



ISSN: 1817-6798 (Print)

Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

available online at: [www.jtuh.org/](http://www.jtuh.org/)

Ahlam Abid Fayadh

Ministry of Education  
Al-Fallujah Secondary School for Girls\* Corresponding author: E-mail :  
[ahlamalkhateeb874@gmail.com](mailto:ahlamalkhateeb874@gmail.com)**Keywords:**CDA,  
ideology,  
atheism,  
Van Dijk,  
Movie**ARTICLE INFO****Article history:**

Received 17 Apr. 2022

Accepted 25 May 2022

Available online 19 Dec 2022

E-mail [t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq](mailto:t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq)

©2022 COLLEGE OF Education for Human Sciences, TIKRIT UNIVERSITY. THIS IS AN OPEN ACCESS ARTICLE UNDER THE CC BY LICENSE

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

## A Critical Discourse Analysis of Atheism in “The Invention of Lying” American Movie

### ABSTRACT

Movies are believed to be one of the current age's main ways for treating certain ideologies, i.e. for promoting and naturalizing certain ideas and beliefs to the public. They are considered as a main source for sharing ideological messages, sometimes implicitly and others explicitly. Further, the artistic and the creative nature of film discourses contribute in increasing the chances of achieving those specific ideological goals. Atheism in The invention of Lying movie is one kind of this issue. This American movie defines itself as a romantic comedy film, yet it gives a good deal of attention to the issue of atheism implicitly. Therefore, this study aims to uncover the hidden messages of atheism in the selected movie and highlight the linguistic means employed for naturalizing and advancing such an ideology.

© 2022 JTUH, College of Education for Human Sciences, Tikrit University

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.25130/jtuh.29.12.2.2022.25>

## تحليل الخطاب النقدي عن الاحاد في الفلم الأمريكي " اختراع الكذب "

أحلام عبد فياض / وزارة التربية

### الخلاصة:

تعتبر الافلام احدى اهم وسائل التطبيع و الترويج للايديولوجيات المختلف عليها في عصرنا الحديث. حيث يتم الترويج لهكذا ايديولوجيات بطرق عدة, تكون هذه الطرق احيانا ضمنية واخرى صريحة. أن اهم مايساعد في تحقيق ذلك هو الطبيعة الفنية والابتكارية لنصوص الافلام. ان قضية ايديولوجية الاحاد في فلم اختراع الكذب هو نوع من انواع الترويج المشار له. يصنف هذا الفلم على انه فلم رومانسي كوميدي الا انه في الواقع يتطرق لقضية الاحاد بصورة ضمنية ويعطيها مساحة واسعة. لهذه الاسباب, ان هذه الدراسة تهدف الى كشف الرسائل وايديولوجية الاحاد الخفية في هذا الفلم وكذلك تهدف لايضاح اهم

الوسائل اللغوية المستخدمة لتجسيد هذه الايديولوجية بطريقة مبتكرة.  
الكلمات المفتاحية: الايدلوجية، الفلم، الاحاد، فان دك

## Introduction

Film discourse is a discourse with certain linguistic and non-linguistic features; the main goal of giving a great deal of attention to film/movie discourses is to make them as expressive as possible in terms of the themes meant to convey (Tahir, 2010: 4593). This unique nature of movie discourses makes them a good ground for exchanging ideologies. Another reason that qualifies movies as a good means to transfer ideologies is the big audiences that they have all around the world. Specifically in the recent years, movies and series have noticed a global fame and interest.

*The Invention of Lying*, the selected movie for the study, is one sample of the movies that serve more than what they claim. This movie covers in a naturalized and hidden way the concept of atheism, which is something that many may not be consciously aware of. Therefore, this study aims at uncovering both (i) the ideological representation of atheism in the movie, and (ii) the linguistic tools employed in the representation.

To achieve the above aims, the study plans an eclectic CDA model. It is mainly based on Van Dijk's (2007) multidisciplinary model of ideological representation in addition to set of linguistic tools- semantic, syntactic, pragmatic and rhetorical. Further, the study extracts and limits the analysis to only the scenes and speeches where the issue of religions/atheism is tackled.

The study hypothesizes that : (i) doing CDA studies on movie discourses can reveal more than one can imagine in terms of hidden ideologies, (ii) implicature plays a central role in communicating the theme of atheism in the *Invention of lying* movie, (iii) in such a unique kind of movies with such a complex structuring, even the semantic and the syntactic contents of the movie contribute in revealing some implied meanings this is because, (iv) the theme of the movie is completely constructed and conveyed pragmatically, and (v) finally, the ideological representation of atheism in this movie is based on certain kind of linkage between a well-known concept of religions in general and a newly constructed one in the movie which is something that makes Van Dijk's model as the most appropriate one for the study.

