



Extended Abstract

DOI: 10.22099/jba.2025.52351.4605

An Analysis of Anvari's Ode, "Letter from Khorasanis", Based on Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis

Fatemeh Sadat Taheri*

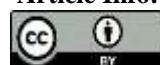
Introduction

Critical discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary approach that studies ideologies and how language is used, thereby increasing the reader's awareness of the author's attitude and worldview. Theorists of this approach believe that the smallest sign in a text or discourse can help to understand society, history, politics, culture, and ethics in any era. Discourse analysis emerged following extensive scientific developments in disciplines such as anthropology, microsociology, cognitive and social psychology, linguistics, semiotics, and other social sciences and humanities fields interested in systematic studies of the structure, function, and process of producing speech and writing. Adherents of this approach analyze the discourse of texts in different ways. One of the experts in critical discourse analysis is Teun Adrianus van Dijk (1943), who has an important theory about ideology and tries to reveal the ideology of individuals and literary works through critical discourse analysis.

Anvari's ode "Letter from Khorasanis" (Name-ye Ahl-e Khorasan), which was composed to complain about the oppressions of Ghozan and request justice from the ruler of Samarkand, is among the literary texts that can be examined according to Van Dijk's model, due to its social content and the representation of the poet's worldview and thoughts about the incident that occurred.

* Associate Prof of Persian Language and Literature, Kashan University, Kashan, Iran.
Taheri@kashanu.ac.ir

Article Info: Received: 2025-02-15, **Accepted:** 2025-07-27



COPYRIGHTS ©2026 The author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, as long as the original authors and source are cited. No permission is required from the authors or the publisher.

Method, Review of Literature, Purpose

Research has been conducted on Van Dijke's theory of critical discourse analysis in literary works; for example, Soltani (2004), in his article "Discourse Analysis as a Theory and Method", using examples about Iran's socio-political developments, has shown that the theory of discourse analysis is a suitable method for analyzing socio-political discourses. Aghagolzadeh (2007), in his article "Critical Discourse Analysis and Literature", has also found that literary texts are capable of being analyzed with a critical method by examining the relationship of this theory with the field of literature. Mirhashemi (2010) in his article "Stylistic Analysis of Anvari's Ode on Ghozan's Campaign in Khorasan" has examined the linguistic, rhetorical, and intellectual data of the ode within a stylistic framework. However, Anvari's ode "Letter from Khorasanis" has not been studied based on Van Dijke's theory of critical discourse analysis.

Considering the mutual relationship between literature and society, Anvari's position and the theme of his ode "Letter from Khorasanis", the author evaluates Anvari's verbal statements in his ode according to Van Dijke's ideological square, and uses a descriptive-analytical method based on data mining of the ode's text. By analyzing Anvari's speech fragments at the lexical level, grammatical structure, the poet's sentence structures and his rhetorical methods, and discovering the manners of highlighting the positive points of the self and the negative points of others and marginalizing the positive points of others and the negative points of the self, the author attempts to determine with what strategies Anvari achieved his goal of opposing oppression and seeking justice.

Discussion

Van Dijke believes that one can penetrate the thought system of individuals by highlighting the self's positive points and the negative points of non-self/others and marginalizing the self's negative points and the positive points of others. He interprets these four characteristics of discourse as an "ideological square". Van Dijke examines the text at the lexical, grammatical, and rhetorical levels. Discourse-forming words are marked words that include deixis, codes, antonyms, and synonymous words. For the self-characters, Anwari uses positive deixis and codes that convey religious, epic, historical, governmental concepts related to greatness and highness, nature, heavens and astronomy to the text and contain Positive semantic concept. Also, by using the repetition technique of the word "justice" and the contrast between the positive features of the self and the negative features of the non-self/others, the positive features of the self-characters have been highlighted.

In the grammatical layer, by using present-tense verbs that are definite, it is clear that Anvari wants to report the disasters of Ghozan with complete certainty so that the ruler of Samarkand will confidently respond positively to his request for help. At the grammatical level, verb moods are fundamental. The frequent use of the adverbial mood, which indicates the certainty of the speaker's words, in comparison to the subjunctive mood, which is accompanied by doubt and desire, and the imperative mood, which is very rare and only in cases where the poet has made a request, indicates Anvari's decisiveness in this ode. The use of definite verbs in the text shows that Anvari has complete control over the circumstances and events. Because Anvari

in this ode only seeks to accurately report the situation and convince the audience to help the Khorasanis, the verbs of this ode are mostly linking verbs. By prioritizing the call over other sentence components as one of the discourse-building strategies, Anvari seeks to show the importance and greatness of the caller, who is always the ruler of Samarkand.

