

Analysis of Three Order Topological: a New Approach to Analyze Audiences of Emotional TV Programs

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Abstract—“Topology of the Three Order” was proposed by the famous French psychologist Jacques Lacan who had large an influence after the Second World War. This theoretical system was formed after the critical inheritance against Freud’s theory. It is a system in which the three categories of “symbolic order”, “imaginary order” and “real order” are merged in some way by using geometric models and etc. To this day, Lacan’s “Three Order Topology” has gone through more than half a century, and its meaning has been widely used in various fields, including art, radio and television broadcast. This article aims to research and analyze this new approach based on its role in the audiences of emotional TV programs. After discussion and inquiry, it can be considered that the “Three Order Topology” analysis is a new approach for the analysis of audiences of emotional TV.

Keywords—Three Order Topology; emotional TV programs; audiences’ approve

I. INTRODUCTION

“Three Order Topology” was proposed by the famous French psychologist Jacques Lacan who had large influences after the Second World War. This theoretical system was formed after the critical inheritance against Freud’s theory. It is a system in which the three categories of “symbolic order”, “imaginary order” and “real order” are merged in some way by using geometric models and etc. To quote Qiong Wu’s words, “The Three Order is not only the Three Order that make up the world, but also the three orders that dominate the subject.” Till this day, Lacan’s “Three Order Topology” has gone through more than half a century, and its meaning has been widely used in various fields, including art, radio and television broadcast. This article aims to research and analyze this new approach based on its role in the audiences’ reception for emotional TV programs.

II. INTRODUCING LACAN’S “THREE ORDER TOPOLOGY” INTO BROADCASTING AND TELEVISION FIELD

Strictly speaking, the field of broadcast and television should be considered a comprehensive field of literature, sociology, art, psychology, and philosophy, especially in the development of this field in recent years, psychology and philosophy has become more and more indispensable and interdisciplinary subject. Lacan’s theory of analyzing the order of human subject survival — “Three Order Topology” can be considered to be applied into the field of broadcast and television smoothly without a doubt.

Broadcast and television itself is a reflection of the human subject, providing a process for human beings to gradually understand themselves from the “mirror”. In Lacan’s research, the process for babies to know that they are “self” in the “mirror” from knowing “others” in the “mirror” is the process of establishing a self-consciousness, and Lacan’s mirror stage, starting from babies’ looking into mirror, all the scenes of confused reality and imagination are called mirroring experiences. Therefore, people can easily create a delusion in which reality and imagination are confused by listening to the broadcast and watching TV. In the experiential theory of the former Soviet Union Stanislavsky, when people watch dramas, they integrate their emotions into the plot and the protagonists, producing an empathy effect, this is the confusion between imagination and reality which we talked about earlier, this forms into a “dramatic” effect. In the field of broadcast and television, the audience will also have a feeling of empathy, which leads to the “symbolic order”, “imaginary order” and “real order” in the “Three Order Topology”. When listening to the broadcast or watching TV, the audience is wandering among the Three Order.

Therefore, in the analysis of the relationship among broadcast and TV audiences, programs and audiences, the

“Three Order Topology” will become a new approach. Under the context of “Three Order Topology”, we can better grasp the audiences’ inner mentality, psychological and spiritual core levels which allow us to perform a more scientific and systematic exploration of the relationship between the audience and the broadcast television program.

III. THE THREE ORDER OF THE AUDIENCES OF EMOTIONAL TV PROGRAMS

The “symbolic order”, “imaginary order” and “real order” of TV program audiences are also coming from empathy and mirroring experience. In short, at the beginning, the audiences simply identify the characters in the image as “others”. With deeper understanding, they will increase certain empathy, put their emotions into the content of the TV program, and finally find their own “mapping” in the content of the program. For “emotional” TV programs, the audiences will have unique empathy and mappings.

“Emotional” TV programs can be narrowly defined as “TV programs about love” in the domestic TV shows. They can be roughly divided into two categories: one is the “Intervention” program, which usually solves problems from both sides (double subjects), “Defence War for Love” is a TV program represented by Tianjin Satellite TV and “Golden Intervention” is represented by Jiangxi Satellite TV’s. Another type of program is the “marriage arranging” program, which is usually based on “one-on-one” or “one-to-many” ways. This type of program is represented by “You Are the One” which was represented by Jiangsu Satellite TV.