## 1. Critical Discourse Analysis

The field of critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) has noticed a special attention in the recent years. This can be as a result of the globally increasing interest in sensitive religious, political and social issues that are endorsed or impeded through linguistic discourses. CAD provides an ideal ground and set of valuable theories for dealing with, interpreting and digging deeper those sensitive issues. Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 259) state that CDA as a specific analytic field aims at revealing certain representations on the base of suggested changes or choices. Therefore, notions such as power, ideology and inequality are central to this field. Thus, items such as discourse, social ideology and social structure are prominent concerns too. Accordingly, CDA is not merely interested in the investigation of linguistic discourses per se. It is rather interested in the investigation of complex social phenomena that require multidisciplinary treatments, of which CDA is one.

Further, a key focus in CDA studies is the concept of criticality. Fairclough (1992, 9) explains that the term ‘critical’ involves “showing connections and causes which are hidden”. Wodak and Meyer (2009,7) add that “critical theories, thus CDA, want to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection”

The current study chooses a critical discourse analysis approach to deal with the theme of atheism in the selected movie for it serves the purpose of the study. It helps to uncover the ideological representation of the idea of atheism and the anti-religious perspective providing linguistic evidences.

## 2. Key Concepts

The following terms are not only key figures in the current study, they are so too in the field of CDA as a whole. They are central to most, and some of them to all, the studies of CDA. Those terms are:

### a. Ideology:

Any discourse or text is said to convey specific ideology, as Wodak and Ludwing (1999:12) state. Ideology is the belief and value of the discourse

producer which serves to bring power for the group they belong to. Van Dijk (1998:8) defines ideologies as “social beliefs which are shared by members of society”. He further, in (2007:116), adds that :

... ideologies are not personal beliefs of individual people; they are not necessarily ‘negative’ (there are racist as well as antiracist ideologies, communist and anticommunist ones); they are not some kind of ‘false consciousness’ (whatever that is exactly); they are not necessarily dominant, but may also define resistance and opposition; they are not the same as discourses or other social practices that express, reproduce or enact them; and they are not the same as any other socially shared beliefs or belief systems.

The ideology that the current study tries to uncover is about an implied atheist perspective of the world. The study, providing linguistic evidences, works on the representation of atheism as a taken for granted belief.

#### **b. Power:**

The second central term is power. It is a term that the former term, ideology, naturally leads to. Ideologies are found to serve power and to bring power for certain group rather than the others. Therefore, discourses promoting for a specific ideology aim at bringing power to those who hold the ideology. Naturalizing and promoting ideologies means controlling the minds of others for the favor of that ideology. Van Dijk (1993:254) illustrates the types of power aiming to control others under two main spheres, one is power based on force and another on cognition. The second one deals with the power based on ideology ( beliefs, information and knowledge) which is used by media of different sort. This latter type is the one CDA deals with. KhosraviNik (2010:104) states “*groups have more or less power if they are able to more or less control the acts and minds of other groups*” That is, holding an ideology and convincing others to adopt the same ideology makes the group more powerful and more dominant.

Fairclough (1989:51) asserts that media, via discourses, involve hidden power relations which are capable of controlling the public sphere. Accordingly, this study assumes that the movie of *The Invention of Lying* is holding an atheist ideology rather than being a merely comedy movie. That hidden

promotion and naturalization of atheism, thus, serves certain powers and powerful groups and aims to change actions and attitudes of the audience in some implicit manner for their own favor.

### **c. Naturalization:**

This third term refers to a kind of property utilized in discourses to get the audience controlled pragmatically. It is often given to ideologies in discourses to represent them as a more common sense, invisible and opaque (Fairclough, 1995:42). Discourses that are naturalized might make their audience feel like they, the discourses, are free from ideologies. They appear to be as more shallow, as it is the case for the data selected for the study which appears to the fans as a merely comedy movie. Such discourses claim themselves to be of no purpose and no interest in the struggle over power . “It appears as not belonging to any side but aiming to represent the reality as it is with no bias or self-effect” (Fairclough ,1989:92 cited in Mohammed, 2019:6).

### **d. Media**

Media is a prominent figure in the studies of CDA. It provides an ideal area where studies of CDA can be done. This is because CDA sees media in general as a source where representations of issues and events are controlled by impending values and beliefs in the discourses they promote for. The values and beliefs, i.e. ideologies, are endorsed via the structures of the linguistic choices made.

## **3. Study Model**

The model to be adopted for conducting this study can be described as an eclectic one. Yet, the main constructing part of the model is Van Dijk’s well-known Socio-cognitive approach", specifically his Multidisciplinary Model of Ideology (2007). In his theory, Van Dijk (2007) states that there are three levels of ideology. Those levels are: the cognitive, the social and the discursive level.

The cognitive level, firstly, concerns ‘social representations’. Social representations cover socially shared beliefs, attitudes, values and opinions. Some examples of those social representations are religious beliefs, racism, feminism, etc. (Van Dijk, 2007:116).

