

## Representation of Television Series and Discourse Construction of Family

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### Extended Abstract

#### 1. Introduction

Through enlisting the help of discursive tools, including media, discourses depict various institutional units, such as family, in a variety of contexts, like that of a television show. The present study aims to answer the following questions.

How is the institution of family represented in television series?

- What discourses are prominent?
- How do these discourses interact?
- And what institutional and societal processes do the discourses belong to?

The study was conducted using one of the most popular Iranian TV shows, Setayesh.

#### 2. Theoretical Framework

In response to this question, the theory of critical discourse analysis of Norman Fairclough was used as a conceptual framework. Fairclough believes that discourses help to reproduce power. He points out through the concept of multi-functional language that texts and discourses are socially constructed, and that language has different functions. The function of the idea of language is to create knowledge systems. In contrast, the function of the personality of discourse is to boil down social subjects to identities or relationships between them. Fairclough defines this very complex relationship using the concept of discursive order. The discursive order of a social realm implies the imposition of a variety of discourses and the relationships among them in this domain. For this reason, Fairclough believes that a discursive order is not a stable system, but an open one which changes with circumstances.

Fairclough believes that in discourse analysis, one should consider not only discourse ordering, but also the communicative event. A communicative event is a

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sample of language use, such as newspaper articles, cinematic videos, video interviews, and political speeches. Each communicative event consists of three dimensions; namely, text (speech, writing, visual image, or a combination of these), the discursive operation that involves the production and use of the text, and social action, all of which should be addressed in communicative discourse analysis.

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

### **3. Method**

In this research, the critical discourse analysis method (with emphasis on Fairclough's framework) was used to answer the research question, and the analysis unit was also a dialogue between actors. Given that this method has three stages; namely, description, interpretation, and explanation, words' values were initially defined at the stage of description (empirical values, relation, and expression). Then based on them, the type of discourses used in the series were identified. In the interpretative phase, the contents of the text were also interpreted and situational texture, type of discourse, and discourse order were determined. Finally, they were identified in the stage of explaining the social foundation and social ideas that played a role in the formation of above-mentioned discourses, and the way to determine the social structures of discourse was shown.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

At this stage, the value of the words was determined in terms of experimental and expressive values that supported the existence of two secular and religious discourses. The relation between the two discourses of secularism and religion is a contradictory one. In other words, this series reveals the opposition of two groups with two different discourses; one with a religious discourse and another with a socialist discourse. Each of these groups tries to compete with the other while faithful to its own discourse in order to achieve its goals, values, and aspirations. What leads to the confrontation between these two discourses is the way of raising children. The most important contrasts are: hiring/attracting, betrayal/loyalty, moral corruption / children's moral wellbeing, and generational sustainability/mutation. In this communicative event, the strategy used by the secular discourse is the strategy of monetarization and marketability, but the strategy used by religious discourse is the strategy of loyalty, ethical, and religious orientation. The problem of the new generation's style of education depicted in this series is not just the main theme of a series, but one of the parental concerns and one of the challenges of our society. The existence of different discourses in our society about the way the new generation should be brought up, and the different perspectives each of them has on

the training style, has led to confusion among families and the youth themselves, insofar as the youth are faced with identity crises. Among the active discourses in society, religious and secular discourses are the most powerful. To overcome this dialectic, the ruling discourse has built series such as Setayesh through media. Therefore, the institutional framework of this text belongs to the institution of the family, but it is the domain of confrontation between the two institutions of religion and the market, and these two discourses are part of the conflict between religions and secularism.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the research indicate that this series represents a discursive opposition between religious and secular discourses, and the main focus of this discursive opposition is the upbringing of children. By showing the superiority of religious discourse, the series introduces this discourse as the one which is better and superior for new generation's training style. Another result of the research is that the series is a depiction of social processes in Iranian society, because in Iranian society there is also a discursive opposition between secular and religious discourses, and every discourse aims at becoming the dominant one. The social process represents the class opposition that gives rise to these discourses. In the series, we witness the confrontation between two dominant forms of middle class people, namely a traditional religious middle class and the more modern, bourgeois class. To overcome this social conflict, the religious discourse proves its superiority through discursive means and invites previous adherents of non-traditional discourse to convert to the traditionalist discourse.

**Keywords:** Critical Discourse Analysis, Setayesh Seies, Religious Discourse, Secular Discourse

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