In the rhetorical layer related to the text's rhetoric, Anvari frequently employs similes, metaphors, and apostrophes. Denial interrogative and declarative questions are also methods that Anvari uses often to convince the audience; as well as grammatical introductions and delays and choosing the appropriate tone of discourse, indirect requests, praying for the audience, along with historical and mythological parallels, swearing, recalling patron's previous help, and using the acceptable character of the Burhani family; that is, Kamal al-Din as a messenger is another strategy that Anvari used in his poetry to convince the audience and change his ideology towards oppression and seeking help from him.

Conclusion

According to the studies conducted, Anvari, based on his ideology of justice, has used various lexical, syntactic, and rhetorical methods to convince the patron and guide him towards justice and revenge. While explaining the disasters of Ghozan in Khorasan to persuade the praised patron to support the Khorasanis and punish Ghozan, he has also used different methods to strengthen Mamdouh's positive features, magnify and repeat the misfortunes and oppressions of the Khorasanis to arouse Mamdouh's sense of compassion and justice, and exaggerate the disasters of Ghozan to strengthen his negative features and provoke Mamdouh to take revenge on him. Codes, deixis, antonym words and repetition in lexical discourse formation, grammatical movement, especially at the level of verb and subject, negative and declarative interrogatives, the use of the call to attract the attention of the audience and persuade him in the syntactic structure and the use of simile, metaphor, allusion and other literary devices in the rhetorical layer are all frequent techniques of highlighting the positive features of the self/similar and the negative features of the non-self/other of Anvari. Anvari applies the technique of marginalizing the shortcomings of the self and the virtues of others by eliminating the rival discourse and omitting the positive features of Ghozan, the negative features of the Khorasanis, and the patron to convince the Sultan and gain his support.

In most of the verses, Anvari has used declarative speech acts and respectful imperatives. Also, the fact that the poet is only a reporter of the incident has led to an increase in the frequency of linking verbs (static) compared to action verbs (dynamic). On the other hand, the fact that all the verbs in this ode are in active voice indicates the poet's power and mastery in explaining his ideologies and goals. The use of indirect speech with the methods of indirect questions, swearing, praying, making conditions, epic and historical parallels, etc., in addition to persuading patron to support the Khorasanis and punish Ghazan, reflects a small part of the social history of the Anvari era. Studies show that the subordinate speaker (Anvari) influences the mind and thoughts of the powerful patron by utilizing his linguistic and expressive capacities and rhetorical techniques. By doing so, he controls the patron, who then carries out his demand, which is the implementation of justice.

Keywords: The Ode “Letter from Khorasanis”, Anvari, Van Dijk, Critical Discourse Analysis, Ideology

References:

Aghagolzadeh, F. (2015). *Critical discourse analysis*. Tehran: E'lmi & Farhangi. [in Persian]

Aghagolzadeh, F. (2020). *Descriptive culture, discourse analysis, and pragmatics* (2nd ed.). Tehran: Elmi. [in Persian]

Aghagolzadeh, F., & Ghiyathiyan, M. (2007). Dominant approaches in critical discourse analysis. *Language and Linguistics*, (5), 39–54. <https://ensani.ir/file/download/article/20160718145943-10064-43> [in Persian]

Ahadi, M. (2016). Van Dijk: Language and critical discourse theory. In *Proceedings of the International Congress of Language and Literature and Literature* (pp. 1–19). <https://civilica.com/doc/582169/> [in Persian]

Ahmadi, M. (2017). The nature of rhetorical criticism and its importance in literary studies. *Applied Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*, 3(2), 73–87. <https://prl.journals.pnu.ac.ir/article-5483-839305ca54b362db5de2f7e9d82a4e3e> [in Persian]

Alipour, M. (2008). *The structure of today's poetry language*. Tehran: Ferdows. [in Persian]

