

The last word on filmic enunciation?*

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The very idea of ‘film language’ should not be perceived as a simple analogy, as it was in the pre-linguistic film-language comparisons of Raymond Spottiswoode, the filmology movement, and so on. Instead, the term ‘film language’ suggests that film is a coded medium like natural language, and possesses a specific, autonomous, underlying system of codes — again, as does natural language. Any claim that film is a language is (or should) be made, not through any direct resemblance between film and natural language, but on methodological grounds: film’s specific, underlying reality can be reconstructed by the methods of linguistics and semiotics. At least from this methodological viewpoint, film theorists are justified in using linguistics and semiotics to study film because these disciplines are the most sophisticated for analyzing a medium’s underlying reality, or system of codes.

Moreover, enunciation theory is useful in film analysis because this term designates the activity that results in the production of utterances (*énoncés*), or discourse, from the system of codes underlying a medium. In its initial stages, the theory of filmic enunciation was dependent almost exclusively on Émile Benveniste’s distinction between enunciation and the utterance and, within the utterance, the distinction between *histoire* and *discours*. For Benveniste, *discours* in natural language employs words such as personal pronouns that grammaticalize within the utterance particular aspects of its spatio-temporal context (such as the speaker and hearer), whereas *histoire* is a form of utterance that excludes pronouns. Benveniste introduced the distinction between *histoire* and *discours* to classify adequately the various tense forms in modern French, since the traditional grammarian’s exclusive reliance upon temporal divisions is insufficient. *Discours* and *histoire* therefore

*Francesco Casetti, *Inside the Gaze: The Fiction Film and Its Spectator*, trans. by Nell Andrew with Charles O’Brien. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.

represent two different but complementary planes of utterance, each manifesting a distinct tense system in modern French. In his article 'Story/discourse: A note on two kinds of voyeurism' (1982), Christian Metz transfers Benveniste's two forms of utterance to a psychoanalytical theory of vision. He identifies exhibitionism with *discours* and voyeurism with *histoire*. The exhibitionist knows that she is being looked at and acknowledges the look of the spectator, just as *discours* acknowledges the speaker and hearer of the utterance, whereas the object of the voyeur's gaze does not know that she is being watched. The voyeur's look is secretive, concealed, like the marks of the speaker and hearer in *histoire*. Metz argued that classical narrative film is primarily voyeuristic — hence *histoire*, for it conceals its own discursive markers (here, the spectator's look), an activity other post-structural film theorists identified with film's ideological function, and feminists with film's patriarchal function (for the look is traditionally conceived as masculine).

Film semioticians do not therefore conceive 'film' to be a pre-given, unproblematic entity. Instead, they aim to define film's specificity — its uniqueness in terms of its underlying reality — rather than its immediately perceptible qualities. The role of theory is to make visible this invisible reality by constructing a model of it. Like other semiotic studies, film semioticians adopt the two tier semiotic hierarchy between manifest/latent levels of reality, and formulate hypotheses describing that underlying reality. One way to justify the linguistic and semiotic analysis of film is to determine if it carries out its own agenda — modeling film's underlying reality.

At its most basic, theory means 'speculative thought'. In Rudolf Botha's terms, theory consists of 'hypothetical systems of concepts which represent an underlying ... reality' (Botha 1981: 20). A theory is a system of interrelated hypotheses, or tentative assumptions, about the unobservable nature of reality (a reality assumed to be a regular, economical, cohesive structure underlying a chaotic, heterogeneous observable phenomena). Formulating hypotheses is dependent upon heuristic strategies, which represent 'any means which may be systematically used to create more favourable circumstances for the construction of hypotheses' (Botha 1981: 109). Botha lists three common heuristic strategies:

1. problem decomposition, in which large problems are broken down into smaller, more elementary problems;
2. analogies, in which the analyst looks for previously solved problems in similar areas of research; and
3. abstraction/idealization, in which a problem is simplified to make it manageable.

