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# THE MULTIMODAL TAPESTRY OF EMOTION: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYZING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION IN FILM DISCOURSE

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Abstract: This article proposes a framework for analyzing the multimodal construction of emotion in film discourse, moving beyond a reliance solely on verbal cues to encompass the intricate interplay of visual, aural, and kinesthetic elements. Film, as a composite medium, utilizes a rich tapestry of semiotic resources to evoke and communicate emotions, drawing on the synergistic power of dialogue, facial expressions, body language, music, sound design, camera angles, lighting, and editing. We argue that understanding emotional expression in film requires a holistic approach that acknowledges the dynamic interaction of these diverse modes. This framework draws upon theories of multimodality, semiotics, and film studies to analyze how specific emotions are constructed through the strategic orchestration of various semiotic resources.

**Key words:** semiotic, ambiguity, polysemy, dynamic interplay, interaction, mode, framework, multimodality, kinesthetic element.

Film, a quintessential multimodal medium, weaves a complex tapestry of meaning through the interplay of image, sound, and language. While dialogue contributes significantly to narrative and character development, a film's emotional impact resonates most powerfully through the intricate orchestration of diverse semiotic resources. This article proposes a framework for analyzing the multimodal construction of emotion in film discourse, moving beyond a reliance solely on verbal cues to encompass the dynamic interplay of visual, aural, and kinesthetic modes. We explore the ways in which different modes can reinforce, complement, or even contradict each other in the construction of emotional meaning, highlighting the potential for



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ambiguity and polysemy. Furthermore, we examine how cultural and historical contexts influence the interpretation of emotional cues in film, emphasizing the culturally situated nature of emotional expression. Through detailed case studies of selected film scenes, we demonstrate the applicability of this framework, providing insights into the complex processes through which filmmakers craft emotionally resonant cinematic experiences. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of emotional communication in film and offers a methodological toolkit for analyzing the dynamic interplay of semiotic modes in the construction of affective meaning.

In the same way that literature was the artistic expression that had a great repercussion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the cinema stands out today as the most unifying of the arts, one that unite the biggest number of stakeholders. According to Bluestone (1973: 3), one third of the films produced in the studios of RKO, Paramount and Universal are adaptations of novels. This is why, besides being works more inclined to win awards, the public shows great interest in watching them, because they consider the renowned novels as having a highest quality.

Cinematic discourse is multimodal in character, driven by its ability to realize social interaction by communicating between filmmakers and viewers. Multimodality is treated as "modus operandi for conducting research for human communication, both mediated and face to face" (Seizov & Wildfeuer, 2018).

In cinematic discourse, the process of emotive meaning making involves visual and acoustic modes, which interact producing different combinations aimed at actualizing the meaning sequences. It outlines the multimodal vector of cognitive-pragmatic analysis of negative emotions in film. Mode, as G. Kress (2001) puts it, is "a socially defined and culturally conditioned resource for the process of meaning making" (p. 27), realized through perceptual modalities. The system of

modes is versatile:

- the visual mode of cinematic discourse is represented by the image;
- the acoustic mode is realized through music, sound effects, etc.;

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• the verbal component is presented in both modes in writing on the visual level and orally on the acoustic one.

The combination of modes varies in time and space producing semantic sequences. Therefore, a multimodal approach to the analysis of cinematic discourse focuses specifically on attracting the modes of film meaning making for the communication between filmmakers and viewers. It leads to considering cinematic discourse as an integral multimodal phenomenon; a combination of modes and semiotic resources generates and actualizes emotive meanings. The selection of modes is based on social and cultural factors related to the author's befiefs, cultural and social characteristics.

Modes interact as "several modes are always used together, in modal ensembles, designed so that each mode has a specific task and function. Such ensembles are based on designs, that is, on selections and arrangements of resources for making a specific message about a particular issue for a particular audience" (Kress, 2010, p. 28).