For audiences, the empathy effects brought by these two types of emotional TV programs are different. The relationships among this Three Order are different. In the “Intervention” programs, the two sides are opposite beings, and the emotional observer (or emotional coach) plays the role of the contradictor. What is shown in the “marriage arranging” programs is the recognition of self-subjects to other subjects.

The first realm that audiences enter in this particular perspective angle is the imaginary order. In Lacan’s context, one can think that imagination comes from narcissism that means putting one’s own subject thoughts into the protagonists. Then, develop a second understanding for the characters in the TV program in some way, and consider some characters in the program are “selves”. Therefore, the audiences will put themselves into the intervened parties in a certain period of time (during and after the program). At this time, the audiences as observers will develop certain mood fluctuations along the protagonists, even Resentment, sadness and other emotions, this shows that although the audiences are only watching TV, the content on TV turns it into a mirroring experience, the audiences combines their experiences with cognition and create their own different stories.

In addition, in the “the symbolic order”, the audiences will self-define a certain prop, a sentence, a person, or something in the program, which becomes a symbol, a kind of meaning. Levi Strauss once said that “social exchanges of human beings are not only reciprocal exchanges, but also

symbolic exchanges.” In the emotional programs, the audiences will define many nouns in concept. There are many common definitions, such as: roses represent love, and so on. There are also many new definitions of things in emotional TV programs, such as the definitions of vocabulary such as “womanizer”, “fag hag”, “material girl”, and “cheating”. Once such words or descriptions appear, people will recall the previous experiences and give new meanings to them. For example, when an audience hears the word “cheating” while watching a TV program, it is very likely that they will quickly associate it with the events they have known or heard about betrayal of love. Then a specific noun will become a symbol. As the saying goes, the approval of the imaginary world is mediated by the meaning structure of language or speech.

The “real order” mentioned in the “Three Order” cannot be completely equivalent to the material world that we are living in, that is, “things are not real realms, and things are only in the real world”. The reason why the real world transcends the symbolic world is that it is something similar to “the other side”, it is not just an appearance. In the meaning of the audiences, when they are being empathetic, usually it’s after defining things, they often hope to find a meaning that transcends the real world of the signifier network. This is why the audiences always wonder “who is right” or “who should be chosen” after watching the emotional TV programs. This can be classified into the exploration of “real world” and the truth. And the TV programs with the meaning of real-world exploration can win audiences’ aftertaste and love, can stimulate the audiences’ visual pleasure.

IV. CREATION AND INSPIRATION TOWARDS PROGRAMS COMING FROM THE ANALYSIS OF THE AUDIENCES OF EMOTIONAL PROGRAMS UNDER THE NEW APPROACH

Through the path of “Three Order Topology”, we explore the psychology of the audiences in the emotional programs, and conducts an expanded analysis of their empathy and mirroring experiences, and further explores the psychology changes of the audiences in the observing process, and analyze the evolution of the above level, and the analysis and such analysis also gives a great inspiration to the innovation of the program.

First of all, in order to let the audiences be able to have a stronger empathy and better mirroring experiences, the content of the programs should be closer to the realities of the audiences’ lives, this will make it easier for the audiences to combine their own practices and their experiences with the protagonists’ in the program, also their fates. Since everyone has the mutual recognition of the imaginary subjects like what Lacan said, it is more appropriate to appeal to the characteristics of this psychology in order to obtain better audience satisfaction.

Secondly, the typical events and the selections of representative people or materials are also important conditions for winning the audience’s resonance. As Lacan said, the identification is the recognition, acceptance and absorption of some other people or objects outside oneself by

the subject in the way of projection in the libido betting. Typical events and characters can win the recognition of the audience with the greatest possibility. In addition, typical events and characters often have a certain symbolic mapping on the audiences, and this kind a mapping can also win the audiences' resonance and recognition to obtain more viewing significance.

Finally, the shaping of the characters should be more ample, try to avoid the simplistic display of the characters, but should show the protagonists' multifaceted personalities and multifaceted characteristics. Imagination is the imagination of one self, the imaginative depiction of the "ideal-ego", and the diversified and multifaceted personalities shaping can be closer to the ideal personality. The ample character image can also better restore the true connotation of the event, and more infinitely close to the real world. The exploration of the true things and the truth appeals more to the real world pursued by the audience.

V. CONCLUSION

The analysis of "Three Order Topology" can deeply analyze the real psychological feelings of emotional TV program audiences, and analyze how to enable the audiences to empathize with such TV programs, so that it can guide TV program workers to create better emotional TV programs, this analysis is a new approach for the analysis of audiences of emotional TV programs.

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