In the first wave of film semiotics, Christian Metz (1974a, 1974b) borrowed strategies 1 and 3 from Saussure, and therefore employed Saussure's analysis of natural language to research the semiotics of film (strategy 2). By transporting Saussure's structural linguistics into film studies, Metz established a new object of study, new problematic states of affairs to be confronted, and a new method with which to approach film, therefore making it possible to identify and establish film studies as an autonomous discipline, with its own agenda. The new object of study was of a new level of filmic reality — the unobservable, latent system of codes that makes filmic meaning possible and which defines its specificity. The first immediate objective of film semiotics was to identify and describe this specific object of study, which Metz carried out by employing the three heuristic strategies mentioned above (problem decomposition, analogies, abstraction/idealization).

In 'Film semiotics' (Buckland 1999) I examine the activities involved in formulating theoretical problems in film semiotics by analyzing three of Metz's canonical texts: his papers 'Cinema: Language or language system?' (in Metz 1974a: 31–91), 'Problems of denotation in the fiction film' (in Metz 1974a: 108–146), and his book *Language and Cinema* (Metz 1974b). In this review I shall extend my analysis to Francesco Casetti's book *Inside the Gaze*, one of the dominant and most visible works of the 'new film semioticians' — or the second wave of film semiotics — which also includes the work of Michel Colin, Roger Odin, Dominique Chateau, among others. (See Buckland 1995 for representative translations of their work into English; and Buckland 2000 for a detailed commentary on their work.) At stake with this English translation of Casetti's *Dentro lo sguardo* (first published in 1986, and translated into French and Spanish) is the continued importance of semiotics in studying film — particularly in the context of Anglo-American film studies — as well as the theoretical status of film semiotics.

Formulating theoretical problems

In the following review I shall use Rudolf Botha's (1981) philosophy of science study into the conduct of (linguistic) inquiry to analyze the way Casetti formulates problems in his theory of filmic enunciation. No author formulates and writes out their theory in the manner made explicit by Botha's systematic and logical steps; such steps are the privilege of the philosopher of science. This adds indeterminacy to the analysis of any text in terms of Botha's categories — even when the stages of the argument are clearly formulated, as they are in Casetti's book.

Botha (1981: 54) lists four activities involved in formulating theoretical problems:

- (a) analyzing the problematic state of affairs,
- (b) describing the problematic state of affairs,
- (c) constructing problems, and
- (d) evaluating problems with regard to well-formedness and significance.

This list is based on the distinction between a ‘problematic state of affairs’ and ‘problems’. Whereas the former refers to an aspect of reality a theorist does not understand, a problem formulates what a theorist needs to look for in order to resolve the problematic state of affairs.

In carrying out (a), analysis, the theorist must know exactly what is problematic, isolate each component of the problematic state of affairs, determine how they are interrelated, and identify the background assumptions informing his or her inquiry, such as the nature conferred upon the object of analysis. The background assumptions of semiotics include: the object of analysis consists of a hierarchy of two levels — manifest and latent, and that the latent is the more significant level to analyze.

In carrying out (b), description, the problematic state of affairs must be accurately recorded and formally described. For Botha (1981: 66), this involves three processes: (i) collecting data; (ii) systematizing data; (iii) symbolizing the results. In collecting data, the theorist must determine whether the data or the theory generates the problematic state of affairs. Systematizing data involves the activities of classifying, correlating, and ordering. These activities enable the theorist to identify common properties among data, put similar data into classes, and determine the relations between the classes. Finally, symbolizing involves representing data in a concise and accurate manner.

In carrying out (c), constructing problems, the theorist employs several different concepts (since a problem is made up of concepts). Botha (1981: 85) identifies four types of concept involved in constructing problems: *phenomenological* concepts, which concern factual data and are intuitively known; *grammatical* concepts (here, *filmic* concepts), general background assumptions concerning the nature of individual languages (or the nature of film); *general linguistic* concepts (here, *semiotic* concepts), which concern background assumptions about the nature of linguistic/semiotic inquiry; and *metascientific* concepts, which concern the aims and nature of linguistic/semiotic inquiry.

Finally, in carrying out (d), evaluating problems, Botha recognizes that only problems satisfying the criteria of well-formedness and significance

are relevant problems worth pursuing. A well-formed problem is solvable — that is, is based on correct assumptions, and is clearly formulated. A significant problem is one that expands our existing knowledge of film. A problem may, therefore, be well-formed, but may not be significant.

Inside *Inside the Gaze*

(a) Analyzing the problematic state of affairs

Casetti clearly states the problematic state of affairs he wishes to address in his ‘Author’s Note to the English Edition’: ‘I wrote this book a decade ago with two purposes in mind. On the one hand, I wanted to understand the ways in which a film pre-arranges its reception and pre-figures its spectator. In this sense I wanted to explore, beyond its metaphorical value, the idea largely shared in the Anglo-American debate of those years that a film “inscribes” or “posits” its spectator and guides that spectator along a “path”’ (p. xvii). The problematic state of affairs Casetti examines is the relation between film and the spectator in the auditorium: ‘At the very moment of explicit contact between the movie screen and the inside of the theater, we discover that this contact is problematic’ (p. 18). He makes this problematic state of affairs more manageable by analyzing it into three distinct areas: the way a film acknowledges, figures, or designates its spectator (chapter 2); the way it assigns that spectator a place (chapter 3); and how the film guides the spectator on a course or journey from its beginning to its end (chapter 4). Casetti’s use of the preposition ‘pre’ on two crucial occasions (‘pre-arranges’ and ‘pre-figures’) pinpoints the boundaries of his research — he wants to examine how the film acknowledges the spectator prior to any particular spectator watching the film. In other words, he wishes to conduct his research on the film’s formal level, or ask how a hypothetical spectator is embedded in the film itself.

In the passage quoted above, Casetti mentions two purposes in writing the book. The passage goes on to mention the second purpose: ‘On the other hand, I wanted to re-locate the issue [the film-spectator relation] directly within semiotics. Although of obvious importance, the Anglo-American debate seems so tied to an intricate theoretical framework that joined semiotics, psychoanalysis, and the critique of ideology that it was in danger of losing touch with the richness and complexity of the formal aspects of cinema’ (p. xvii). Casetti identifies the overlap between his research questions and that of the so-called Anglo-American ‘contemporary film theory’ of the seventies, which attempted to debunk the mysticism surrounding mainstream cinema by denouncing it as a site

of dominant cultural production, via a combination of Althusserian Marxism, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and structural linguistics. The problematic state of affairs addressed here was the spectator's desire to go to the cinema, to ask why spectators watch a two-hour spectacle on screen. The contemporary film theorists' answer identified the individual as a divided subject (divided between consciousness and the unconscious) who is ideologically addressed (or interpellated) by mainstream films as a unified subject. (See Rodowick 1995 for one of the most articulate summaries of contemporary film theory.) While focusing on film's mode of address, Casetti wishes to disentangle his research from both psychoanalytic and ideological theory. Furthermore, his research is also distinct (or more accurately, opposed to) the current fashion for reception studies in film studies, which denies the existence of immanent meanings in texts, therefore ruling out the study of hypothetical spectator positions imbedded in texts in favor of how specific spectators have actually comprehended particular films. (See Staiger 1992 for a comprehensive overview of reception studies in film studies.)

The problematic state of affairs Casetti wishes to address has, therefore, already been addressed in film studies (by the contemporary film theorists), and has already been supplanted by reception studies. In other words, they have already been formulated into specific problems and partly answered and surpassed. The significance and importance of Casetti's book lies in its attempt to return to a fundamental problematic state of affairs in film studies and reformulate it differently — in fact, reformulate it in the most precise, logical, and explicit manner possible.

(b) Describing the problematic state of affairs

(1) Collecting data. Each chapter of *Inside the Gaze* contains numerous carefully chosen and well analyzed examples from several films, including Welles's *Citizen Kane*, Buñuel's *El*, Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* and *Vertigo*, Leo McCarey's *The Kid From Spain*, and Antonioni's *Cronaca di un Amore*. It is from these examples that Casetti collects his data and defines his problems. For example, he focuses on characters' looks into the camera, voice-overs, titles addressing the spectator, flashbacks, films within films, and credit sequences as privileged moments of enunciation in the cinema that need to be integrated into a general theory of filmic enunciation.

(2) Systematizing data. Casetti classifies these privileged moments of enunciation as 'commentary' (or 'enunciated enunciations') — that is, film as *discours*. This is in opposition to 'narrative' (or 'receding

enunciation') — that is, film as *histoire*. Narrative defines the default value in narrative films, those moments when the process of enunciation producing the film remains hidden, directing the spectator's attention, then, to the product itself: the *énoncé*, the utterance, or the film. Commentary is readily identifiable because it makes visible the process of enunciation in the film. For example, in characters' looks into the camera, voice-overs, titles addressing the spectator and so on, the enunciator leaves explicit traces on the film.

Casetti then focuses on the opposite pole — the enunciatee: '... a film will always have an enunciatee. Whether manifest or implicit, the enunciatee provides a kind of frame deriving from the enunciation and accompanying the text throughout its development, a thread that cannot but be woven into its fabric' (p. 22). The enunciatee is, therefore, a term that designates the way the spectator is implied by the filmic text. Both enunciator and enunciatee are simply abstract categories implied by the film's very existence. Casetti argues that these two abstract categories are nonetheless figurativized in the film's narrative, as the narrator and narratee respectively. That is, the film's enunciator is figurativized in the form of an on-screen narrator — a character in the film's diegesis who organizes what appears on screen. And the film's enunciatee is figurativized in the form of a narratee — a character in the film's diegesis who receives what the narrator tells them. Casetti gives the example of the opening of *Stage Fright*: 'An automobile races at top speed through the streets of London. A young woman, Eve Gill, is at the wheel helping her fiancé escape from the police. At Eve's request, the young man relates what has happened to him; his account appears in flashback. ... a narrator present in the field addresses a narratee (Jonathan tells his adventures in first person to Eve Gill who, with good reason, is anxious to listen)' (pp. 106–107).

(3) Symbolization. Casetti ends up identifying filmic enunciation as a film's in-built coordinate system, a system that links a film to particular aspects of its spatio-temporal context (particularly the enunciator and enunciatee). That is, enunciation 'grammaticalizes' within the film (the *énoncé*) its points of origin and destination (enunciator and enunciatee). But these two points do not remain fixed: they shift according to the balance that operates between them in the *énoncé*. One of the most innovative additions to the theory of filmic enunciation one finds in *Inside the Gaze* is Casetti's typology of four shot types. Yet, what makes this typology extremely problematic is that Casetti symbolizes these shot types in the form of propositional structures and personal pronouns.

Through an analysis of the opening sequence of *The Kid From Spain* (Leo McCarey 1932), Casetti develops, using the deictic categories *I*, *you*,

and *he* or *she*, his typology of shot types, a typology that goes some way toward describing the space that opens out a film or a scene to each spectator (or at least her look):

The gaze which shapes the scene unites and brings forth what is shown, who is showing, and who is being shown. The latter clearly do not refer to individual persons, but to principles of textual constructions, *operators* that define the film's 'self-construction' and 'self-offering'. One might dub them subjects the way we speak of 'logical subjects'. They are also equivalent respectively to the enunciator, the enunciatee, and the discourse through which these operate. That is, they correspond to the gesture of appropriation that enables one to see, the gesture of address that offers something to sight, and the thing (or person) which is seen. Again, at issue are not individual persons but 'logical operators' that a film can represent only through personification, in the form of an *I*, a *you*, and a *she*, *he*, or *it*. (p. 46)

For Casetti, this system of three gestures (or elements) is obligatory in all films (it constitutes the film's conditions of possibility). Although these elements are invariant, Casetti allows for a shift in emphasis on one at the expense of the others; indeed, his typology is based on the hierarchical reconfiguration of these elements.

The first type of shot Casetti identifies is based on a fundamental equilibrium between the elements. Attention is drawn neither to the enunciator (*I*) nor to the enunciatee (*you*), but only to the film itself (the utterance, or *he/she/it*).

The opening shots of *The Kid from Spain* are a good example. It aims, with a composition of full-face framing, to provide an immediate recording of the facts, as if to seize the essence of an action without revealing the labor of observation and examination that produced it. More precisely, think of those moments when we see that the young women look and speak to each other, while we are unable to see the gazes upon them. Here the enunciator and enunciatee exist at a level of perfect equality, finding support in a point of view which reveals only what it cannot hide: the *énoncé*. Facing a self-evident *he*, *she*, or *it* are an *I* and a *you* which are understood without being explicitly present. The enunciatee must assume the position of a *witness*. (p. 47)

This is the 'objective shot', or film as *histoire*/narrative/receding enunciation. What Casetti means here is that, as with all discourse, the objective shot presupposes an enunciator — or an *I* — and an enunciatee — or a *you*, although attention is not drawn to either of these two coordinates. According to Casetti, their presence is not, therefore, explicit, but implicit, in the objective shot.

The second type of shot is 'interpellation', which ruptures the equilibrium apparent in the first type, since both the enunciator's (*I*)

and the enunciatee's (*you*) presence become explicit in the utterance (although unequally). A character's look at the enunciatee is a seminal case of interpellation. Casetti formally defines interpellation as follows:

an *I* (who gazes and sees) confronts, to the point of coinciding with, a *she* (who makes herself seen but who also gazes toward the he who is intended to gaze), while a *you* (destined to gaze and be gazed at without ever being seen) enters in the game without assuming any precise form. This is what produces an unequal disposition between enunciator and enunciatee. Both openly display themselves but the first is figurativized in a character identified through action (the act of gazing) and objective (to ensnare the film's viewer), while the second is present simply for what it is — an 'ideal' point of view. ... the enunciatee performs the classical function of the *aside*. (pp. 48–49)

What Casetti means in effect is that the enunciator (*I*) enters the film through the intermediary of a character's look (*she*), which is directly addressed to the enunciatee (*you*). The enunciator is, therefore, using a character to address the enunciatee in much the same way as a character in theater addresses the audience in an aside.

The third type of shot is the 'subjective shot', consisting of two moments — a character's act of looking and the enunciatee being shown what the character is looking at (these two moments can be shown in one, two, or three shots). Casetti conceives these two moments as a series that goes from 'I gaze and make you gaze at the one who gazes' (that is, a shot of a character looking) to 'I am making him see what I make you see' (that is, a shot of what the character is looking at) (p. 49). Here, the character (*she*) and enunciatee (*you*) become prominent, and the spectator who come to embody the enunciatee's role identifies with a character.

Finally, Casetti calls the fourth type of shot an 'unreal objective shot', which refers to unusual camera angles that cannot be attributed to any character. Casetti gives the example of those shots found in Busby Berkeley musicals where the camera is placed perpendicular to the horizon — when it is pointing downwards on a group of dancers who form an abstract pattern (an example of which is found in *The Kid From Spain*). According to Casetti, the deictic formula is 'as though you were me' (p. 50). The main point is that the enunciator and enunciatee are positioned as equivalent to the extent that both are detached or absent from the scene and share the camera's omniscient position. The spectator who comes to fill the enunciatee's role therefore identifies with the camera's look.

For Casetti, these four shot types identify the primary way in which film acknowledges and places a spectator who comes along and fills the place of the enunciatee. We have seen that, in the objective shot, the spectator is

positioned as a witness; in interpellated shots, the spectator is addressed by an aside; in the subjective shot, the spectator identifies with a character; and in the unreal objective shot, the spectator can only identify with the look of the camera.

In other words, we have the following schema:

Shot	Enunciatee
objective	witness
interpellation	aside
subjective	identification with character
unreal objective	identification with camera

This is Casetti's basic framework for describing and symbolizing the film's orientation toward the spectator.

(c) Constructing problems

The problems that Casetti has constructed to solve are phenomenological, filmic, semiotic, and metascientific. To 'understand the ways in which a film pre-arranges its reception and pre-figures its spectator' (p. xvii) is phenomenological and filmic because a film's very perception factually and intuitively presupposes that it addresses spectators in some precise way that needs to be specified. Furthermore, Casetti wishes to address this fundamental problem in a semiotic framework, because semiotics yields maximum information on the film's formal structures of address, in opposition to both contemporary film theory, based on Althusserian Marxism and Lacanian psychoanalysis, which quickly moved away from the film itself to consider the more general problem of the way subjectivity is constructed in culture and society, as well as reception studies, which focuses on the individual reports of historically situated spectators. Finally, Casetti's approach is metascientific in that, throughout *Inside the Gaze*, he foregrounds the aims and nature of semiotic inquiry as well as the activity of theory construction.

(d) Evaluating problems

To 'understand the ways in which a film pre-arranges its reception and pre-figures its spectator' (p. xvii) has generally been considered to be a significant problem to address in film studies since the early seventies, and has been solved on a number of levels (perceptual, ideological, psychoanalytic). And Casetti's laudable aim to formulate this problem in

semiotic terms is also significant, not least because he develops an internal perspective on the object of study (the film) that yields knowledge about the structure and function of that object. Yet the symbolization of that problem in terms of deictic categories and propositions brings his research into question, for the reasons I stated in the opening of this review: film theorists are justified in applying linguistic and semiotic concepts to film on methodological grounds, not by drawing direct analogies between film and natural language. Such analogies create category mistakes — they confuse the form of one medium (personal pronouns in natural language) with the specific form of another (the way a film formally acknowledges its enunciator and enunciatee). Casetti wrote in his ‘Author’s Note to the English Edition’ that ‘I wanted to explore, beyond its metaphorical value, the idea ... that a film “inscribes” or “posits” its spectator and guides that spectator along a “path”’ (p. xvii). Unfortunately, by symbolizing his research in terms of personal pronouns, his exploration of the film spectator remains largely metaphorical.

Metz (1995) wrote a critique of Casetti’s use of personal pronouns to describe aspects of filmic reality, before rejecting outright a deictic theory of filmic enunciation. First of all, he questions Casetti’s identification of the film enunciator with the *I* — that is, the subject of the utterance (the filmmaker). Metz argues that it is more plausible to identify the subject with the spectator, which film theorists in the seventies had done. Moreover, Metz rejects the symmetry Casetti’s deictic formulas establish, which suggest the enunciator and enunciatee have equal status, that both are roles to be invested with bodies. But Metz argues that this symmetry is merely a symptom of the use of the first two persons of natural language:

where the enunciator is concerned, there is no body. And since it is true that roles (or their equivalents in another theoretical frame) call for an incarnation — the nature of this call still remains enigmatic — the ‘enunciator’ is incarnated in the only available body, the body of the text, that is, a *thing*, which will never be an *I*, which is not in charge of any exchange with some *You*, but which is a source of images and sounds, and nothing else. *The film is the enunciator*, the film as source, acting as such, *oriented* as such, the film as activity. Casetti’s idea, that a body would be needed for the enunciator as well as for the addressee, is inspired by the first two persons of the verb in languages. (Metz 1995: 150)

Metz also repeats the point that film theorists should not draw analogies between film and natural language. This is evident when he challenges Casetti’s identification of film/character with the third person pronoun. Metz finds this paradoxical because, in Benveniste’s famous definition, the third person is the absent non-person, in opposition to the first (*I*)

and second (*you*) persons, who are present. But in the cinema, ‘the film, far from being an absent instance stuck between two present ones, would resemble rather a present instance stuck between two absent ones, the author, who disappears after the fabrication, and the spectator, who is present but does not manifest his presence in any respect’ (Metz 1995: 150–151).

Metz is equally critical of Casetti’s attribution of the verbs ‘to look/watch’ and ‘to see’ to the *I* (the filmmaker): ‘[the filmmaker] does not watch, he has watched (which is still not entirely accurate: he has filmed, and, therefore, watched; the “utterer” [émetteur] does not watch his film; he makes it)’ (Metz 1995: 151). What Metz clearly means is that the filmmaker, when watching his film, becomes its enunciatee (a *you* in Casetti’s terms). In this sense, then, the *I* does not watch: ‘from the source, nothing either watches or sees, the source produces, expands, *shows*’ (Metz 1995: 151).

Finally, Metz attempts to demonstrate the arbitrariness of Casetti’s deictic formulas. He simply reorients himself to the opposite side of the filmic text. For example, this is how he discusses Casetti’s formulation of the subjective shot:

According to Casetti, the enunciator plays a silent role and the addressee [enunciatee] on the contrary is very much highlighted, since he is ‘syncretized’ with a concrete character, through whose very eyes we see what we see, and who is therefore, like the addressee, a watcher That is beyond doubt. But it is also true, if you turn over the text, that the enunciator regains his importance, in that the source is ‘figurativized’ in a character who is not only a watcher (as the spectator), but is also someone who shows, like the filmmaker who stands behind him. This character has one eye in front and one eye in back, he receives rays from both sides, and the image can be perceived in two different ways, as in some drawings in which form and background can be inverted. (Metz 1995: 154–155)

Metz is at pains to emphasize that the reversibility he speaks of is totally different to the reversibility of interlocutors in a dialogue — a reversibility made possible by personal pronouns! In fact Metz is quite right; he points out that, in a dialogue, the deictic signifiers change referents, constituting the actual movement/reversibility of oral exchange, whereas the reversibility he speaks of is an analyst simply changing his theoretical viewpoint.

Metz concedes that not all figures of enunciation can be reversed, since some are precisely imprinted in a film (this means then, that the subjective shot, which Metz did reverse, is not precisely imprinted on a film). In Casetti’s formulas, Metz mentions that the unreal objective shot cannot

be reversed (Metz refers, not to the Busby Berkeley examples, but to the systematic use of low angles in the films of Orson Welles).

Beyond *Inside the Gaze*

Through his critique of Casetti, Metz ends up rejecting, not only a theory of enunciation based on personal pronouns, but also a theory of enunciation based on deixis. Perhaps it is necessary to pause here and note that, although linguists adopted the concept of deixis to develop a theory of personal pronouns, deixis is in fact a more general concept that begins to explain the general phenomenon of the way humans and animals orient themselves in space. One — and only one — of many ways humans do this is through the use of linguistic categories such as personal pronouns — as well as adverbs of time and space. While I agree with Metz that a theory of filmic enunciation should not be based on personal pronouns, I would not take the step of ruling out deictic links between a film and its context. I still acknowledge that a film has a coordinate system that links it to its context. But unlike Casetti, I would not describe this coordinate system in terms of personal pronouns, for pronouns are the coordinate system of natural language: they manifest natural language's deictic relation to its context. It should be evident that film also has a coordinate system that establishes a deictic relation between it and its context. But it is wrong to think that we can symbolize that coordinate system in terms of personal pronouns. This is because deixis is not exclusively a linguistic concept, and did not originate in linguistics.

Karl Bühler developed a theory of deixis that does not reduce this term to personal pronouns. His theory may therefore be useful in elucidating the deictic dimension of nonlinguistic forms of discourse. In the early part of the twentieth century, Bühler was instrumental in the formation of the new psychology of the Würzburg school. The aim of this school was, in Bühler's words, to 'consider the meaningful behaviour of the living being' (Bühler, quoted in Eschbach 1990: xxix). This involves developing a situation model of action, of the way an individual interacts with her environment. Crucial to this model of action is an account of the systems of orientation an individual employs when interacting with her environment. Such systems of subjective orientation include: the physical act of pointing (ocular deixis, or pointing that takes place within a common space of actual perception), the use of deixis in speech (verbal pointing), anaphora (where one piece of language points to another piece of language), and what Bühler calls imagination-oriented deixis (orientation in fictional spaces).

