

Linear and logical analysis of film narrative structure under digital media

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Abstract: In the current era of digital media technology development, the development of movies has moved towards a diversified period. For traditional movies, great changes have taken place in both narrative structure and narrative perspective. Film is the art of narrative, and its narrative structure is the arrangement and combination of audio-visual, time-space and other elements in the film. In the narrative structure of contemporary movies, it is changing from linear structure dominated by time to flat structure dominated by space. Based on the theory of narratology and through the analysis of film works, this paper discusses the linear and nonlinear narrative structure of film narrative structure, and further studies the linear and nonlinear logic of film narrative, providing theoretical basis for linear and nonlinear narrative of film.

1. Introduction

Generally speaking, the narrative structure of movies can be divided into two categories: linear and nonlinear, and each category also contains a variety of narrative structures of secondary categories, such as the linear sequence, flashback and interlude, and the nonlinear stream of consciousness and plate type. Traditional films generally adopt linear narrative structure [1]. David Bordwell pointed out: Narration means that the film prompts the audience to construct the process of continuously forming stories on the basis of plot narrative organization and style stylization [2]. To paraphrase the outline, linear structure is the "outline" of film narrative, while causal chain is the "goal" of film narrative. Usually, the audience's mind is impressed by profound themes, typical characters and wonderful details, which are the flesh and blood on the film narrative structure, and the film narrative structure is the key to the film narrative.

Non-linear film narrative is the result of deconstruction of traditional films by post-modern film lovers, which has created a new era of film narrative and opened a new chapter for the diversification of film narrative [3-4]. Under the background of digital media, the directors unconsciously express the artistic conception of the film through the loose narrative technique. The basic feature of film aesthetics is to depict life, express thoughts and feelings and create aesthetic value by shaping the screen image. In the narrative of movies, this is the combination and interdependence of narrative image elements and discourse elements.

2. Linear structure

Linear narrative structure is to show the process of events according to the time sequence, create a closed narrative chain for the audience, pursue seamless connection between events, weaken the narrative way, and finally make the audience blindly identify with the film.

2.1. Sequential formula of causality

There is an obvious causal relationship in the development of the event, which is mainly divided into four parts: beginning, development, climax and ending. Time is unidirectional. The story in the film has happened and completed in the passage of time, and finally a closed narrative circle is formed, which is the most common narrative structure of the film. There are essential differences between the narrative of movies and the narrative of TV, and the narrative of literary works. Movies

are the result of interpretation by writers, photographers, editors and directors, of course, the director is the dominant one. It uses strategies and tactics, and what narrative purposes and attempts may be achieved. For example, the structure and means of an article are different, and the relationship between narrative and audience is different. At the same time, the research structure and participation degree of audience are different.

However, while time and space, images and discourse elements in movies are interdependent, there are also contradictions among them. The composition of symbols in movies is also restricted by the current social and cultural ideology. The director should express this feeling of time and space disorder, and make the development of the story complicated and messy by studying script writing. This is the film's nonlinear narrative way, which can make time and space rotate, make the film more exciting, and unify multiple clues with the overall clues. With the intervention of psychological narrative clues, modern movies pay more attention to irrational instinct and intuition, while logic and drama are diluted and dispelled, and sporadicness is enhanced. Meanwhile, the relatively single connotation of linear structure often develops into a composite multi-part theme symphony with nonlinear structure.

2.2. Repetitive relation interwoven

In this narrative structure, there are usually two levels: the main clue and the secondary clue, and the main clue is developed in time sequence. For example, the Iliad began with Achilles' anger (because King Agamemnon took away his beautiful female prisoner), and Paris' seduction of Helen and the outbreak of the Trojan War were realized through background explanation; The Odyssey began with the withdrawal of troops after the end of the Trojan War, and both the beginning and end of the Trojan War and Odyssey's journey back home became the narrative subject of epic.

As for interactive movie's narrative form, we may think that it cannot be decided by the director or audience, because with their joint participation, interactive movie does not have a fixed narrative route or a complete story form in the narrative process. It breaks the conventional mode that traditional movies construct plots according to the single time sequence of "(prelude-) beginning-development-climax-ending (-ending)". Using "non-temporal sequence" (such as time backtracking, time repetition, time jump, etc.) to structure the movie plot gives the movie text a broader perspective, richer content and more objective expression.

Because the types of conflicts and their solutions can be expected by the audience, the attention of the experienced audience tends to shift from stories and constantly asking 'what happened next' to narrative skills and the confrontational value system itself presented by conflicts "[5]. This is actually what we call "linear structure", because of the strict causal logic relationship between its structures. In interactive movie, the uncertainty of movie narrative makes it transform into a kind of aimless line search with the participation of audience. These nomadic lines have multiple trends, which run through points, shapes and outlines, thus forming numerous personalized nomadic narratives, and finally forming a network and tree narrative mode.

3. Non-linear narration of movies

3.1. Nonlinear narrative structure

Compared with linear narrative, the structure of non-linear narrative is more complex and changeable, and there is no rule to follow. However, after careful study, we found that the nonlinear narrative still has a certain logical structure, and there are still the beginning, development, climax and ending of the story. They are: time sequence, time length and time frequency, which are the concept of division put forward by Gérard Genette in the field of literary narrative, and have been introduced into the research field of film narrative by André Gaudreault and David Bordwell. It can be said that the nonlinear structure not only reflects the creator's thinking, but also respects the audience, giving the audience the right to organize the story and judge the morality, and the audience becomes a part of the film and the biggest player of the movie game.

