

(UN)FRAMING THE TEXT: SCHEMA-THEORETIC VIEWS OF COMPREHENSION

Esra Körpez

D.E.Ü.Fen-Edebiyat Fak.

Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Bölümü İZMİR

ÖZET

Okuma şema kuramları okuyucunun metinleri anlama ve yorumlaması sırasında, belirli bir düzende inşa edilmiş bilgilerin nasıl kullanıldığını anlatır. Bu çalışma, şema analizinin kuramsal altyapısını vererek "anlama" eyleminin dünya, dil ve metin şemalarının aktif olarak kullanılmasına bağlı olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Şema analizi, okuyucunun bir metni yorumlamada temel bilgi yapılarını kullandığını, bunun yanı sıra metin yazarlarının da bu yapıları kendi dünya görüşlerine uygun bir "içerik" oluşturmak suretiyle yeniden çerçevelediklerini iddia etmektedir. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma şema etkileşiminin ideolojik yönleri üzerinde durarak, belli çerçevelerin seçimi ve kullanımı sonucunda dünyayı anlama ve yorumlamada egemenlik modellerinin nasıl desteklendiği veya bununla nasıl mücadele edildiğini ortaya çıkarmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: şema analizi, çerçeve anlam bilimi, senaryo, okuma süreci, tek örnek-leme, seçme, ön plana çıkarma, şema değişimi

ABSTRACT

Schematic theories of reading emphasize the significance of the reader's organized knowledge in the comprehension and interpretation of texts. This study by giving place to the theoretical foundations of schema analysis elucidates the fact that "cognition" relies heavily on the active use of world, language and text schemata. Schema analysis purports that the reader activates his basic knowledge structures to interpret the text whereas the writer reframes these structures to produce "contexts" appropriate to his own worldview. Consequently, this paper also focuses on the ideological aspects of schema activation and tries to show how the selection and utilization of particular frames can support or challenge hegemonic patterns of reading and understanding the world.

Key words: schema analysis, frame semantics, script, comprehension, reading process, prototyping, selection, salience, ideology, schema change

What happens when we read? This has been a question whose answer has differed immensely in the field of literary theory and criticism. Formalists and Saussurean structuralists have pinpointed the communicative aspect of a written text emphasizing the reading experience as an addresser/addressee relationship where the responsibility of reader is a passive one aimed to "ex-

tract" or "decode" what has been already encoded. Because structuralists were more concerned of how language as an underlying system conditioned the formulation of meanings, they undermined the historical and social context of the text as well as its conceptual representations. Other critics such as Michail Bakhtin,¹ have emphasized the reading process as an act of "negotiation," an interplay between the text and the reader in which the reader exists only through a dialogical interaction with the text. Phenomenologists like Wolfgang Iser (1980) have viewed the reading process as a "sense-making activity" highlighting the "constructivist" aspect of reading. In such a view, "meaning" is created by the "supposed experience of a generalized reader" (Suleiman & Crossman, 1980: 26) and "consist[s] of the complementary activities of selection and organization, anticipation and retrospection, the formulation and modification of expectations in the course of the reading process" (1980: 22). Iser (1980) together with other "reception theorists" put a strong emphasis on the reader as the producer of meaning but at the same time have acknowledged the importance of the "text" as well. For example, Ingarden (1931: 18-19) maintains that besides the role of the reader, "schematized aspects of the text" and its "represented objectives" should also be given full consideration in any act of interpretation. However, other reader-response theorists such as Stanley Fish (1981) and Norman Holland (1975) regard the reading process as a pure subjective interpretation of the reader. While the former asserts that the "reader

supplies everything"² in the text and that there can be no text separate from the reader the latter stresses the psycho-analytic aspects of reading and constructs a one-to-one relationship between "reading" and "identity themes" that readers unconsciously carry with them throughout their life and which shape their subjectivity and the reading process.³

As a result, the reader-centered approaches in themselves carry two contradictory tendencies which have been identified by Cook as follows:

The first tendency is one which seeks to incorporate reader variation as an element in the construction of discourse, but regards the reader's response as delimited by nature of the text in question. The second . . . is one which rejects the existence of autonomous text, reversing the apparent direction of communication from author through text to reader, and regarding text and even author as the creation of the reader. (1994: 175)

All of the literary theories ranging from "death of the author" to the "death of the reader" have proposed diverse methods of interpretation making "the act of reading" even more complicated and ungraspable. Obviously, this "mystery" of the reading process evolves from the fact that the creation of meaning is a cooperative venture where the writer, reader and the text have important shares. A text cannot speak for itself, a writer cannot "speak" without a text and without a reader none of these can be "realized."

