

FILM CONSUMPTION: WHAT WE WATCH IS NOT WHAT WE GET!

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Film Tüketimi: İzlediklerimiz Aldıklarımızı Değil!

İletinin gönderilme ve alınma süreci çok karmaşık bir yapıya sahiptir. Göndericide göndermek istediği iletinin biçimlenişi ve bunun gönderilmesi ile alıcıda alınan iletinin alımlanması ve yeniden biçimlendirilmesi farklı işlemler gerektirirler. Gönderici ile alıcı aynı birey olmadıklarından kimlikleri ve biçime, anlama, dürümlenme ve çözümlenme basamaklarına bakışları farklı olduğundan iletinin anlatmak istediğinden farklı anlamlara bürünmesi hiç de zor olmaz. İleti yapısından ayrılıp bireyin anlığında depolandığında ise tümüyle içerikten ve biçimden bağımsız, alımlayan bireyin özgün yorumlarına açık bir yapı kazanır. İletinin yeterince açık ve anlaşılır olmaması durumunda

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göz ardı edilmesi çok olağandır. İletinin tüketilmesi ise ne derece olasıdır? Gerçek bir tüketim söz konusu olabilir mi? Yoksa beyine kaydedilmiş bir ileti zaman içinde yeni bir anlam, yeni bir önem kazanarak özgün halinden farklı biçimlere girebilir mi? Yapı ve biçim, kavram ve anlam, devinimsel ve özgün iletiler arasındaki bağlantıların irdelendiği bu çalışma, filmin görüntüsel, sözel ve sembolik katmanlardaki anlamlarının hepsinin birden birey tarafından algılanabilmesi ve tüketilebilmesinin ne derece olanaklı olduğunu sorgulamaktadır.

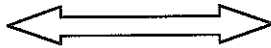
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The paper aims to evaluate the films consumption process and the cognitive factors affecting it. By film, the cinema films are considered in general assuming that these are different from the television viewers. The basics of this distinction could be summarized as the volunteer participation into the viewing action, conscious decisions made for the film choice and the separation of the required time. These differences make the cinema viewers different from the general television viewers.

The process of film viewing is very important. It involves the readiness period for the message: getting ready for the message is a very important cognitive factor affecting the perception, reception and interpretation of it. If some people given deliberately wrong information about the film they would be watching probably would feel unsatisfied when the film ends. Because, they spend almost the whole film time waiting for their

expectations to be fulfilled but nothing happens -neither the film subject is correct nor the expected crew appears, so they would feel that they were cheated. So, background information is highly important to get ready for the messages. To connect the outer world with the film is another factor. Only this connection could make the film more meaningful in the eye of the film viewer. If there would be no connection then, it would not be possible to take the film to the reality of the film viewer and there stays the perceptions, reactions and interpretations as well. This could be seen as a kind of a mutual reaction between these two ends.

The film is the
of the real world and related
to the individual somehow.



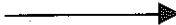
is reflected in the
life.

With the studies, it is proved that rather than television the cinema provides a more effective viewing opportunity for the individual. It is effective not only through the wide louder audio facilities accompanying to the visuals. It is effective because of the conscious decisions made about watching a certain film and to devoting the necessary time for it. The film gains more importance if it interesting for the individual. So, having an interest could be shown by being there in the cinema saloon. But the effectiveness of the film on each individual would be different because the process of getting the is a very complex one and every individual could have different ways of getting the same message. It is not only the stylistic variations stemming from the personality factors but also the ones dealing

with the physical abilities and perception capacity of the viewer. In order to be an effective viewer the individual forces himself/herself to use the emphatic devices. The more the individual depersonalise himself/herself the better s/he could put himself/herself into the other's shoes. But being emphatic or developing emphatic behaviour is highly related with the social values of the individual as well as the emotional ones. The more emphatically they are involved into the viewing action the more they are affected by the film. Being affected brings together the concept of reflection and reflection is the only way that the film returns to the society again.

