subject and verb are absent in the given title phrase. Kress & Leeuwen (2006) claimed that there have been different kinds of alternate procedures to read logos of drama and film. Therefore, Beasley & Danesi (2002) stated that image construction is one of the ultimate goals to create an appropriate mirror image of the entire work. It embeds the consciousness in society. The lives of both males and females live on mythical characters' logos.

5.2. *Analysis of Multimodality*

The approach of multimodality was given by Kress & Leeuwen (1996). The present approach is utilized to follow a regular social procedure to analyze the semiotics. The study employs this approach to position the sign, the mode, and frame the tools to analyze the title logos of Pakistani dramas.

5.3. *Signs in Different Positions*

The signs of placement are significant in developing representative symbols. The signs on the title cover of drama do represent images with different connotative meanings.

5.3.1. *Drama Serial Muqaddar (Destiny)*

Figure 1 (see appendix) shows two women standing behind a man. The male is shown with a dominant structure that rules on both women. However, both women clasping the man's chair with unhappy faces depict their servile condition. Though the women are shown to be dressed in better outfits, their faces still lack the happiness that ought to be on the faces of rich women. The logo consists of three separate individuals with their own identities. The ruling sign of man is related to the strict expression on his face with a sober personality. He is in a central position between the two women, one on his left and the other on his right. He is more focused on the title logo than both of the women. This represents his ruling authority over the two women. The two women are focused on the same resolution, less focused than the man sitting on the luxurious sofa in the center. The minor resolution shows their less privileged position in society. The center place of man depicts the ideology of control.

5.3.2. *Drama Serial Kesa Hai Naseeban (How is the fate?)*

The title in Figure 2 is in the center of the complete image. It is because the entire story of this drama and the visionary semiotics revolves around the title of this phrase. The phrase is centered on the focused image of a married girl who is beaten and demonstrates an unsuccessful married life. The red dress of a girl shows a sign of marriage with blood-stained spots on her face that depict the signs of domestic violence she faces in her in-law family. The girl is placed in the center because the major focus of the photography revolves around a girl, the story's main character. Similarly, the logo is placed under the specific image of a girl, which shows that the girl characterizes the philosophy behind this logo. The boy and the older woman are placed on the right and left of the girl, respectively. This depicts that they support the philosophy of this logo with the help of their side roles in a drama. The word "fate" is particularly culturally connotative. It explains that the thing defined will be a part of one's life, whether one accepts it or not. Therefore, the

logo has played the role of a symbol related to a beautiful girl's unsuccessful married life.

5.4.   *Modes of Drama Serials*

The modes are cultural and societal works on signs. Halliday (1978) presented three important meta-functions based on the modes. One mode is color, which represents identity. The second mode of color is the societal position to identify the resources. The Third mode of color concerns resources to represent relation with background and signs of coherent effects.

5.4.1. *Drama Serial Muqaddar (Destiny)*

Figure no. 1 (see appendix) depicts the two women dressed in pink and red. The dress color of both defines the societal position of women in Pakistani society. The red and pink color is connoted with the married woman in society. The man is outfitted with a dark blue color dress. It is a decent color that shows the dignified personality of a man. The color red and pink is associated with the sign of love and the married woman, who is perceived as sincere with her husband and his decisions. Therefore, the red and pink dresses are perceived as mythical to represent a girl's life after her marriage.

5.4.2. *Drama Serial Kesa Hai Naseeban (How is the fate?)*

Figure 2 (see appendix) shows a girl in the bridal dress. The color of the dress is red. It is the cultural suit of the bride in Pakistan. The color red is a sign of love and the marriage of a woman. The red color shows a sign of belonging to the husband. The woman belongs to her husband after her marriage. She is obliged to obey every decision that her in-laws make. It is the cultural position of Asian women in society. The color of the dress that the bride has worn tells the entire story.

5.5.   *Framing of Images*

The image framing in Figure 1 of the drama serial *Muqaddar* represents three individual characters of the story. The two women were in a contradictory position to men through the social constructivist frame. The woman is framed by the undermined position that identifies her place altogether in a servile condition. The man is placed in the frontal position of the cover page to show his lead in society. It shows that the position of a woman is predetermined in society and is to be ruled by her man. She is recognized in society by the name of her husband or the guardian that supports her. She needs to be identified independently in society to fulfill her wishes. On the other hand, Figure 2 of the drama serial Kesa *Hai Naseeban* has framed three important characters of the story. The girl in a bridal dress is in the middle of two characters who are confident in their stature. The girl is meek and is observed under the ruthless control of the boy and the elderly lady. The question in the form of a drama title is raised by the girl to the dominant society for the answers to such ruthless attitude that she has been facing by her in-laws. She asks not only society to answer, but a query is raised to develop the consciousness of all those girls who have been on the verge of domestic violence. Therefore, it is significant to comprehend the two distinguished roles of separate identities, one dominant and the other submissive.

6. Conclusion

The study attempted to present the semiotic analysis of communicative elements subtly present in title covers of Pakistani dramas. For this purpose, the title covers of three renowned Pakistani dramas were taken. It was to examine the role of semiotics in comprehending nonverbal forms of communication. It tended to present that semiotics communicate social stages of different representable signs. This helps to understand that visual symbolism is significant in communication. The art of semiotic analysis is divided into the following main divisions for its study. They are to identify the actual places of signs framing signs with other relational identities; they can be the gestures and the different colors in the title picture to play their assigned roles. The

role of semiotic visualization motivates the audience about different current issues in society. Therefore, the role of every other drama in an advertisement sketches the societal significance of drama. The representations show the theme of the story with its conclusion. The domestic and societal issues of women are mainly highlighted in Pakistani dramas. They are forced to rule under the domination of male society. Figures 1 and 2 of the drama serials *Muqaddar* (Fate) and *Kessa hai Naseeban* (How is the fate?) show the dependence of women that is under the dominancy of male decisions. They are forced to decide the fate that may be against their wishes. Therefore, semiotics does have a significant position in comprehending extra-lingual elements. It is a new paradigm of research that needs proper heed in the future for research in Pakistani Media.

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Appendix (1)-Figure 1:

Appendix (2)-Figure 2: