

The Potential Disruption of Casual and Emotional Coherence in Diegetic Drama

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This study explores the interplay between causal and emotional coherence in diegetic drama, examining how these elements shape audience perception and engagement. Generally, in dramatic structure, causal coherence ensures a logical sequence of events, where actions lead to predictable consequences, while emotional coherence maintains psychological consistency in characters' motivations and reactions. Traditional dramatic forms, based on Aristotelian decorum, such as Greek tragedy and western realist drama, rely on a strong alignment between both types of coherence to create immersive narratives. In contrast, modernist diegetic dramatic forms, based on Platonic anti-mimetic concepts, often weaken or disrupt causal coherence while preserving emotional depth, as seen in Epic drama, Expressionism, Symbolism, and the Theater of the Absurd. In plays like Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, the plot may seem illogical, but the emotional atmosphere of existential dread and the need for companionship provide coherence at an affective level. In the case of Epic drama, as another type of diegetic drama, the matter becomes a little more complicated. It seems that Epic theater, particularly in the works of Bertolt Brecht, intentionally disrupt emotional identification to provoke critical reflection. Conversely, in Epic drama, events unfold in exaggerated, non-realistic ways, but they align with the play's emotional truth. Brecht's plays, for instance, often distort the causality of events in disrupted narrative episodes but maintain emotional coherence to provoke reflection in the audience. This paper demonstrates how different kinds of diegetic drama strategically manipulates causal coherence to maintain narrative emotional clarity to encourage reflection. Based on reception theory, the paper argues that Brecht's techniques redefine the audience's role, transforming them from passive consumers of classical casual narrative patterns to active critical participants in meaning-making. Ultimately, this study highlights how diegetic drama's engagement with emotional and casual coherence and reception theory serves as a political and aesthetic strategy, reinforcing its function as a tool for social critique and ideological awareness.

Keywords: emotional coherence, casual coherence, diegetic drama, epic drama, absurd drama