In outlining the way ocular deixis interacts with linguistic deixis (in an example of an individual attempting to orient herself in a new city), Bühler emphasizes the role of the individual's body: 'When [a] person uses words like *in front — behind, right — left, above — below* [a] fact becomes apparent, namely the fact that he *senses his body*, too, in *relation* to his optical orientation, and employs it to point. His (conscious, experienced) *tactile body image* has a position in relation to visual space' (Bühler 1990: 145).

Imagination-oriented deixis involves an awake individual (rather than one who is dreaming) mentally wandering through memories or imaginary, fictional objects and events. Here, the individual becomes displaced from the common space of actual perception:

What are we to make of the verbal pointing that [an individual] ... follows on the imagined object? According to our convention, he should not be ecstatically transported from his present situation of actual perception in the true sense of the word. A normal person is not ecstatically transported at all as a rule; when, sometime during the day, one hears, say, a vivid travel description or a vivid scene from a novel, the experience of the transition back to everyday affairs and to the immediate demands of the moment is not remotely like genuine waking up as if from a dream. (Bühler 1990: 150)

Between ocular deixis and imagination-oriented deixis Bühler mentions a third, intermediate, type: 'This *third type* is usually an unstable and transient initial experience. The characteristic by which it can be recognized is that the person who is having the experience is able to indicate with his finger the direction in which the absent thing is seen with the mind's eye' (Bühler 1990: 152). The main point Bühler makes is that ocular deixis, the deictics of spatial orientation (in front — behind, right — left, etc.), not only functions in a common space of actual perception, but also in imagination-oriented deixis. During a displacement into a fictional space, 'every displaced person takes his present [conscious, experienced] tactile body image along with him, to put it metaphorically' (Bühler 1990: 154). The displaced person combines her conscious, experienced tactile body image (and optical orientation within actual perception) with what she is imagining.

Bühler's work presents a rich source of material to describe perception in the cinema. Perceiving a film involves the third type of deixis Bühler mentioned — a combination of optical deixis and imagination-oriented deixis. (Although I cannot develop this point here, it seems that this third type of deixis may also be useful in describing the experience of an individual interacting with virtual reality gloves and helmet, since such an interaction involves real space, the spectator's sense of her tactile

body image, together with imagination oriented deixis — the individual's orientation in virtual space.) Ocular deixis defines the film spectator oriented in the auditorium in front of a blank screen. Actual perception is involved, and the common space is rigidly structured to create the harmonious orientation of spectators. But when the lights are dimmed and a film is projected, imagination-oriented deixis is superimposed over ocular deixis. This is an unstable, transient experience to the extent that imagination-oriented deixis is always 'threatened' by distractions in the auditorium, or by the potential instability of the filmic text itself, both of which will return the spectator to the exclusive experience of ocular deixis. When successful, this third type of deixis will involve the spectator perceiving the images on screen, but these images will displace her into a fictional space which involves, in Bühler's words, 'every displaced person [taking] his present [conscious, experienced] tactile body image along with him' (Bühler 1990: 154).

Casetti does not, therefore, offer the last word on filmic enunciation, for two reasons: (1) an adequate theory of filmic enunciation should not symbolize its results in terms of the enunciative structure of another form of discourse; in other words, we have to step back from Casetti's symbolizations, and rethink the way we can symbolize his results in a well-formed manner. (2) Beyond the abstract realm of enunciation is the body of the spectator that takes up the abstract enunciative positions that Casetti theorizes. Bühler's concept of deixis includes the role of the body as well as the role of imagination, both of which are currently central to a cognitive theory of film. Rather than perceiving a break between earlier semiotic work and more recent cognitive work (as cognitive film theorists are apt to do), it is best, in my opinion, to chart the similarities and continuities between film semiotics and cognitive film theory, to envision the productive collaboration between them in the formation of a cognitive semiotics of film.

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