If we regard the reading process as a communicative act that takes place between the writer, the reader and the text, then we must acknowledge the

imperative role that cognitive processes play during any communicative interaction. For in order to communicate, participants draw upon memory for language, its rules and prior knowledge of the world. It is the cognitive processes of information that both the writer and reader select, store and retrieve that make communication possible. In other words, communication whether it be oral or written, "presuppose[s] the existence of a conceptual domain of understanding jointly constructed by the producer and recipient(s)" (Werth 1999: 17). Furthermore, in any act of reading, it is assumed that "knowledge" which is stored away within the mind but appropriate and relevant to the context of the "text world" (Van Dijk, 1977a and Werth, 1999) is retrieved and utilized by the listener or the reader. This brings us to the fact that comprehension takes place when the reader is able to integrate the text-based information with his/her pre-existing knowledge base (Werth, 1999; de Beugrande, 1980; Emmot, 1994,1997). In other words meaning is created through the interaction of the reader's background knowledge and the text and is neither wholly constructed by the reader nor the text alone. Reading comprehension is not simply a matter of extracting from a text what a writer has put into it or what a reader wants to decode from it. As Marilyn Adams and Allan Collins put it, "a text only provides directions for the listener or reader as to how he should retrieve or construct the intended meaning from his own, previously acquired knowledge" (in Singer & Ruddell, 1985: 406). Ingarden also implies a similar view when he asserts that successful "concretization" of a text depends on the "representation" of previous experience of the reader (1931: 255-65), putting emphasis on the fact that comprehension of the text is based not only on the reader's linguistic knowledge but also on his/her prior knowl-

edge of the world. Given that the reader's linguistic and world knowledge bear an influential marking on his/her act of interpretation, I believe that an analysis of "schema theory" will not only be fruitful in revealing how meaning is generated and formulated by the reader, but also of how deviant texts such as those that belong to the magical realist genre, construct an "intelligible" and "familiar" fictional world by making use of existing schemata.

One of the most used cognitive processes in the comprehension of texts is the utilization of what many cognitive scientists and linguists identify as "schema," variously called as "framing" (Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974; Winograd, 1975; Fillmore, 1976, 1982; Minsky, 1980), as "scripts" (Schank and Abelson, 1977) or "schemata" (Bartlett, 1932; Rumelhart, 1980) and which also has similarities with Fauconnier's "mental space" (1985) concept and Lakoff's "idealized cognitive model" (1987).⁴ Schema theory has been used in a variety of fields ranging from linguistics to AI (Artificial Intelligence), from cognitive psychology to sociology. Schema theory posits that clarity and comprehension of reading material is dependent on the reader's pre-existing knowledge. The goal of the schema theory has been indicated by critics as "to specify the interface between the reader and the text—to specify how the reader's knowledge interacts with and shapes the information on the page and to specify how that knowledge must be organized to support the interaction" (Adams and Collins, 1979: 3). Because the devising of schemata plays an essential role in narrative comprehension it will be reasonable to give place first to some of the definitions that are offered by various theorists concerning "schemata" or "frames":

When one encounters a new situation (or makes a sub-

stantial change in one's view of a problem, one selects from memory a structure called frame. This is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary. (Minsky, 1975: 211)

A schema then, is a data structure for representing the generic concepts stored in memory. These are schemata representing our knowledge about all concepts; those underlying objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions and sequences of actions. A schema contains, as part of its specification, the network of interrelationships that is believed to normally hold among the constituents of the concept in question. (Rumelhart, 1980: 34)

By the term "frame" I have in mind any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits. When one of the things in such a structure is introduced into a text, or into a conversation, all of the others are automatically made available. (Fillmore, 1982: 111)

All three definitions highlight the fact that we perceive the world by making use of "frames" or "schemata" which not only represent our experiential or cultural background knowledge but also function to organize our experience and guide our action. Since we cannot identify each new person, object, or event as unique or separate, we attempt to sift through a remarkably large

amount of information so that we can give meaning to the "reality" out there in connection to a frame, schema or script we already know. As Tannen asserts, ". . . people approach the world not as naive, blank-slate receptacles who take in stimuli as they exist in some independent and objective way, but rather as experienced and sophisticated veterans of perception who have stored their prior experiences as 'organized mass'⁵ and who see events and objects in relation to each other and in relation to their prior experience" (1979: 144). In this respect, schema theory views organized knowledge as a hierarchical network of mental structures which represent one's understanding of the world, and reading as an activation/construction process in which new information is assimilated into pre-existing "schemas." In other words, this theory claims that "knowledge of the world" plays an important role in the interpretation of any text, for reading involves active participation on the part of readers, who map the information in the text against their own stored knowledge to make sense of it: "understanding is a process by which people match what they see and hear to prestored groupings of actions that they have already experienced" (Schank and Abelson, 1977: 67). In this prestored associative network of hierarchically and thematically connected concepts, the "representation at the top of the hierarchy is sufficiently general to capture the essential aspects of all members of the class. . . . The power of this structure derives from the fact that the top level representation of any schema simultaneously provides an abstraction of and a conceptual frame for all the particular events that fall within its domain"(Adams and Collins, 1979: 3-4). Another important characteristic of a schema is the concept of "slots." According to Minsky's frame theory, during comprehension the individual not

only maps in-coming information onto an appropriate schema but also "fills out" the details of the schema with explicit features of the specific situation. Such activation involves "slots" in the schema being "instantiated" with any of the range of values that are compatible with its associated schemata (Minsky, 1975). Formulated in this way, the cognitive process of "instantiation" plays a pivotal role in the (re)construction of schemas. As Rumelhart proposes, ". . . a schema is instantiated whenever a particular configuration of values is bound to a particular configuration of variables at a particular moment in time. Interpreting a situation to be an instance of some concept, . . . involves . . . the instantiation of an appropriate schema . . . by associating the various variables of the schema with the various aspects of the situation"(1980: 36). Furthermore, "instantiation" also serves the purpose of filling out the details of a schema that are not expressed explicitly. Thus, the process of "instantiation" also functions to assign "default values"(Minsky, 1975) to any particular situation or story. MacLachlan and Reid have given the "cinema-going frame" as an example, and have maintained that when such a frame is activated in a text, "it can be assumed by default that watching a film presupposes buying a ticket and taking one's seat; such details do not have to be specifically mentioned by the writer. Readers constantly and automatically supply default elements of this kind whenever they read"(1994: 72). A characteristic of "default elements" is that they are expectation-driven. Readers supply details that are not explicitly stated on the basis of expectations derived from previous experience and world knowledge.

An educational psychologist, Richard Anderson, pinpoints the significance of "schemata" in the act of interpretation and adds that schema the-

ory sharply contrasts with "the conventional view that comprehension consists of aggregating the meanings of words to form the meanings of clauses, aggregating the meanings of clauses to form the meanings of sentences, aggregating the meanings of sentences to form the meanings of paragraphs, and so on. . . . The meanings of the words cannot be "added up" to give the meaning of the whole. The click of comprehension occurs only when the reader evolves a schema that explains the whole message' (Anderson, 1985: 373, 375). In other words, we do not simply start at the beginning of a story and proceed word to word until the very last page; on the contrary, our mind searches for organizing patterns that will give meaning to our present reading experience. Therefore, interpretation is more than just an exercise of our linguistic knowledge; it involves "cognitive framing" which readers are generally unaware of and which determines the kind of background knowledge that is utilized during the reading process. As such, inferences based on world knowledge and context are essential ingredients for building meaning.

However, readers when interpreting the text not only make use of their real-world knowledge frames but also their knowledge about typical text structures which have been labeled by some as "story grammars" or more generally as "story schemata" (Rumelhart, 1975; Mandler and Johnson: 1977; Thorndyke, 1977). A story grammar can be defined as "a rule system which specifies canonical sequences of units occurring in stories and the conditions under which they can be changed, deleted or moved. A story schema based on the grammar is a mechanism which has incorporated some of all these regularities and makes use of them during processing" (Mandler, 1983: 307). The story schema contains readers knowledge about the conventional con-

struction of stories in their culture. It is assumed that knowledge about the conventions of storytelling and its rules facilitate reading comprehension and enable the reader to recognize the rhetorical organization of the text and to process it. For example, Rumelhart (1975) proposes eleven grammar rules of a story in which at the highest level we come across the story as being comprised of an event and an episode, with the episode comprising an event and a reaction, and so on. Rumelhart argues that a detailed structural knowledge of this type will facilitate comprehension since the reader will be able to fit the objects and events described in the text into these already established general schemas. (In fact, it is by means of such schemas that we are able to define what a plot, a setting or an episode is.) Another example for story schemata is given by Lichtenstein and Brewer (1980). They maintain that among the common properties that are shared by most narratives are the presentation of the major characters and the location at the beginning and the enactment of the moral at the end of the story. These common conventions are picked up by readers during the reading process and are developed into a schema that represent their own concept of how a typical story is structured from beginning to end (Mandler, 1983; McConaughy, 1980). That is, readers recognize a text as an example of story by what is in it and how it is organized. Readers use this schema to understand and remember stories that they have read or heard and to predict what would happen in other similar stories.

In short, we can say that "story schemas" are "formal rule systems for describing the regularities found in one kind of text (Mandler, 1984: 18) and which in turn reflect the story grammars we discover or construct, and which enable us to recognize general formats of various types of texts such as fairy

tales, thrillers, detective stories, TV news programmes, recipes and so on. It would appear that through repeated exposure to stories of various general types we internalize idealized schemata for them, making it easier for us to comprehend them, to represent them in memory and to recall them. For instance, stories told in the order we normally expect are recalled more easily than those which defy these expectations (Mandler and Johnson, 1977; Stein and Glenn, 1979, Thorndyke, 1977). For it is through these story grammars that we develop expectations and constructs for what we are likely to encounter in the act of reading. We try to map onto each story that we read the rules and relationships of the idealized framework of story and replace the real characteristics of the story with the prototypical ones provided by the framework. However, because storytelling conventions can also differ from culture to culture, "story schemata" may also vary in different parts of the world.