The social level, secondly, is the macro-level of ideology. It involves the social structures of society such as social groups, classes, organizations,

institutions, etc. Thus, power and control and similar notions are the main concern of this level of ideology. It functions as a means to gain control and power (ibid.)

The discursive level, thirdly, is the micro-level of ideology. It deals with discourses and the discursive practices of their users. That is, it converts language use and the practices it involves. This third level of ideology functions as a means to achieve, represent and manipulate the above two other levels (ibid: 118).

The other parts of the eclectic model concern the linguistic tools to be used in the analysis. For achieving a comprehensive and more objective analysis of the discursive level of ideology, several linguistic tools are adopted. Those tools investigate the semantic, syntactic, pragmatic and rhetorical aspects of the discourses used in the movie. More specifically, the tools involve:

- lexical choices under the semantic aspect: Fairclough (1989:116) mentions that social relationships between participants are mainly created by "a text choice of wording". Van Dijk (2001:99) adds that lexical choices convey "beliefs" and influence "the opinions and attitudes of recipients". So , as Fairclough (2001:95) asserts, any discourse type and its main contents that any text draws upon can be shown by the type of lexical choices done.
- Implicature and presupposition under pragmatic aspect: Implicature shows the inferences and the implied meanings in the discourse which contribute in shaping the ideology adopted. Gazdar (1979:38) defines implicature as "proposition that is implied by the utterance of a sentence in a context even though that proposition is not a part nor an entailment of what was actually said". By implicature, both types of implicatures are referred to, the conversational (triggered by violating Grice's maxims) and the conventional. Presupposition, on the other hand, constructs , as does implicature , those types of meaning that "are often seen as less direct than the lexical and sentence semantic , and as a result of this indirectness can be seen as helping to naturalize certain ideologies". It communicates itself to readers "at a relatively subconscious level" (Jeffries, 2007:129).
- Sentence type, whether affirmative, question or command, is covered under the syntactic aspect.
- Analogy, simile and irony under the rhetorical devices: Analogy is the process of making comparison and contrast between two things or ideas to imply certain ideas. Irony is the sarcastic coverage of certain ideas, thoughts

or characters. Simile deals with comparing one thing to another of a different kind.

#### 4. Data and Methodology

The data of the current study is a movie entitled The Invention of Lying. It is described as a romantic comedy film. It is built on an imaginative story of a world where people do not know the concept of lying. The only concept they are familiar with is the factual truth. They say everything as it is with no lying or complement, no matter how bitter or bad the truth can be. Then one day, Mark, the main character, finds himself having an ability to lie. He, as being the only person who can lie and who can ever comprehend the concept of lying, utilizes his ability to make his life better. As a part of the changes that make him a more successful person, Mark discusses things related to the place people go after death and the man in the sky (God).

This study chooses The Invention of Lying as the data because the movie is represented to people as simply being a comedy and romantic movie while it serves more than that. A sensitive issue related to the public sphere has been well-covered within the movie by giving it a big space and a complete shape. The issue is related to the religious and the non-religious beliefs of people. More specifically, the movie seems to promote indirectly for an atheist perspective. Therefore, the current study decides to extract the related scenes and analyze them following a CDA approach. So, only the scenes in relation to atheism are going to be extracted.

The methodology to be followed in this study is as follows:

- (i) A detailed linguistic analysis is going to be done for the extracted parts to uncover the discursive level of ideological representation, which itself constructs the base for the other levels of Van Dijk's model as the figure below shows:

