Critical Discourse Analysis of Narrative in the Arabic Version of *Kalila va Dimna* (The Case Study of Chapter of the Monk and His Guest)

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Narrative texts can be considered influential means which, along with their pedagogical and aesthetic functions, reproduce particular social orders. In this regard, we can think of textual strategies as techniques that are applied to reconstruct a discursive hegemony. In other words, the language and structure of a story can serve as an ideological device to protect the power relations in a certain society. *Kalila va Dimna* is among the oldest narrative texts in which the relationship between power, language and ideology can be easily perceived. Written around 3rd century BC, the original version of *Kalila va Dimna* contains some didactic fables. These fables were prepared to transfer Indian monarchs’ sociopolitical ideologies to their surrogates. The Arabic version of the book, translated from the Pahlavi by Ibn Al-Moquaffa, is, in effect, an adaptation of the original version and contains similar sociopolitical ideas which deserve in-depth analysis. Combining the key concepts of CDA (critical discourse analysis) with some concepts in narratology, this paper aims at examining the ideological aspects of narrative in a chapter of Arabic *Kalila va Dimna*.

2. Theoretical Framework

The most remarkable discursive concepts through which discourse analysts study power relations are “persuasion” and “legitimization”. According to the concept of persuasion, by creating a dual system of moral values, the authors of a text exaggerate “good” (positive) characteristics of the superior class discourse, and simultaneously, highlight the “bad” (negative) characteristics of the inferior class discourse. In this regard, the author acts like an ideologue whose attempt is persuading the reader to accept the preconstructed values as uncontroversial truths. According to the concept of legitimization, the authors validate their texts by using particular strategies, e.g., authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization and mythopoeia, to convince the reader to interpret the textual content as a legitimate discourse. Over the last few decades, many discourse experts have utilized the aforementioned concepts to study the ideological aspects of narratives. To this end, they

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suggest various analytical levels which can be summarized as follows: 1. The level of narrating: in this level, the analyst examines strategies used by a narrator to evaluate characters’ speech as reliable or unreliable. 2. The level of narrative process: in this level, the analysts show that how an ideological framework distributes and naturalizes the good/bad functions or actions in a story; 3. The level of symbolization: in this level, the analyst studies the particular blending methods that lead to forming ideological metaphors; 4. The level of contextualization: in this level, different versions of a narrative and different forms of historical hegemonies, reproduced by these versions, are examined.

3. Method
Following the framework suggested in CDA and narratology, this descriptive-analytical research aimed to investigate different ideological levels of narrative in a chapter of Arabic *Kalila va Dimna* (Chapter of the Monk and his guest). After introducing the story, we will go through the multiple levels of narrative, discussing how language and structure of a story are affected by a dominant discourse.

4. Results and Conclusion
The results of the present paper reveal that narrative levels and strategies in *Chapter of the Monk and His Guest* are employed to recreate a particular sociopolitical ideology. Accordingly, in the level of narrating, there is a hierarchical relationship between characters who are involved in generating the story. Based on this hierarchy, the reliable narrator must be an inferior ideologue i.e., a monk, whose speech is legitimized by superior ideologues of *Kalila wa Dimna* (king Dabeshlim and Baydapay the philosopher). In the level of narrative process, we can see an antagonistic relationship between components of the story: while negative roles e.g., complication are attributed to the inferior character (the guest), the positive actions, e.g., resolution, are attributed to the superior character (the monk). The study of the symbolization showed that the metaphorical components in the main story and its sub-story are blended in such a way that can convince the reader to accept the ideological message of the text. By examining the level of contextualization, it was found that the hierarchical relationship in the fictional world is indeed a reflection of class conflicts in the estates where the text was written or translated. In other words, fictional characters are actually representatives of real citizens who have experienced the dictatorship in Ancient India, Sasanian Empire and Abbasid Caliphate.

**Keywords:** Critical Discourse Analysis, Narrative, The Chapter of the Monk and His Guest, Ideological Relationships

**References (In Persian)**


References (In Arabic)


References (In English)


