

The Importance of Film Annotations in Analyzing Cinema Discourse

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ABSTRACT

In this article, discourse is viewed as a complex of linguistic, psychological, and social phenomena which is subject to both the rules of grammar and the more general rules of speech organization, interpretation, and coherence. One of the discourse kinds examined in this article is cinema discourse. It is the outcome of the development of the film text notion and is characterized as a collection of verbal and non-verbal elements of narrative connected to films. The study researches into film annotation as an important concept within film discourse.

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Film annotations refer to the process of adding notes, comments, or descriptions to a film in order to provide additional context, analysis, or insight. These annotations can be used for a variety of purposes, such as educational study guides, critical analysis, or enhancing the viewing experience for audiences. Annotations may include information about the film's production, themes, symbolism, cultural context, or references to other works. Annotations can help viewers deepen their understanding and appreciation of a film, and can also stimulate discussion and debate in film discourse. Recently, considerable attention has been given to film studies. Due to its significant impact on society, the film industry is the subject of scientific and practical interest of specialists in various fields: art historians, film critics, philosophers, literary critics, cultural scientists, sociologists, etc. (Buckland, 2016). Cinema discourse in linguistics refers to the study of language patterns and communication in film. This field of study involves analyzing the use of language, both verbal and non-verbal, in films to understand how it contributes to the narrative, characterization, and overall cinematic experience. Film discourse is the result of the expansion of the film text concept. While both film text and film discourse include linguistic characteristics, film discourse additionally focuses on extralinguistic factors, such as cultural and historical background, knowledge of the target audience, the setting of the film, as well as non-verbal means like images, gestures, facial expressions, etc. (Wildfeuer & Bateman, 2016). Film discourse analysis is based on critically evaluating words, phrases, and images. Film discourse is analysed as a multimodal text, bringing together the fields of narratology, philosophy, cultural studies, and other spheres. Among researchers studying film discourse from a linguistic point of view, one can distinguish various approaches. Linguists research into the concepts of film discourse and film text, the types of film discourse and their classification, the functions of film discourse. Many focus on art history and semiotics of film narrative. Other issues of interest are the genre typology of film discourse, the analysis of film dialogue as a linguistic component of the film, etc. (Jones, 2018; Johnstone, 2018; Kusse, 2016; Lyul'cheva, 2017). A film annotation is an important concept within film discourse. The process of annotating is based on converting a large volume of information into a shorter piece, the purpose of which is to obtain a generalized characteristic of the text and reveal its logical structure and the most significant aspects of the content (Karpilovich, 2007).

Article shows that film discourse can be compressed into various types of annotations: treatment, synopsis, logline, tagline, and trailer.

A treatment is a document that outlines the basic concept, structure, and key elements of a film project. It serves as a blueprint for the film and provides a detailed overview of the story, characters, setting, and themes. A treatment typically includes a synopsis of the plot, descriptions of the main characters, key plot points, and any notable visual or stylistic elements. It may also cover the tone, genre, and intended audience of the film. They are often used in the early stages of film development to pitch ideas to producers, financiers, and collaborators. They help convey the creative vision and potential of the project, laying the groundwork for the scriptwriting and production process. The treatment of the film *Green Book*, for example, includes 1779 words, the treatment of *Bohemian Rhapsody* consists of 1569 words, and the treatment of *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* has 1660 words. This considerable number of words allows to include in a treatment detailed descriptions of events, locations, scenes. An important feature of a treatment is that it doesn't give opinions or evaluations, only focusing on the facts.

The next type of film annotation to be analysed is a synopsis, which is a brief successive presentation of the plot. A synopsis contains an average of 60-150 words in 4-8 sentences. The word count of the *Green Book* synopsis is 148, the synopsis of the *Bohemian Rhapsody* has 132 words, and the *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* synopsis includes 163 words. Each of these synopses is around 8-9% of the size of the corresponding treatment, which explains why the synopsis includes only two mandatory components. A synopsis film annotation provides a snapshot of the film's story without going into extensive detail or analysis. It is often used in promotional materials, film reviews, and film databases to give audiences a quick understanding of what the film is about before viewing it.

Another type of film annotation under consideration is a logline. It is aimed at expressing the main storyline of the film in 1-2 sentences and 20-30 words. The *Green Book* logline does so in 22 words, the *Bohemian Rhapsody* logline uses 24 words, and the *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* logline includes 30 words. So, a logline is around one sixth of a synopsis in size, which creates the necessity to make the film description even more concise.

The shortest type of film annotation is a tagline. It usually consists of 5-15 words in 1-2 sentences. The *Green Book* tagline has 5 words, the *Bohemian Rhapsody* tagline is made up of 11 words, the tagline of *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* includes 6 words. Taglines are almost entirely aimed at creating intrigue, attracting the attention of the viewers and motivating them to watch the film, and only then are they aimed at providing information about the film. In most cases taglines only hint at the content of the film without providing any specific information or details.

One more type of film annotation analysed in the study is a trailer, which stands separately from the other four. While a treatment, a synopsis, a logline, and a tagline as film annotations are based on written text, a trailer employs camera work, scene selection, montage, and sound editing to narrate cinematic stories to viewers. A trailer announces the genre of the film and its main themes, introduces the main characters and the central conflict (problem, goal, or event) while leaving out its resolution. An important feature of a trailer is its focus on dialogue and direct speech, unlike other types of annotations, which mostly employ third person narration. All types of annotations presented in the research have one common feature: they all provide information about the topic of the film. All annotation types except for the tagline contain information about the main characters and the main problem, goal, or event. Treatments, synopses, and loglines share several grammatical features. At the same time, various types of annotations have their own structural and semantic characteristics.

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