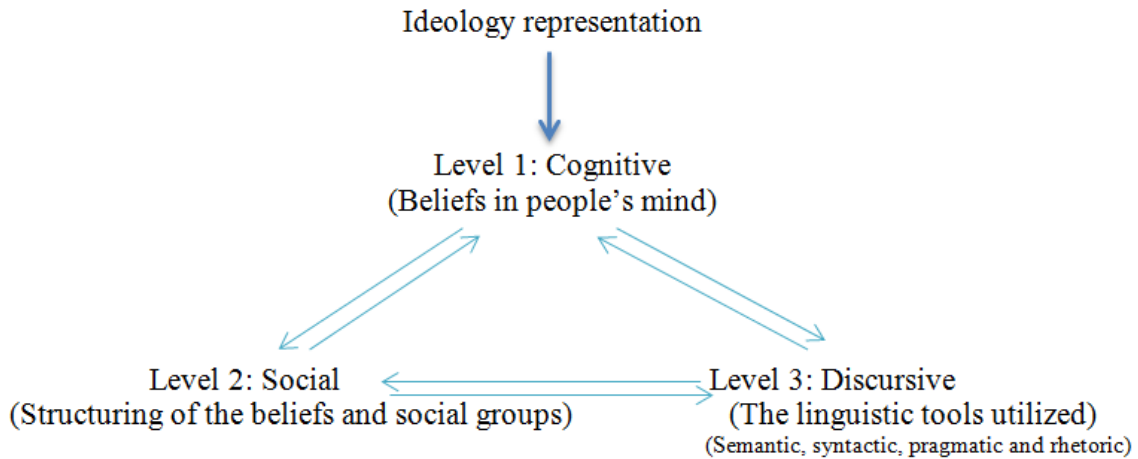


Figure (1): Study Model

- (ii) An ideological discussion is going to be done by first making a precise reference to the two other levels of ideological representations in terms of study issue (atheism) and then an overall discussion is going to be done to show the exact representation of the ideology and the way it is naturalized.

## 5. Linguistic Analysis

This section is going to deal with the linguistic analysis of the data selected. The analysis is going to cover the discursive level of Van Dijk's theory of ideology with reference to the selected linguistic tools. The analysis is going to be divided into two parts. The first is going to cover discourses related to shaping characters. The characters that the study focuses on, for purposes that will be shown later, are Mark and the others collectively/people. The second part covers whatever related to the new belief itself, i.e. religions VS atheism.

### a. Characters

The first character is Mark, the main figure in the movie, the hero. The following linguistic choices are made to shape his character and personality:

*Ext.1 "So if you're a chubby, little loser like this guy, for example, that's Mark Bellison, by the way, then you're all alone and at the bottom of the pile."*

This first extract shows a set of negative lexical choices made purposefully for describing Mark. He is described as a "loser", "chubby", "little", "alone", and "at the bottom of the pile". All these lexical choices define Mark as a very worthless person.

*Ext.2 "I'm disappointed that you're early and not really looking forward to tonight in general"*

In this extract, the girl- Jennifer- he is about to date tells him that she is neither excited nor interested in dating him after seeing him. Such a conversation implies, again, that Mark is a worthless person and a loser. He cannot succeed on a personal and emotional level too.

*Ext.3 "It's all I can afford in my situation. I know I'm in my 40s, but I haven't got any financial assets to speak of. Also, my boss said he's probably gonna fire me this week"*

The existential presuppositions which are derived from the use of a noun phrase "all I can afford" and "any financial assets" imply that Mark is a loser on the economic/financial/business level too. He fails to make enough money and even fails to keep a job, which is indicated by the lexical choice "fire". Further, the expression "in my 40s" conventionally implicates that a person in such an age should at least have some financial assets, which Mark does not have.

*Ext.4 " I don't find you attractive"*

The use of "not" and "attractive-not attractive" is another lexical choice to assert the negative physical and non-physical appearance of Mark.

*Ext.5 "water: She's way out of your league.  
Mark: thank you"*

In this extract, the waiter comes to see what the dating couples want to offer. So, just for being a person who does not know to lie, the waiter comments on the situation implicating that Mark is just a loser and a worthless person in comparison to the girl he sits with. This adds more assertion to the fact that Mark is loser and a non-worthy person. He is seen as so to even a simple person like a waiter.

Mark's reply, on the other hand, adds more confirmation. Saying Thank you implicates an agreement to the speech being claimed. So what is said is just the truth.

*Ext.6 "No, not very attractive. No, doesn't make much money. A bit fat. Has a funny little snub nose. Kind of like a frog in the facial area"*

The above extract is a phone talk between the girl Mark is on date and her mother. She, the girl, mostly describes his appearance in a negative way. She uses lexis such as "not attractive" , "fat" , "little snub nose", and "like a frog". All the lexis is meant to describe him ironically, in a negative way.

*Ext.7 "Mark is one of Lecture Films' least successful screenwriters."*

*Ext. 8 "You're an awful writer"*

*Ext. 9 "you're a little man-b\*tch."*

*Ext.10 "you will always be a loser"*

*Ext.11 "Good luck, douche bag."*

These are just other descriptive lines of Mark's character. One of his colleagues introduces him as the "least successful" writer and another describes him as "an awful" writer , " a little man bitch" , a "loser" forever and a "douche bag".

*Ext.12 "Mark: I don't hold that much hope for the future.*

*A Colleague: I don't have a lot of hope for you neither"*

The conversation above implicates another assertion on the idea that Mark is just a loser who can never get a chance in life.

*Ext.13 "Well, you're stupid."*

Stupid is the lexical choice used to describe Mark in his second date with the same beautiful girl he dated before. She also adds:

*Ext.14 "I don't want little fat kids with snub noses"*

This is an indirect implicature raised by violating Graic's maxims and implicating that Mark is the "fat" one with a "snub nose"

The second character is a collective concept. It is "people/ the others", i.e. people all around the world who show interest in Mark's stories/lies. The picture shaped for the others/people is seen in the following extracts:

*Ext.15 "This is it Mark, only a few hours left of this until an eternity of nothingness"*

This extract is said by Mark's mother on her death bed. She was so sad and desperate about dying and becoming nothing. The noun phrase "an eternity of nothingness" is an existential presupposition that represents a fact on the

situation after death. This noun phrase constructs a part of what the “others” belief, which is a belief that makes them feel in certain way, which is explained in the next extract.