Alizadeh Khayat, N., & Ruhi Kiyasar, A. (2020). Rhetorical aspects of the syntactic element of “Nadā” in the poems of Akhavan Thaleth. *Rhetorical Linguistic Studies*, 21(11), 275–300. [in Persian]

Azami Khoyard, H., & Arab Yousefabadi, A. (2020). Socio-cognitive analysis of the discourse of contradictions between Jarir and Akhtal based on Van Dijk's model. *Arabic Literature*, 12(2), 110–132. https://jalit.ut.ac.ir/article_73518.html [in Persian]

Bani Talebi, A., & Foruzandeh, M. (2017). Examining the types of repetition and their functions in *Vis and Ramin. Literary Techniques*, 9(3), 27–42. <https://doi.org/10.22108/LIAR.2017.93955> [in Persian]

Fathollahi, E., & Kameli, E. (2015). The process of persuasion in the Holy Quran. *Research on the Sciences of the Quran and Hadith*, (25), 75–99. <https://doi.org/10.22051/TQH.2015.948> [in Persian]

Fazeli, M. (2001). An experimental study on ideology and cultural control. *Book of the Month: Social Sciences*, (51–52, 54, 58). <https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/magazine/number/3869> [in Persian]

Fotuhi Rud Ma'jani, M. (2011). *Stylistics: Theories, approaches, and methods*. Tehran: Sokhan. [in Persian]

Ghorbani Zarrin, B. (2015). Ramal Bahr. In *Encyclopedia of the Islamic World* (Vol. 20). Tehran: Encyclopedia of Islam Foundation. <https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/1697008> [in Persian]

Javaheri, L., & Moradi, R. (2019). Critical analysis of bargaining discourse. *Linguistic Research*, 10(2), 171–192. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jolr.2019.282199.666511> [in Persian]

Jurjani, A. (2004). *Reasons for miracles* (M. Radmanesh, Trans.). Tehran: Shahnamehpazhuhi. [in Persian]

Montazerghaem, M., & Yadegari, M. (2016). Presenting a conceptual-theoretical model of critical rhetorical reading. *Cultural and Media Studies*, (18), 9–20. <https://doi.org/10.1001.1.38552322.1395.5.18.1.5> [in Persian]

Motavalli, K. (2005). *Public opinion and methods of persuasion*. Tehran: Bahjat. [in Persian]

Mottahdin, Z. (1975). Repetition: Its phonetic and rhetorical value. *Journal of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities of Mashhad*, 11(3), 483–530. <https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/736730> [in Persian]

Nasrollahi, Y., & Abbaszadeh Mobaraki, B. (2022). Analysis of the discourse of power in Attar's mathnavis. *Mysticism Research*, 14(27), 251–274. <https://erfanmag.ir/article-1-1259-fa.html> [in Persian]

Radfar, A. (1989). *Rhetorical-literary culture*. Tehran: Ettelaat. [in Persian]

Rajaee. (2013). *The elements of rhetoric in the realms of meaning, expression, and originality*. Shiraz: Shiraz University. [in Persian]

Safavi, K. (2005). *Introduction to semantics*. Tehran: Sooreh Mehr. [in Persian]

Shahri, B. (2011). *Examining the relationship between ideology and metaphor using a critical discourse analysis approach*. Mashhad: Ferdowsi University. [in Persian]

Sojudi, F. (2008). *Applied semiotics*. Tehran: Elm. [in Persian]

Van Dijk, T. A. (2003). *Studies in discourse analysis: From text grammar to critical analysis* (P. Izady et al., Trans.). Tehran: Media Studies and Planning Office. [in Persian]

Van Dijk, T. A. (2015). *Ideology and discourse: A multidisciplinary introduction* (M. Novbakht, Trans.). Tehran: Siyahrud. [in Persian]

Van Dijk, T. A. (2021). *Society and discourse* (T. Asgharpour, Trans.). Tehran: Negah-e Moaser. [in Persian]

Yarmohammadi, L. (2016). *Cognitive discourse contrastive analysis: Persian and English in the framework of critical linguistics*. Tehran: Hermes. [in Persian]

Yousofi, G. (1966). Letter from Khorasan. *Yaghma*, 19(5), 305–309. <https://ensani.ir/fa/article/279761> [in Persian]

Zarrinkub, A. (2010). *With the caravan of Hallaj* (16th ed.). Tehran: Elmi. [in Persian]