Six key functions have been proposed for schemata:

- As 'ideational scaffolding' for assimilating text information. Information that fits the slots in the reader's schema is easily learned, perhaps with less effort.
 - For facilitating selective allocation of attention. They help to determine the important parts of a text, and guide the reader regarding where to pay close attention.
 - To assist inferential elaboration. To allow readers to go beyond the information which is explicit in a text.
 - To allow orderly searches of memory. Acting as a guide to the types of information that need to be recalled.
- To facilitate editing and summarizing (since it includes a key to items of importance).
 - To permit inferential reconstruction where there are gaps in recall. (Anderson, 1985: 376-7).

Within schema theory, the interaction of both top-down and bottom-up processing modes is crucial for an understanding of text processing as an active procedure, rather than as a passive receptive skill based on decoding. Skilled readers will use both bottom-up processes (the understanding of discrete units) and top-down processes (building up a meaning through a holistic understanding of the world) simultaneously during their act of interpretation. While bottom-up processes facilitate the "instantiation" of in-coming information into appropriate "slots" of a schemata, top-down processes help the reader "to assimilate" the consistent data to the reader's conceptual system or to "resolve ambiguities" and "select between alternative possible interpretations" when a mismatch occurs (Adams and Collins, 1979: 5). What this indicates is that while we use our bottom-up processing to handle familiar situations, we use our top-down processing to deal with unfamiliar or totally new situations. For it is our top-down processes that help us make predications about the intended meaning of phenomena that seem apparently contradictory, illogical and meaningless at lower processing levels. The idea of different processing levels in the activation of "frames" or "schemas" allows for an account of text understanding as a dynamic process that can change throughout reading. For matching a feature in a situation, concept or object with an already existing schema is not a "static" or a "deterministic" cognitive process. Contrary to the claims of many artificial intelligence researchers (Minsky, 1975; Charniak,

1975), schemas are not fixed "data structures" but are, as Bartlett has proposed, "constructive" knowledge structures" which are "active" and "developing"(1932: 197-201). Kintsch also maintains a similar view when he asserts that "the comprehension process is controlled not merely by a single (conventional schema) that is imposed on the process in a top-down fashion, but by several different schemata that derive from the reader's apperceptive mass and that are activated in a bottom-up fashion from the text itself, or that are indeed constructed while reading a story from the information so far processed, an interaction with the apperceptive mass"(1980: 98). In other words, "framing" is not merely "a process of fitting what one is told into the framework established by what one already knows"(Charniak, 1975) but is a developing construction when "combined with the experience of a particular piece of discourse, leads to the constructive processes in memory"(Brown and Yule, 1983: 249). Because knowledge is always relative and open to interpretation, so are framing processes. We modify frames and scripts in the light of new experiences and in turn these modifications become part of our memory, used for understanding subsequent events:

New experiences re-write our storehouse of narrative expectations, and we improvise on old stories to respond to them. In this fashion our cultural software is continually rewritten. An increasing variety of narratives add flexibility to our framing of events and consequently our understanding of them. A person who has 'seen it all' is a person who has many different stories [frames] to draw upon. (Balkin, 1998: 197)

Thus, the act of framing is not a static process but a dynamic one in which we improvise, revise or create new frames of understanding from our existing storehouse of knowledge. Because experience is always subject to (re)organization or (re)framing according to different interests and different points of view, framing is not only a process of association and transition but also of "transaction"(Genette, 1991:261). Consequently, schema theory emphasizes not only how readers make active use of schemata in the processing of texts, but also how texts can change pre-established mental representations by evoking new schemata. To elaborate more on how the reorganization of schemata can result in cognitive change I will refer to Cook's framework (1994) which categorizes schemata into three levels: language schemata, text schemata and world schemata. Cook maintains that the dynamic interplay between linguistic and text-based structures on one hand and schematic representations of the world on the other hand can initiate a change in the schemata of the reader:

So far, the description of schema theory has emphasized the role of schemata in creating coherence during the processing of texts. The influence described has been one-way. Schemata have been represented as relatively fixed structures acting upon texts to create discourse. There is, however, another side to this process. Text may change schemata. The interaction may not be one-way, but reciprocal and dynamic. While any interaction with new experience or text may be of this kind, and may effect changes in schemata, there may also be experiences and discourses whose

primary function is to alter schemata, making the mind better equipped for processing in future. (Cook: 1994, 183).

According to Cook, discourse can affect the schematic knowledge of the reader in three ways: it can reinforce, preserve or disrupt already existing schemata. In the first two cases, writers may use language, text and world knowledge bases to confirm or promote existing schemata. Discourse that disrupts schemata on the other hand, destroys existing schemata either by constructing new ones or establishing new connections. Cook refers to these processes as "schema refreshment"(ibid, 191). Furthermore, he adds that schemata refreshment which is subject to reader variation and change throughout time should be considered as the basis of discourse deviation: "Where there is deviation at one or both of the linguistic level and text-structural levels, and the deviation interacts with a reader's existing schemata to cause schema refreshment, there exists the phenomenon which I term 'discourse deviation'"(ibid, 198). Cook maintains that discourse deviation is a dynamic process between the reader's representations of language, text and world schemata and the ones evoked by the text since it involves a constant updating and restructuring of information.

The notions of "deviance" and "schema refreshment" used by Cook is important to understand how literary texts are able to cause "cognitive change" in the reader by means of schema change and how they provide a new means of interpreting experience. When a text strikes us as unusual, challenging or difficult it is because the text has been able to challenge our conventionalized way of thinking by deviating from either one or more of the schemata that organize(s) our language, text and world knowledge.

1.2. Construction of Schemata and the Encoding of Ideology

Since schemas are configurations of background knowledge, they also incorporate the ideological properties of knowledge bases, i.e. they also constitute both a vision of the world and a system of values. However, when readers activate "schemas" in order to make sense of what they read, they are mostly unaware that these highly complex network of mental representations carry in them the dominant ideologies of institutional, societal and cultural systems. For example, the conventionalized way in which texts are structured (story grammars) reflect a canonical view of literature that stipulates what is or is not normally expected. A text can stand as a "story" type, an "advertisement" type or a "report" type if only "people routinely apply to it a *consistent set of processing schemas* (italics are not mine) that constitute both structure and content"(de Beaugrande, 1987: 56). In other words, because schemata represent our conventional knowledge of the world, they determine what is normal in a given culture in a given situation (Van Dijk, 1977b: 13). Trandis' definition of schemata is also useful in highlighting the close affinity between schema activation and ideological positioning: "Schemata are organized categories held in a cognitive framework, possessing effect and forming values, attitudes, expectations, norms, roles and unstated assumptions"(1987:265). Bearing this in mind, the producer of a text can manipulate the "schematic" knowledge of a reader to reproduce "commonsense" assumptions of reality or to challenge them. If literary works tend to challenge existing frames, this can lead to schema change and the creation of new schemata. In this respect, schema theory can contribute greatly to the demonstration of how ideologies are perpetuated and maintained in "text

worlds" since literary texts not only evoke "frames" drawn from real-world knowledge and experiences but also utilize those same "frames" to reinforce or challenge power relations operative in institutional and societal processes.

I will try to demonstrate how "schemas" contribute to encode ideology by referring to its two significant features, that of prototyping and that of selection and salience. Both features play an essential role in the representation of mainstream literary conventions, values and belief as the "normative." As a result, after briefly touching upon these two features, I will shift my focus to the most important outcome of schema activation which is the process of "naturalization" whereby a network of discursive, social, cultural and political practices are represented as common assumptions or as the "natural" criteria.

1.2.1. Prototyping

The feature of "prototyping" or "stereotyping" plays an important role in understanding the activation of frames and the ideology lying underneath them. Rumelhart, when defining what a schema theory is, underlines the fact that without a "prototype theory of meaning" a schema theory cannot be explained since meanings are encoded in terms of their prototypes: ". . . inasmuch as a schema underlying a concept stored in memory corresponds to the meaning of that concept, meanings are encoded in terms of the typical or normal situations or events, that instantiate that concept"(1980: 34). Besides Rumelhart, Fillmore also emphasizes the one-to-one relationship between "framing" and the activation of standard or prototypical scenes or contexts. A "frame" in Fillmore's usage refers to the "system of linguistic choices . . . that can get associated with prototypical instances of scenes"(1975: 124). Furthermore in his article "Frame seman-

tics", he observes that "the frame or background against which the meaning of a word is defined and understood is a fairly large slice of the surrounding culture, and this background understanding is best understood as a 'prototype' rather than as a genuine body of assumptions about what the world is like"(1982,: 117-118). Others like Minsky and Schank & Abelson have used the term "stereotype" in place of the term "prototype" when defining what a frame or script is:

A frame is "a data-structure for representing a stereotyped situation"(Minsky, 1975: 212).

A script is "a predetermined, stereotyped sequence of actions that defines a well-known situation"(Schank and Abelson, 1977: 41).