It is generally believed that the earliest non-linear psychological structure can be traced back to

Griffith's "Partisan Divergence", and the psychological concept of the film's leading narrative structure is the "intolerance concept" in the director's mind and its cinematic presentation. Coupled with the uncertainty of non-linear time relationship, the audience repeatedly scrutinized and confirmed in the process of watching movies, and realized the pleasure of participating in the game, just as the omniscient narrator in the film said, "the whole process is regarded as a jigsaw puzzle". It also basically follows the post-modern dissociative and fragmented narrative modes, but many narrative modes have traces to follow, mainly including mesh narrative mode and tree narrative mode, which can be used to roughly summarize the narrative form of interactive movie.

In the traditional linear structure, "paragraph" only exists as a film unit, and there is a close causal and logical relationship between the preceding and following paragraphs, whose position is fixed and cannot be moved. Compared with the plot film, the movement mode and characteristics of prose film conflict have changed in connotation and extension, which makes the external conflict between things fade away. Instead of pursuing the "intensification" and faster rhythm of conflict like dramatic structure, it emphasizes the "gradual change" and slower rhythm of conflict [6]. " Of course, this choice will not be one-way. In the process of this choice, there will be two or more lines of choice, that is, two or more narrative lines, thus forming a network narrative mode and a tree narrative mode.

3.2. Nonlinear narrative structure skills

3.2.1. Conversion between different colors such as black and white

Use the conversion between black and white or between black and white and other colors to distinguish different time and space and express different stories. On the basis of inheriting some literary narrative genes, movies also inherit this technique, which can also be called a kind of nonlinear narrative, but the nonlinearity in this sense is also completely attached to the inherent linear logical thinking inherited from literary narrative and rooted in people's brains. In "Citizen Kane", the span of a flashback is also related to the breadth of previous flashbacks. For example, Bernstein's story of "Inquirer" started from the time when Thatcher's private diary was interrupted, while Li Lan's detailed description of the encounter between Kane and Emily began with Bernstein. Thus, the story development has multiple directions, and the audience will naturally have multiple choices to complete more complex and changeable interactions, and the story development can return to the original point, even shuttle each other in the net.

Each section is independent in story, characters, time and space, but each section is related by some key details, or each section is the interpretation and expression of the same theme from different angles. Gray, white and red are widely used in the movie "Red lantern hanging high", which fills the whole picture of the movie and properly expresses the theme of the movie: repression and struggle, thirst and expectation, fear and suffocation. Of course, this also makes the theme of the film contact with the audience appropriately, and further baptizes the spirit of the audience. These different narrative perspectives have inherent logic, that is, they express the inherent contradiction of human nature, and the history of personal struggle embodies the criticism of the consequences of American modernization [7].

3.2.2. Montage editing technology

Montage editing can express the transformation of time and space, make clues parallel, and name stories according to certain rules. After the audience's choice, some clues extend with the development of characters' behaviors and conflicts, thus connecting narrative spaces in series in the range of activities of different characters, and interweaving many lines to form a huge space network. That is to say, this kind of structure itself is a metaphor for a philosophical truth: people's life is multifaceted and complex, so it is difficult to comment, instead of being single and simple, which is true for all people.

There is no "bright line" that runs through the plot, and clues and themes gradually emerge. The theme of film art is usually subtle and tactful, and prose film and drama film are no exception. As one of the most basic narrative modes, it is a complex narrative mode based on linear narrative,

which is also transformed into a personalized narrative and an independent fragmentary narrative after deconstruction [8]. Repetition in form or content makes the story gain unique tension, and strengthens the connotation of ideas and the orientation of meaning. The narrator emphasizes not the independent plot or scene, but the relationship between different clues, events and characters reflected through the lens or paragraph, and the story usually presents an open ending.

3.2.3. The connection between characters and clues, the interweaving relationship between points and lines

The narrative of any movie is to discover the connection between people, people and other things naturally or premeditated, and make these connections cross and influence each other to form a powerful narrative network. Ge Daer's "Do what you want" is a typical example of a fragmented narrative structure, and the subtitle of the film is "12 life scenes". When talking about this film, Susan Sontag thinks that "it rejects causality, and the common causal order of narration is disintegrated because the plot is arbitrarily divided into 12 episodes-these episodes are not causal, but connected with each other in sequence". It expands the capacity of the film. Just as we play jigsaw puzzles, time is not the decisive factor. Only when each jigsaw puzzle is placed in the right position can it form a whole.

Although narrative clues are darkened, the internal logicity between fragments is still very strong. The structure of prose is free, unlike drama literature, which is divided into scenes, and the plot is not as compact as novels. Then there will be a regular or irregular network in the story interwoven by many clues, and the trajectory of many characters' actions in this network is the basic point of forming the network narrative mode. Altman's "Short films", which is based on a series of short stories by Raymond Carver, pushes the scattered nonlinear structure mode to the extreme and becomes the network radiation in spatial form. Li Yu, a Chinese dramatist in the Qing Dynasty, said, "Let the viewer go into the mountains and vagina, and everyone will be overwhelmed" [9]. This is the expression of the artistic connotation brought by the non-linear film narrative and the structural art conveyed by the director.

4. Conclusions

With the film becoming a more independent and mature artistic style, and having a philosophical appeal for the contingency and inevitability of life and time, the causal linear structure can no longer adapt to the expression of the content to be described in this type of film. Under the background of digital media, in the development of film from linear narrative to nonlinear narrative, we have not only retained many excellent linear narrative methods, but also abandoned many linear narrative factors. Different narrative structure models have different narrative emphases, some focusing on the plot of the story, some on the way of telling, some on the psychological capacity, some on the atmosphere and atmosphere, and some on the concept and connotation. Have the freedom to choose the perspective of the characters, and at the same time always keep an uncertain "mystery" sense of the ending, so that the movie can truly become the movie of each audience.

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