*Ext.16 “I'm scared.”*

The lexical indication of “scared” is a completion to the extensional presupposition stated earlier. People feel “scared” about the fact that there is “an eternity of nothingness” coming after death.

*Ext.17 “What else happens?”*

*Ext.18 “ I'm going to see my mother again when I die.”*

*Ext.19 “Tell us more, please.”*

These three extracts are said by nurses and a doctor to Mark when the latter has spoken to his grandmother about a nice place to go after death. The three linguistic interaction ranging from a question form (a request for more information), an affirmative statement on speculating other results of going to such a nice place after death ( seeing other dead people, those whom we love) and a polite command (also requesting for more information). These three different syntactic constructions show that people around him belief what Mark has just said so they just elaborate on the discourse instead of questioning him.

*Ext.20 “The words you spoke last night, to your grandmother, spread like wildfire. Please, tell us more. Explain what you said.”*

This is another reaction which came in a form of a command requesting for more information. This is said by one of the people who gathered in front of Mark’s house after what Mark has said is spread. The whole seen and some other questions , as extracted below from ext.21 to ext.24 , also show that people are naïve enough and ready to belief what is being said.

*Ext.21 “Is there only one place you go when you die?”*

*Ext.22 “Will everyone who has ever died be there?”*

*Ext.23 “What's this place called?”*

*Ext.24 “Will I get to have sex with people there?”*

All these extract are question forms requesting for more information. Asking for more information is a sign of acceptance. It is different from questioning the issue itself. The questions above does not show any doubt. They ask for more details.

*Ext. 25 “Oh that makes me happy!”*

In this extract, the beautiful girl Jennifer, expresses her feeling after she has known about what Mark says on the life after death. The use of the lexical item “happy” indicates a change in the state of “The other/people” after knowing the new lie. Here is also an implied rhetorical analogy is done. The implied analogy is done between being “scared” and “sad” before the lie and being “happy” , “at peace” after it.

*Ext.26 “Jennifer: How did your grandmother feel when you told her these things?*

*MARK: Happy. At peace.”*

The lexis in this extract, “happy” and “at peace” in addition to the question raised by Jennifer” also asset the analysis above, i.e. the implied analogy.

### **b. The new belief**

The following extracts contribute in shaping the atheistic ideology linguistically, with its all main figures (that will be explained later):

*Ext.27 “You're wrong about what happens when you die. It's not an eternity of nothingness”*

*Ext.28 “When you die you're going to go to your favorite place in the whole world. And you're going to be with all of the people you've ever loved and who have ever loved you. And you're going to be young again, and you'll be able to run through the fields and dance and jump, and there will be no sadness, no pain, just love and laughing and happiness. There will be ponies made of gold, and everyone will live in giant mansions, and everything will smell like cookies. And it will last for an eternity, Grandma. An eternity.”*

*Ext.29 “ You're going to be happy forever, grandma. I promise you. Say hello to my mom for me. Tell her I love her.”*

This is the first scene where the topic of atheism is tackled implicitly. It is a scene where Mark’s grandmother is about to die and he tries of comfort her

and ease the situation to her by telling a lie. So, the audience is expected to comprehend that every single word here is a definite lie. The scene consists of three main speeches.

Firstly, there can be seen a literal neglecting of the existential presupposition of “eternity of nothingness”, which is at the same time an implied conformation of it! The opposite process is done with the noun phrase “your favorite place in the world”. It is another existential presupposition. Yet, it is literally confirmed but pragmatically cancelled. Furthermore, some other existential presupposition are confirmed as components of the “favorite place”, such as “ponies made of gold” and “giant mansions”. Also a list of factive presupposition are stated too such as “with all of the people you've ever loved and who have ever loved you”, “be young again”, and “able to run through the fields and dance and jump”. However, all these linguistic tools are meant to confirm literally but cancel the meaning pragmatically. The whole scene is meant to be received and interpreted by the audience as a definite lie.

Also set of lexis are carefully used, some in form of an analogy, such as “Sadness” Vs. “laughing”, “pain” Vs. “love”, “happy”, “young” and “eternity”. The main lexical item here is “eternity” and it is repeated twice as a kind of emphasis.

A simile is also used where the smell of the place is described “like cookies”.