Interestingly enough, since it is the "prototypes" that determine the meanings of other related concepts, and since they are used to represent an entire category and provide a normative model for the category they serve to be very powerful ideological weapons. In the act of framing, prototypical or stereotypical examples are more likely to be used not only as reference points but also as the "norm" or "ideal" type to which all other concepts are related. What this implies is that any member of a category that fails to match the prototype will be viewed as "imperfect, deficient, less valuable, or abnormal" (Balkin, 1998: 255). For example, Lakoff has shown that in the western culture the notion of motherhood is based on the concept of nurturance (1987: 85-6). Framing motherhood in terms of nurturance yields a prototype, the housewife mother, who provides for her children and takes care of them. Consequently, it becomes the housewife

mother who begins to represent the set of norms that define the motherhood frame. As a result, all mothers and women who do not correspond to this model are viewed as deficient, lacking or insufficient. Thus, frames have ideological power because they can in fact be utilized in literary discourse to enhance commonsense assumptions by implicitly demarcating normal, natural and privileged associations about the world. Furthermore, because people usually view prototypes or stereotypical examples as the most common version of a category they will also use them as "gap fillers" to "flesh out or supply features of unknown or partially known events or members within a category" (Balkin, 1998: 253).

1.2.2 Selection and Salience

The feature of "salience" is also another ideological aspect of "framing." As Gregory Bateson puts it, we can consider the frame around a picture "as a message intended to order or organize the perception of the viewer," a message which "says, 'Attend to what is within and do not attend to what is outside.' . . . Perception of the ground must be positively inhibited and perception of the figure (in this case the picture) must be positively enhanced" (Bateson, 1972: 187). As "messages intended to order or organize the perception of the viewer," frames permit the inclusion of certain messages and relations while excluding others. When thought in this way, then frames should be seen as a "focusing device" (MacLachlan and Reid, 1994: 20) that have the power to affect the reader with what they enclose. As a result, schemata or frames can be understood as those "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse" (Gitlin, 1980: 7) to construct reality. For what writers

are doing when they employ a particular schema or frame in their text, is actually selecting some aspect of a perceived reality and making it more salient. By doing so they also promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and or treatment recommendation (Entman: 1993, 52). Therefore, writers by employing certain frames not only convey their own worldview by "sizing-magnifying or shrinking elements of the depicted reality" (Entman, 1991: 9) but also define a problem in a specific manner and prescribe particular solutions. For example, Entman contends that the "cold war frame" which was used by the United States until the demise of the Soviet Union, "highlighted certain foreign events—say, civil wars—as problems, identified their source (communist rebels), offered moral judgements (aesthetic aggression), and commended particular solutions (U.S. support for the other side)" (Entman, 1993: 294). In this respect, even though the framing process can be seen as similar to metaphorical mappings that highlight or conceal certain categories of experience in the conceptualization of reality, frames are broader than metaphors and may include many metaphors within them.

As a result, because frames and schemata constitute principles of selection, emphasis, prototyping, and presentation that organize the social construction of reality, they are powerful cognitive tools that can convey particular messages with ideological meanings or implications. For "schemas" as all cognitive features of discourse can be used to support power relations as well as to challenge or change them.

1.3 Conclusion

Schema theory depicts a theoretical framework for understanding how through various framing devices,

interpretation takes place, how incoming information is remembered, restored and restructured by the reader as well as how this information is manipulated by the writer to "produce" contexts appropriate to the writer's own worldview. Readers without inferring the appropriate frames can in fact misread the signifying strategies of writers even if they are equipped with the basic knowledge structures about the world. In this respect, "frames" or "schemata" should be considered as one of the most important cognitive processes in which readers connect the text to their own storehouse of knowledge. For if we assume that there is no stable or determinate "text world" (since there is always a dynamic relationship between the writer, reader and the text) then "context" also changes meaning for it becomes a linguistic construct that is first "framed" by the writer and then the reader. Writers first select the "facets of the world" (Fairclough, 1989:80) that they will enclose readers in and construct the text as their own interpretation of the world; in turn readers try to make sense of what is presented to them by activating their knowledge frames derived from their world knowledge, assumptions and expectations. As a result, "frames" are used both by the writer and the reader "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" occurrences within their life space and the world at large (Goffman 1974: 21). To put it differently, while we may frame the reading of texts in particular ways, this activity is not independent of the devices by which texts may attempt to frame themselves (MacLaclan and Reid, 1994: 9). In such a view, text interpretation becomes as what Fairclough asserts, "the interpretation of an interpretation" (1989:80) or as what Culler identifies as "framing the sign" (1988). In this respect, I believe that a schema analysis is, indeed, necessary to any study of literature, where we confront questions

about how interpretation occurs in line with readers' expectations as well as how writers manipulate language in order to convey their own ideological worldview.

¹ For a further reading on Bakhtin's dialogic aspect of language see *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson, (Austin: U of Texas P, 1981).