#### A Symphony of Semiotic Resources:

Emotional expression in film is not a singular act but a carefully constructed symphony of semiotic resources. These include:

- **Verbal:** Dialogue, narration, and on-screen text contribute to the explicit or implicit expression of emotions. Tone of voice, pauses, and inflections add further layers of meaning.
- Visual: Facial expressions, body language, gestures, costuming, and makeup provide visual cues that communicate a character's emotional state. Mise-enscène, the arrangement of elements within the frame, creates an emotional atmosphere.
- **Aural:** Music plays a powerful role in shaping emotional responses, from swelling orchestral scores that amplify drama to subtle melodic motifs that convey specific feelings. Sound design, including ambient sounds, sound effects, and silence, contributes to the emotional texture of a scene.
- Cinematographic Techniques: Camera angles, movement, framing lighting, and editing all contribute to shaping emotional responses. A low angle shot can make a character appear powerful, while a high angle shot can



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convey vulnerability. Fast-paced editing can create tension, while slow motion can emphasize emotional weight.

The power of film lies in the dynamic interplay of these modes. They can reinforce each other, creating a unified emotional impact. For example, a character's tearful confession of love (verbal) might be accompanied by a close-up shot highlighting their sorrowful expression (visual) and a melancholic melody (aural). However, different modes can also complement or even contradict each other, creating ambiguity and polysemy. A character might speak sarcastically (verbal) while maintaining a neutral facial expression (visual), creating irony and inviting the viewer to interpret the underlying emotions. we will discuss the literary language and the language of film showing the main differences between them and how that distance allows the reading and enrichment of a work that reflects another one. Then we will talk about the principle of equivalence between word and photo(gram) - since we are facing two different art expressions it is necessary to make brief remarks about the differences between film and literary milieu, as the act of writing expressed in images it is characterized by a greater distance of the literary arts for the film.

<i>y y</i>	
Literary language	Cinematographic language
Representations of images	Reproduction of images
Linking of basic ideas (images)	Sequence of mental images
	towards sound
	and not sound images.
It starts from the word to the visible	It starts from the visible image to
image	reach
(Calvin, 1990: 98).	verbal expression (Calvin, 1990: 98).
Idea of imagination as	Communication from images with the
communication with the soul of the	potential implied. "Around each
world (Calvino, 1990: 103) and of	image lurk other, they form a field of
"imagination as a repertoire of	analogies, symmetries and
potential, hypothetical, of what is not,	oppositions (Calvino, 1990: 104).
nor was it and maybe not, but it	
could have	

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been" (Ibid : 106).	
Privileges "the direct observation of	Privileges immediate reception,
the real world, the ghostly and	ready andlinear.
dreamlike transfiguration, the world	
figurative () and a process of	
abstraction, condensation inteorização	
of sense experience" (Calvin,	
1990: 110).	
Conceptual and of media effects -	Actualizing show, made present -
spaceseems to be "temporalized"	timeseems "spatialized" (Brito 2006:
(Brito 2006:	146).
146).	
It is necessary a creative collaboration,	Simple and easy understanding, "the
subjective and emotional (illusion of	viewer is more frivolous, more
ownership of what was thought).	committed to entertainment, to have
	fun, to thrill or
	not" (Lopes, 2004).

In conclusion, understanding the emotional impact of film requires moving beyond a simplistic analysis of dialogue and delving into the rich tapestry of multimodal expression. Filmmakers artfully orchestrate a symphony of verbal, visual, aural, and cinematographic elements to evoke specific emotional responses in viewers. This intricate interplay of semiotic resources creates a dynamic and often polysemous emotional landscape, where meanings are constructed not only through individual modes but also through their interaction and juxtaposition. By recognizing the synergistic power of these different modes and considering the cultural contexts in which they operate, we can gain a more nuanced appreciation for the complexities of emotional communication in film. The proposed framework, emphasizing the analysis of individual modes and their interplay, offers a valuable tool for unraveling the threads of this multimodal tapestry. Further research exploring the specific affordances of different semiotic resources, their cultural

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variations, and their dynamic interplay within diverse cinematic contexts will undoubtedly enrich our understanding of the powerful and pervasive role of emotion in the language of film. As the field of multimodality continues to evolve, so too will our appreciation of the intricate ways in which film constructs, conveys, and manipulates our emotional experiences.

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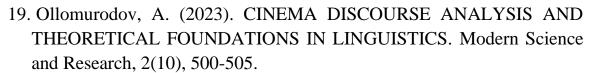
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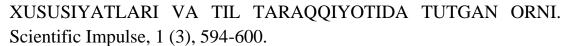
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