Thus, not every watching provides consumption of the film and not every consumption is a real one. In order to consume the film, the viewer should have an appropriate background to catch all the values and signs reflected in the film. This could be seen as the knowledge of alphabet to decipher the written form of the language. Having the necessary tools to begin to dig for an archaeological site.

Having the necessary tools, having the background information could not be enough either. First, the messages involving the new items should be recognised by the receiver.

Sender: new message  Receiver: transforms the meaning

Considering the general communication rules, there should be the sender and the receiver to transmit the information. The original sender of the cinema film, in fact, is the individual providing a familiar figure for the screen-writer to reflect in his/her

work. But the screen-writer seems to be the sender and thus the individual becomes the receiver. The mutual changing of these roles could be seen in the communication situations as well as in the films. In order to transform the meaning into an understandable and applicable way the individual follows a series of actions to get the message. Getting the gist of the message is sometimes easy but understanding the real value of it, or keeping it for further usage and reflections, could require a very effective process of understanding. The senders usually try to wrap the message into a form of structure to make it possible to reach to the receiver. The receiver would then try to figure out the meaning of the message and picks it out from the context not form the structure. If the message is not comprehensible enough, the receiver has a great tendency to ignore it. Since the new forms and items are so difficult to remember the brain just concentrates on the meaning part of the sent message neither the individual items in it, nor the structure it is wrapped.

Structure and known concepts  Meaning

The structure and the known concepts formulate the background of the receiver, to get ready for the new messages in it. Sometimes, although the structure and the concepts are known before the meaning in them is a new or unfamiliar one. Thus, a change in the known items for example the order, the frequency of the messages could give us the real meaning. But sometimes it might not be enough to understand the order, or to notice the

frequency of the elements given in the film, the message is still embedded somewhere else, not in the structure but in the transformed meaning. For example, in the novel "The Secret Face" (Gizli Yüz) by Orhan Pamuk, the mirror, is just an ordinary concept, known by the individual viewer. But, it gains an important messages within the film, reflecting the unknown to the viewer just unlike an ordinary mirror in his/her daily life but as a mysterious one within its own context. The mirror, the reflection of the real world is a deception for most of the people in the story. They think that they are reflected in some way or another but in fact the mirror prevents them seeing the others, the truth, the things they are faced. Another example that could be given from the same work is the concept of time. Time is a known concept familiar to anyone in the society. But the way the time is put in the work makes the meaning blurred instead of clarifying it. The time, the ambiguity in the reflection of the time and several other objects and concepts associated with it make the writer and the screen writer create a different world using the same familiar concepts as his base. All the objects and the dialogues could have different meanings if the wrapping of the message would be somewhat different.

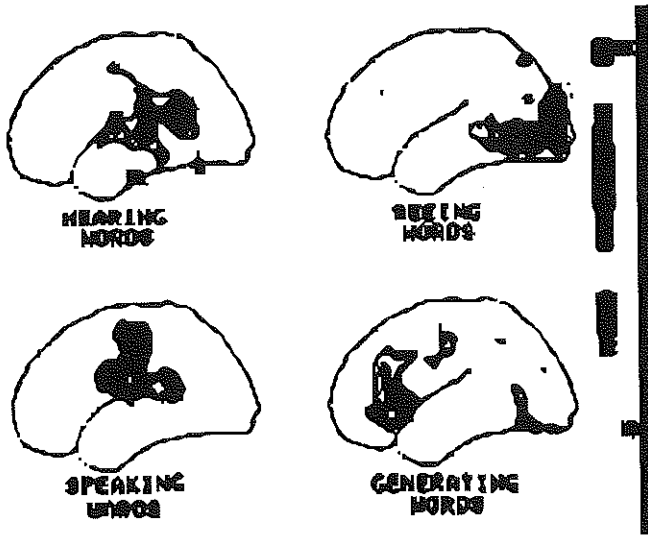
As the receiver consumes or digests the message, the messages are filed into the brain according to their order of importance. But this is a kind of mystery which is the right order and when? The primary importance of the time could change with the affect of other factors. The same points could be ordered and re-ordered endlessly, since the hierarchy of these would be