² For a further reading on Stanley Fish's approach to the role of the reader during the act of interpretation and his opposing views to Wolfgang Iser see Fish, S. (1981) "Why No-One's Afraid of Wolfgang Iser." *Diacritics* 11: 2-13.

³ For a further reading on Holland's view on how the reader's "identity" affects the interpretation process see "Unity, Identity, Text, Self" *PMLA* 90 (1975): 813-22.

⁴ References to the conception of framing processes can be readily found in psychology, particularly cognitive psychology (Rumelhart, D.E., (1975) "Notes on a Schema for Stories", in D.G. Bobrow and A. Collins, (eds.) *Representation and Understanding*. New York: Academic Press); Mandler, J.M. (1984) *Stories, Scripts, and Scenes: Aspects of Schema Theory*. Hillsdale, N.J.:Lawrence Erlbaum), in anthropology (Bateson G. (1972) *Steps to an Ecology of the Mind*. New York: Ballantine), in linguistics and discourse analysis (Tannen Deborah, (ed.) 1993. *Framing in Discourse*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press; Fillmore, C.J. (1976) "The Need for a Frame Semantics within Linguistics", in *Statistical Methods in Linguistics*. Stockholm: Skriptor), in communication and media studies (Entman, Robert M. 1993. "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm" in *Journal of Communication* 43 (4): 51-58; Pan Z and Kosicki G. M. 1993. "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse", in *Polit. Communication*. 10 :55-75; Scheufele D. A. 1999. "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects", in *Journal of Communication* 49:103-22), and policy studies (Schon D. A. And Rein M. 1994. *Frame Reflection: Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies*. New York: Basic Books.)

⁵ Deborah Tannen borrows the phrase "organized mass" from Bartlett who uses it to describe the past as operating in "an organized mass rather than as a group of elements each of which, retains its specific character" (1932: 197).

WORKS CITED

- Adams, Marilyn J. & Collins, Allan. (1979). "A Schema-Theoretic View of Reading", in Roy O Freedle (ed.), *New Directions in Discourse Processing*. Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.
- Anderson, Richard C. (1985) "Role of the Reader's Schema in Comprehension, Learning and Memory", in H. Singer and R.B. Rudell, (eds). *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading* (3rd ed.). Newark, DW: International Reading Association/Lawrence Erlbaum .
- Balkin, Jack M. (1998). *Cultural Software: A Theory of Ideology*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Bartlett, Frederick C. (1932). *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Bateson, Gregory. (1972). *Steps to an Ecology of the Mind*. New York: Ballantine.
- Brown, Gillian & Yule, George. (1983). *Discourse Analysis*. New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Charniak, E. (1975) "Organization and Inference in a Frame-like System of Common-sense Knowledge", in R.C.Schank and B.L. Nash-Webber, (eds) *Theoretical Issues in in Natural Language Processing*. Cambridge: Bolt, Beranek and Newman.
- Cook G. (1994). *Discourse and Literature: The Interplay of Form and Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Culler, Jonathan. (1988) *Framing the Sign: Criticism and Its Institutions*. Oxford:Blackwell.
- Deaux, Kay & Lawrence S Wrightsman (1988): *Social Psychology*. Pacific Grove, CA:Brooks/Cole.
- de Beaugrande, Robert. (1980) *Text, Discourse, and Process : Towards a Multidisciplinary Science of Texts*. London: Longman.
- de Beaugrande, Robert. (1987) "Schemas for Literary Communication", in L. Halasz, (ed.) *Literary Discourse*. Amsterdam: Mouton de Gruyter. 48-73.
- Emmott, Catherine. (1994) "Frames of Reference: Contextual Monitoring and the Interpretation of Narrative Discourse", in M. Coulthard (ed.) *Advances in Written Text Analysis*. London, Routledge: 157-166.
- Emmott, Catherine. (1997). *Narrative Comprehension: A Discourse Perspective*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Entman, Robert M. (1991) "Framing U.S. Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents," *Journal of Communication* 41 : 6-27.
- Entman, Robert M. (1993) "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," *Journal of Communication* 43 (4) : 51-58.
- Fairclough, Norman. (1989). *Language and Power*. London and New York: Longman.
- Fauconnier, Gilles. (1985). *Mental Spaces: Aspects of Meaning Construction in Natural Language*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Fillmore, Charles J. (1975). *Santa Cruz Lectures on Diexis*. Bloomington : Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Fillmore, Charles J. (1976). "The Need for a Frame Semantics within Linguistics", in *Statistical Methods for Linguistics*. Stockholm: Scriptor. 5-29.