*Ext.30 “JENNIFER: Just tell me what you said. Please, Mark.*

*MARK: “My grandmother was dying, and she was terrified, shaking all over. She didn't want to just become nothingness. So I told her that when she died there wouldn't be nothingness. That she would be with all of the people she loved who had died and that she would live an eternity of joy and happiness.”*

This is another scene where a conversation between Jennifer and Mark is held. It asserts the same idea of the previous scene. He shortly tells her about what he has told his grandmother. There can be seen another factive presupposition stating “there wouldn't be nothingness”. Two of the previous factive presupposition are also restated, “would live an eternity of joy and happiness.” and “be with all of the people she loved who had died”. However,

the difference in this scene is that Mark states these presuppositions in an ironic way, but still Jeniffer takes them seriously and get impressed.

Some important lexical choices are also seen in this scene such as “dying” ,” terrified”, and “shaking”.

*Ext.31 “I feel like I should be reading these off of something other than just notebook paper. I wish they were like, written on large tablets or even just nicer paper or something.”*

This is another scene in a direct relation to the issue. It is where Marks gets ready and writes everything he is about to tell people about the idea he came up with, something similar to a religion. The lexical uses of “tablet” and “nicer paper” hold certain pragmatic indications that will be explained later.

*Ext.32 “Everything you want to know is written here. On this old pizza box.”*

In this extract, the noun phrase “old pizza box” has certain ideological indications, to be explained later.

*Ext. 33: “MARK: Number one: There is a man who lives in the sky who controls everything.*

*MAN #1:What does he look like?*

*Mark : Tall. Big hands. A good head of hair.*

*WOMAN #1:What ethnicity is he?*

*MARK: He's a new ethnicity. It's like a mix of all of our ethnicities.*

*MAN #2:Does he live on a cloud?*

*MAN #3: Can we see him?*

*MARK: No. He lives much higher than the clouds, too high to see.*

*WOMAN #2: So he lives in space?*

*MARK: No, not that high.*

*MAN #3 :So you mean the Thermosphere?”*

This scene, in addition to some others, explain one main figure of the idea he is talking about. That figure is “A man in the sky”. The expression is a factive presupposition that indicates the existence of a man who controls the whole world. The characteristics, whether personal or physical, of this man is also states. Lexis like “tall”, “big”, “head of hair” and “new ethnicity”, are chosen to add details on the figure.

*Ext.34 “Number two: When you die you don't disappear into an eternity of nothingness. Instead, you go to a really great place”*

*Ext.35 “Number three: In that place every person will get a mansion”*

In the two extracts, once again, the existential presupposition “eternity of nothingness” verses the existential presupposition “a really great place”. Also, “mansion” is repeated both as a lexical choice and as a noun of existential presupposition.

*Ext.36 “Number four: When you die, all the people you love will be there too.”*

This affirmative sentence repeats the same emotional idea stated before as a kind of assertion.

*Ext.37 “Number five: When you die there will be free ice cream. All day. All night. Whatever flavor you can think of.”*

Another factive presupposition is stated here, “there will be free ice cream”

*Ext.38 “ MARK : Number six: If you do bad things you won't get to go to this great place when you die..*

*MAN #9: Where will you go?*

*MARK: A terrible place. The worst place imaginable.”*

A counter factual presupposition is stated to clarify the main condition for going to the nice place described, if clause. Also, an existential presupposition is used to define the existence of an opposite place, “ terrible place”.

*Ext. 39 “Number seven: The man in the sky who controls everything decides if you go to the good place or the bad place. He also decides who lives”*

*Ext.40 “Number eight: Even if the man in the sky does bad shit to you, he makes it up to you by giving you an eternity of good stuff after you die.*

The qualities and the abilities of the main in the sky are stated in the two extracts above. An emphasis is given to the lexical item “decide” in collocation

with verbs like “go” and “live”. Other lexis such as “give” and “does” are also used which contribute in emphasizing the idea of “being in control”.

*Ext.41 “The man in the clouds told me.”*

This last extract holds an important presupposition, and thus inference. The word “told” here conventionally presupposes that the man in the sky speaks to Mark, which is also something that has important ideological insights.