depending on the individual and the mood of the individual at that time. What is important at that moment, wouldn't have the same importance a minute later. The dominating ones and the ones dominated would be changing continuously. As it is a journey for the individual himself/herself it could be accepted as the journey of the meaning into its original place. But the fact is that there is no original place but various ways of using it utilizing it for different purposes. For example, when the photographer goes to present his new photographs to the mysterious women in the Secret Face, he finds only an iron, a mirror and a lamp. These are the known objects and the order of them are not as important as the other messages. Instead their implied meaning has more importance such as iron, meaning the wish to correct all the mistakes done throughout the life, lamp is the wish to illuminate the dark corridors of the memories and thoughts and mirror reflecting oneself to the others or preventing us to see the others behind it. So, the familiar objects and concepts make us face with the unfamiliar thoughts and aspects. Most of the viewers have not enough sufficient background knowledge for such a mystery and thus the viewing does not lead to the consumption of all the meanings and messages in the text.

Along with the old items and concepts, the viewer should confront with the new ones. Each new item is filed along with the other old ones. But as the old ones change its order of importance or primary meaning so do the new ones. So, it is a mutual recycling reshaping the world of meaning. It has neither a

certain structure nor a certain meaning. Everything is in a kind of balance that if one changes the others change too.

These new messages could be placed into a new file, or associated with an old one. There is also a connection procedure among the files. For example, the visual codes are kept in one file, and the audio codes are kept into another. The situational codes make up another file contextualizing the message.



In these files the message is transformed into the meaning and the receiver remembers only the items associated with other meanings in his/her file system. Thus, the meaning is produced whenever it is required but again there is the tendency of using the old files instead of the new ones. The new files are also

connected to the old ones and are opened when any transformation is required. If the speed and duration of the transfer is limited or not available for a certain period of time, these little new files are usually deleted and the new information is forgotten. In order to get the new messages these should be connected to the old files and a meaningful construction should be verified. Also the association of the new files should be quicker than the old ones by giving the receivers the similar input several times in order to recycle the message. Since the perception centers in the brain are different for the visual and audio signals, the individuals generally have difficulties in remembering the connection of the two different signs. Also, the audio and visual codes require different decoding processes thus, even two scenes following each other would be very difficult to follow. For the individual the meaning is in the re-production phase. If the individual could reproduce what s/he has seen or watched in a meaningful way, then the meaning could be accepted to be conveyed. If what one gets as a message and what one produces as a meaning are different then, the meaning is not reflected in the individual and either there were no consumption or it was not an effective one. These issues are highly related with the cognitive theories, individual perception, reception, recall, interpretation and production stages.

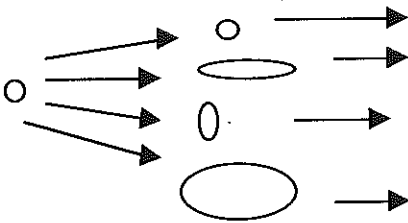
Cognitive theories: There are many theories related to the cognitive system of the individual. How messages are recognized and filed in the appropriate way. For example some people are more alert for the visual signs. The visual part of their brain is

more active and there is a great possibility of understanding the messages when they are given via visual signs. Some others having a wider acceptance for the audio signs feel ready more for the sounds. Still a third group has the capacity of grasping the audio and visual sign together and these signs are filed together. As for the recollection needed they should retrieve the related information and recall these two different types of signals associated to each other. If they have a difficulty in remembering one or the other there would be no way for recollection.

Cognition is highly related with the readiness mentioned before. If the individual is ready for the certain type of message then the message would be easier to get and understand. Otherwise, it would be two difficult for the individual to get ready and store the information during the flow of information. For example, for the viewers accustomed to the way of Orhan Pamuk or Ömer Kavur it would be easy to look at the problem from different angles. The ones having no acquaintance would have difficulties in the way of getting the messages and interpreting them. Apart from the individual perception we could even talk about the perception of the society which requires certain ways of thinking and interpreting. i.e. the cultures having cylindrical life styles have different perceptions than the ones having angular homes. These two types of societies would see different things even if they look at the same scene on the screen.