- Fillmore, Charles J. (1982). "Frame Semantics", in *The Linguistic Society of Korea*, (eds.), *Linguistics in the Morning Calm*. Seoul: Hanshin Publishing.
- Fish, Stanley. (1981). "Why No-One's Afraid of Wolfgang Iser." *Diacritics* 11: 2-13.
- Genette, Gerard. (1991). "Introduction to the Paratext", trans. by Marie MacLean. *New Literary History* 22: 261-72.
- Gitlin, Todd. (1980). *The Whole World is Watching: Mass media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Goffman, Ervin. (1974). *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Holland, Norman. (1975). "Unity, Identity, Text, Self." *PMLA* 90 (1975): 813-822.
- Ingarden, R. (1973) [1931]. *The Literary Work of Art: An Investigation on the Borderlines of Ontology, Logic and Theory of Literature*. Trans by G. Grabwics. Evanston, Northwestern University Press.
- Iser, Wolfgang. (1980). "Interaction Between Text and Reader", in Suleiman, Susan and Crossman, Inge (eds). *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kintsch, Walter. (1980). "Learning from Text, Levels of Comprehension, or: Why Anyone Would Read a Story Anyway." *Poetics* 9 : 87-98.
- Lakoff, G & Turner, Mark. (1980) *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, George. (1987) *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, George. (1993). "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor", in A. Ortany, (ed.), *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lichtenstein E.H. & Brewer, W.F. (1980). "Memory for Goal-Directed Events." *Cognitive Psychology* 12: 412-45.
- MacLachlan, Gale & Reid, Ian. (1994). *Framing and Interpretation*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press.
- Mandler, Jean M. (1983). *Stories: The Function of Structure*. Washington, DC: National Science Foundation.
- Mandler, Jean M. (1984). *Stories, Scripts And Scenes: Aspects Of Schema Theory*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Mandler, Jean M. & Johnson, N.S. (1977). "Remembrance of Things Parced: Story Structure and Recall" *Cognitive Psychology* 9: 11-51.
- McConaughy, S.H. (1980). "Using Story Structure in the Classroom." *Language Arts* 57: 157-64.
- Minsky, Marvin. (1975). "Framework for Representing Knowledge", in P. Winston (ed.) *The Psychology of Computer Vision*. New York: McGraw Hill: 211-7
- Rumelhart, David .E. (1975) "Notes on a Schema for Stories", in D.G. Bobrow and A. Collins (eds.), *Representation and Understanding: Studies in Cognitive Science*. New York: Academic Press, 211-36.
- Rumelhart, David E. (1980) "Schemata: The Building Blocks of Cognition", in Rand J. Spiro,

- Betram C. Bruce and William F Brewer, (eds). *Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension: Perspectives from Cognitive Psychology, Linguistics, Artificial Intelligence and Education*. Hillsdale, N.J.; Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Rumelhart, D.E. and Ortany, A. (1977) "Representation in Knowledge", in R.C. Anderson, R.J. Spiro and W.E. Montague, (eds) *Schooling and the Acquisition of Knowledge*. Hillsdale: N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Schank, Roger C. & Abelson, Robert B. (1977) *Scripts, Plans, Goals and Understanding*. New York: Erlbaum.
- Singer, Harry & Ruddell, Robert B (eds.) (1985) *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading* (3rd ed.). Newark, DW: International Reading Association/Lawrence Erlbaum .
- Stein, N.L & Glenn, C.G. (1979) "An Analysis of Story Comprehension in Elementary School Children", in Roy Freedle (ed.) *New Directions in Discourse Processes*. Vol. 2. Norwood: Ablex. 53-120.
- Suleiman, Susan R. And Inge Crossman, (eds.) (1980) *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Tannen, Deborah. (1979). "What's in a Frame? Surface Evidence for Underlying Expectations", in Roy O' Freedle, *New Directions in Discourse Processing*. Norwood, N.J.; Ablex. 137-81.
- Thorndyke, Perry W. (1977) "Cognitive Structures in Comprehension and Memory of Narrative Discourse." *Psychology* 9: 77-110.
- Trandis, H.C & Albert, R.D. (1987) "Cross-Cultural Perspectives", in F.M. Jablin, L.L. Putnam, K.H. Roberts and L.W. Porter, (eds.) *Handbook of Organizational Communication*. Beverly Hills, Sage. 264-95.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1977a) *Text and Context: Explorations in the Semantics and Pragmatics of Discourse*. London: Longman.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1977b) "Semantic Macro-Structures and Knowledge Frames in Discourse Comprehension", in P.A. Carpenter and M.A. Just (eds.), *Cognitive Processes in Comprehension*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum. 3-33.
- Yağcıoğlu, Semiramis. (1996). "Elestirel Söylem Çözümlemesi: Politik Bir Eylem Olarak Okuma Uğraşı", *Gündoğan Edebiyat*, Bahar: 67-75.
- Werth, Paul. (1999) *Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse*. Essex: Longman.
- Winograd, T. (1975) "Frame Representations and the Declarative Procedural Controversy", in D.G. Bobrow and A. Collins (eds.), *Representation and Understanding: Studies in Cognitive Science*. New York: Academic Press.