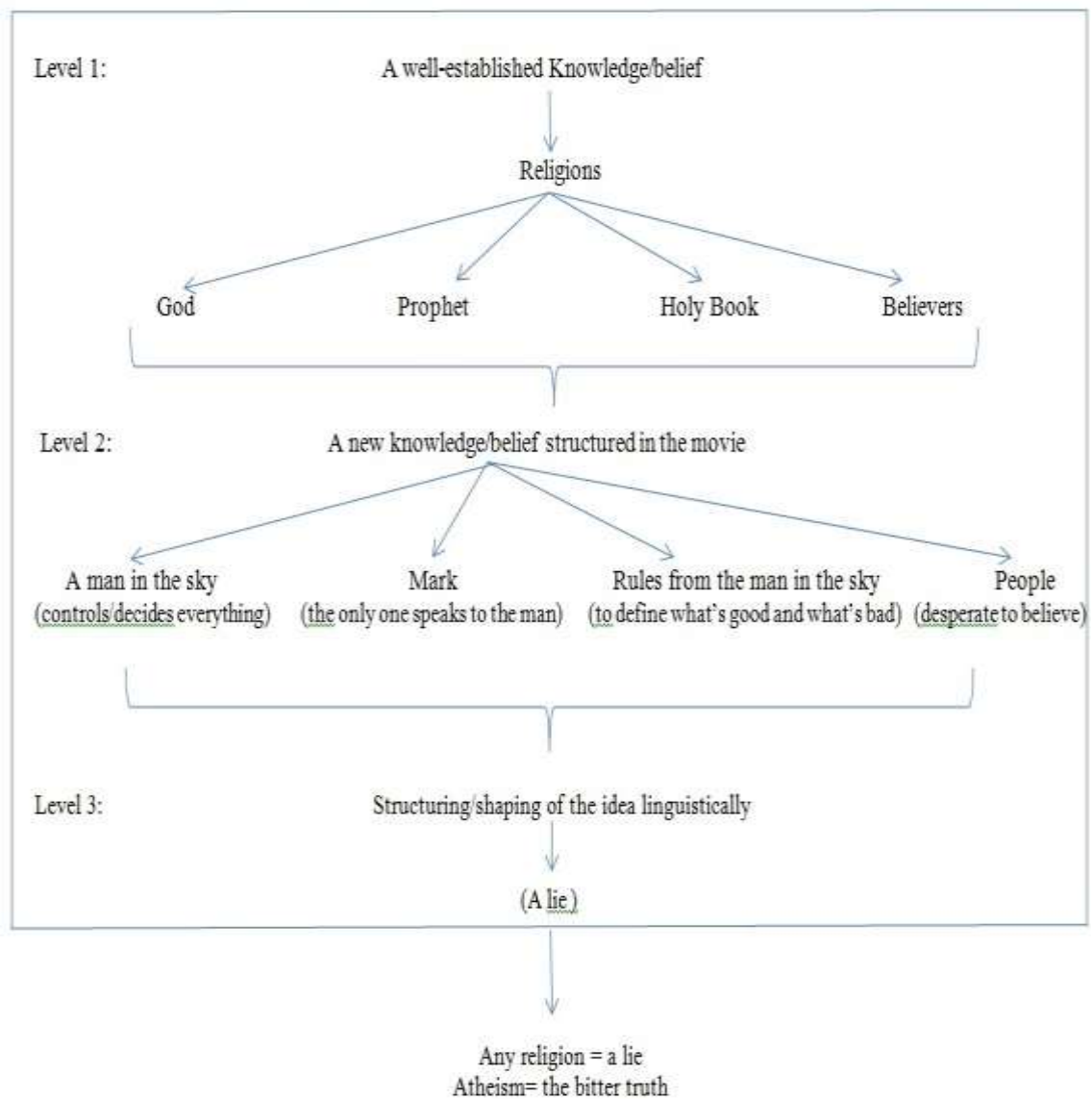
## **6. Ideological Discussion**

Before starting the overall discussion of the atheist ideology being naturalized in this movie, a short yet precise explanation is going to be made on the two other levels of ideological representations. In respect to this study, the cognitive level of ideology here is the idea of religion, any religion. The well-known knowledge of any religion in the world consists of four main prominent figures. Those are: a God, a prophet, the statement of the religion which is documented in a holy book, and believers. So these four can be called the main components of any religion. Talking on these four figures or referring to their characteristics naturally calls to mind the concept of “religion”. So, any idea that is based on these four figures or components can be called religion. Further, each of these figures, as indicated earlier, is also known for certain characteristics. For instance, God is known to be the controller. A prophet is known to be the one who communicates with the God and spreads God’s messages. Holy books tell what religions allow and what forbids in additions to what happens to people after death. So, as the characteristics of these figures are all mentioned and pictured, then religion VS. atheism is a central theme in the movie and these figures are as well. Accordingly, all these ideas are constricting the cognitive level of the ideological representation in this movie. Audience is expected to call this knowledge to mind when watching the movie, whether consciously or sub-consciously to help him make certain linkage and comprehend the real purpose.

The social level of ideological representation in *The Invention of lying* is structured on the base of two main paradigms. The first paradigm is the components of the movie (namely *The man in the sky*, *Mark*, *Pizza box with set of rules*, and the others/people)- which themselves match the main figures of religions. The second one is the concept of *Lying VS. truth*. What the second

paradigm means is that the content of the movie in the scenes selected is expected to be comprehended in an opposite way. That is, if Mark says that there is a place to go after death or there is a man in the sky who controls everything (a God), then these are only lies that the audience should never ever believe. In other words, if the movie says that there is God, it actually implies that there is no God at all and you only accepts such a claim if you want to lie to yourself, i.e. if you are an idiot.