Perception and reception are different concepts when it comes to the consumption of a film. In a viewing situation especially in the cinema film situation the individual is in a way

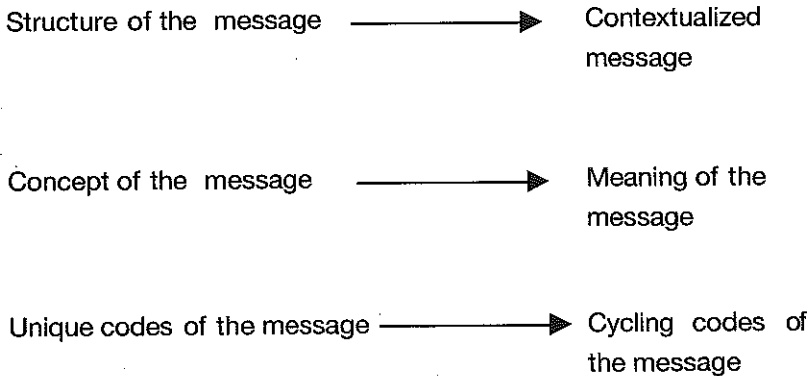
forced to perceive every detail in the film. The wide screen, the loud voice make it all printed into the brain. But perception does not require reception. The individual could get the message but might not put it into the brain to be stored. It is just a perception of that time, then, it is forgotten. Whereas a recall is asked there would be no sign of the perceived things. Some scientists believe that only the recalled information could be interpreted. In a way in order to interpret on a fact, a concept, an object one should be able to store it and recall it whenever it is required. But through these recalls different interpretations are possible. In each recall the filed items renewed with the new gathered information, updated and evaluated to be decoded again. This is the most problematic phase of decoding the message. Because if the original form of the message is forgotten and only the copies of it filed in the brain there would be no real interpretation. These would be just the pseudo formulations. These give way to misunderstandings, miscodings or multiple meanings of the same structure.



Getting the message, requires a series of transformations. During these transformations the structure of the message is not kept in its original form, instead the meanings produced from the structure would be stored. When a recall is required not the original structure but the meanings drawn from the message would be remembered. And the new evaluations requiring frequent recalls would give way to new interpretations of the same structure in different ways. Since the original structure of the given message is not broken, this would be possible to yield as many different interpretations as possible.

The reproduction stage is not a required one. This could happen when you need to give an example of a watched film for a specific situation. This is rather different from recognition alone. The purposeful exemplification of the same structure would give way to contextualize the message. Thus, contextualizing the message, requires it to be removed again from its original structure. The structure of the message is the way it is conveyed, the different audio or visual densities within the implied structure and meaning. But decontextualising it require the change of the balances the way the message is carried. Apart from its own structure there would be no way to contextualize it in the same way. Single items, visions or signs separated from their own context would not give way to the sum of the message in its original form. The actions for example in the Ömer Kavur film is just similar to each other. If the viewer codes all the actions in the same form under the "searching" heading, then, there would be misunderstandings led by miscoding the actions.

The search in the film is a continues action throughout the film and has a different value and aim at each different stage. The participants of the viewing action would not gather all the information they get. Because the film is dense with lots of symbols and it requires time to put all the information into its related files. The immediate codings would cause the individual to put his/her interpretation of what s/he saw in the film. And when the codes are deciphered it is not the given message anymore, it is the message of the receiver, the individual viewer. It is related to his/her own filing system rather than the sender of the message and the meaning is established in a certain way just to give opportunities enough for recycles and re-interpretations. The concepts gathered throughout the messages are not the concepts anymore. They are transferred into the meaning sector. The message contextualized and received its new form in the individual.



The more the codes cycling the more the viewer would be accustomed to it. Getting along with the new messages would be easier and quicker. Cycling codes would be easy to get and interpret but these are called to be the easy way of consumption and just like fast food they are easily forgotten. The unique codes such as the ones in “Akrebin Yolculuğu” or “Gizli Yüz” the viewers would force themselves to find out and to decipher would be more effective than the cycling ones although they are more difficult to get.

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