Linking together the three levels of ideological representation, the message of the movie can be clearly interpreted, which is summarized in the figure below and explained next :



Figure(2): The ideological representation of atheism in The Invention of Lying Movie

For uncovering the ideological representation of atheism in this movie, the representations of the main figures or components of religions in general need to be revealed first, which are as follows:

- a. The concept of God is shaped under the name of “ a man in the sky”. The qualities given to this “man in the sky/cloud” , as shown in the detailed analysis of the linguistic tools, clearly indicate two things : (i) underestimating the divine, and (ii) linking and matching the figure (The man in the sky) in undeniable way to what religiously seen as a God. (see ext.33,39,40)
- b. Mark is meant to represent a prophet. He is also underestimated, thus the concept of prophet in general is underestimated too. He is described as a loser that can never succeed in any a sphere of life. That is, he fails to make it work economically, personally, emotionally, etc. He is a totally worthless and rejected person. He only gains value and fame when he starts to spread his big lies (that there is a man in the sky and a place to go after death). Without the lies, he would have been a worthless person forever. The linguistic analysis of his character above confirms this claim. (see ext.1-14 and ext.41)
- c. The rules decided by the man in the sky and the pizza box where they are written represent and match the concept of religious beliefs documented in a holy book. The rules which are stated are so similar to the religious rules of most religions. The points covered are some common shared beliefs among most religions, things related to paradise and conditions to go there after death. So this is just another direct linkage to the theme of religions. Further, the pizza boxes are meant to underestimate the idea of having a holy book to document the religious rules. It pragmatically indicates that the idea of having holy books is trivial. (see ext.27-40)
- d. The last figure is the representation of all the people who show interest in the new belief. So, those people picture the real believers in the real world. They are pictured as some trivial, idiot, bored, sad, and desperate people. They are people in need to something to get them out of their fear from going to an eternity of nothingness. They are people who are ready to believe anything without questioning it no matter how worthless is it.(see ext.15-26)

However, the ideological representation of atheism only becomes apparent though three main processes:

- (i) linking the figures represented in the movie to the concept of religions,
- (ii) recognizing the underestimation done to the value of the four figures, and
- (iii) comprehending the main theme of the movie where everything in relation to the concept of religion is meant to be defined as a definite lie and , thus, the opposite is always the truth. So, if religion is linguistically represented as something exists and as a fact, then it is never so. Atheism is the factual thing. So, reading implicatures is the key.

## 7. Conclusions

The current research has concluded the followings:

1. CDA serves as an important study field in uncovering hidden ideologies in movie discourses.
2. Reading implicatures reveals important meanings to the conscious level and the main implicature for interpreting atheism in the selected data is triggered from knowing the movie story (Inventing lying).
3. Van Dijk's model of the multidisciplinary theory of ideological representation suits perfectly this study because of the specific way that atheism is represented in it. The theory has perfectly succeeded in denaturalizing what is naturalized and uncovering it.
4. Pragmatic notions such as implicature and presupposition are specifically central in such movies of a pragmatic nature
5. Even the semantic and the syntactic structures gain some pragmatic qualities and contribute in revealing some implied meaning when the overall message/theme is shaped pragmatically as it is the case in The Invention of Lying.

## References

- Fairclough, N. (1989). Language and Power. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). Discourse and Social Change. Cambridge: Polity.
- Fairclough, N.(1995) .Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language, (1st ed.) . London: Longman
- Fairclough, N. (2001). Language and Power,(2nd ed.). London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N.& Wodak, R. (1997).”Critical Discourse Analysis”. In Van Dijk (Ed.) (1997). Discourse as Social Interaction. London:Sage,258-284.
- Gazdar, G. (1979). Pragmatics: Implicature, Presupposition and Logical Form. .London: Academic press.
- Jeffries , L. (2007) . The Textual Construction of Female Body : A Critical Discourse Approach . PALGRAVE : MACMILLAN
- KhosraviNik, M.(2010). "Self and Other Representation in Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the conflict over Iran's nuclear programme in British and Iranian Newspapers ". Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. Lancaster University, UK.
- Tahir,M. (2010). Creation of Ideology Through the Language of Cinema: a Feminist Discourse Study of Media Education. In “Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences” . 4592–4596.
- Van Dijk , T(1993). "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis". Discourse & Society,4(2), 249-283.
- Van Dijk, T (1998). Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach. London: Sage.
- Van Dijk, T (2007) Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach (London: Sage, 1998), 115-140.
- Wodak, R. & Ludwing, W. (1999) Challenging in a Changing World : Issue in Critical Discourse Analysis . Vienna: Passaenverlag
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009). Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory, and Methodology. In R. Wodak, & M. Meyer (Eds.), Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis. London: Sage, 1-33