

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Film is a narrative medium that organizes events into a structured discourse, and time plays a central role in shaping how audiences understand a story. In narrative theory, a distinction is made between the chronological sequence of events in the story and the order in which those events are presented in the discourse. Genette (1980) explains that narrative order may differ from story order, a phenomenon he refers to as anachrony, which includes flashbacks and anticipations. This distinction shows that narratives, including films, do not always present events in chronological order. Instead, they rearrange temporal sequences to create meaning, emphasis, and perspective.

Bordwell (1985) further argues that narration in fiction film organizes information in ways that guide the viewer's construction of the story. He distinguishes between story, which consists of events in their chronological order, and plot, which presents those events in a particular arrangement. Viewers reconstruct the story based on cues provided by the plot. This indicates that the arrangement of time in film directly influences how coherence and causality are understood. When events are presented out of sequence, audiences rely on various cues to understand how different time layers are connected.

The structure of time in discourse can be explained more clearly through linguistic theory. Reichenbach (1947) proposes a model of tense that accounts for temporal relations in language. He distinguishes three temporal points: Speech

Time (S), Event Time (E), and Reference Time (R). Speech Time refers to the moment when an utterance is produced. Event Time refers to the time when the described situation occurs. Reference Time refers to the temporal point from which the event is viewed. Reichenbach argues that tense does not simply mark past, present, or future, but expresses the relation among these three points. For example, in the past perfect form, the event occurs before the reference point, and the reference point occurs before the moment of speaking ($E < R < S$). This framework makes it possible to analyze how events are positioned in relation to one another within discourse, especially when narration does not follow chronological order.

The interpretation of temporal relations is closely connected to deixis. Levinson (1983) explains that deixis refers to the way language encodes features of the context of utterance. Temporal deixis includes tense and time expressions such as now, yesterday, and tomorrow. These expressions depend on the speaker's temporal position. In narrative discourse, however, the deictic center may shift from one scene to another. An expression like now may refer to the present of a past scene rather than the actual present of the viewer. This shifting center shows that temporal meaning in narrative depends on perspective and contextual anchoring.

Other scholars such as Hornstein (1990) and Klein (1994) further discuss how tense involves relations between temporal points rather than simple time labels. Their work supports the idea that temporal meaning is relational and structured within discourse. However, although these theories are well established in linguistics, they are not often applied directly to the analysis of film dialogue. Many studies on film focus on visual techniques or general narrative structure,

while the linguistic organization of time in dialogue and narration is rarely examined using Reichenbach's S-E-R model in a systematic way.

The Age of Adaline (2015), directed by Lee Toland Krieger, provides a suitable case for examining temporal reference in film. The story follows Adaline Bowman, a woman who stops aging after an accident in 1937. Although decades pass, her physical appearance remains the same. The narrative moves between different periods of her life, combining present scenes with memories and past experiences. These temporal shifts are expressed not only through visual transitions but also through dialogue and voice-over narration that refer to specific years, events, and durations. Because the film presents multiple time layers, each utterance must be interpreted in relation to its temporal context.

For this reason, examining temporal reference in this film is important. There is still limited research that applies Reichenbach's framework to analyze cinematic discourse, particularly in films that frequently shift between different time periods. By identifying the patterns of Speech Time, Event Time, and Reference Time in *The Age of Adaline*, this study seeks to explain how linguistic structures help maintain coherence in a non-linear narrative. This research contributes to the study of temporal reference in discourse and shows how time is conceptually organized through language in film.

Intelligentia - Dignitas

1.2 Research Questions

1. What types of temporal references based on Reichenbach's S–E–R framework are found in the dialogue and narration of *The Age of Adaline* (2015)?
2. How do these temporal references contribute to the conceptualization of time in *The Age of Adaline* (2015)?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify and categorize the temporal relations in *The Age of Adaline* (2015) using Reichenbach's model of Speech Time (S), Event Time (E), and Reference Time (R).
2. To analyze how the identified temporal relations shape the film's conceptualization of time within its narrative structure.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the analysis of temporal reference in *The Age of Adaline* (2015). The data are taken from the official movie script and English subtitles and are limited to utterances in dialogue and narration that express temporal relations, either explicitly through grammatical marking or implicitly through contextual reference. Only linguistic elements that contribute to the identification of temporal structure are included in the analysis.

The study applies Reichenbach's (1947) framework, which distinguishes three temporal points: Speech Time (S), Event Time (E), and Reference Time (R). In this research, Speech Time refers to the diegetic present of each scene in which

an utterance is produced. Event Time refers to the time at which the described event occurs. Reference Time refers to the temporal point from which the event is viewed or interpreted. Each selected utterance is analyzed by determining the relation among S, E, and R and classifying the temporal configuration, such as $E = R < S$, $E < R < S$, $S = R < E$, $S < E = R$, and other possible patterns.

The linguistic analysis includes tense forms, aspectual constructions, temporal adverbs such as now, yesterday, tomorrow, and forever, and temporal deictic expressions that signal temporal anchoring. The procedure consists of determining the Speech Time in the narrative context, identifying the Event Time referred to in the utterance, establishing the Reference Time, and mapping the S–E–R relation.

This study does not examine lexical meaning categories, figurative language, or pragmatic categories such as person deixis and spatial deixis unless they directly affect temporal interpretation. It also does not analyze cinematic techniques such as editing, camera movement, visual symbolism, or character psychology. The focus remains strictly on the linguistic realization of temporal reference and its contribution to the conceptualization of time in the film.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the discussion of temporal reference in discourse by applying Reichenbach's model of Speech Time (S), Event Time (E), and Reference Time (R) to film dialogue. Although Reichenbach's theory has been widely discussed in linguistics, it is not often used to analyze time structure in films in a systematic way. By examining the relation among S, E, and R in *The Age of*

Adaline, this research shows how tense works as a relational system in a non-linear narrative. The study also explains how repeated S–E–R patterns help shape the way time is understood in the film.

The research also connects linguistic theory with film narrative analysis. Discussions about time in film usually focus on visual elements such as editing and scene transitions. On the other hand, linguistic studies of tense often remain abstract and are rarely applied to cinematic discourse. This study brings these perspectives together by showing that the organization of time in film is supported not only by visual techniques but also by grammatical structure in dialogue and narration.

In addition, this research may serve as a reference for students and researchers who are interested in tense, temporal reference, and discourse analysis. It shows that film dialogue can be examined using a clear theoretical framework, especially in films that frequently move between past and present. The findings also help explain how a complex storyline can remain clear and coherent through structured temporal relations in language.

1.6 State of The Art

Research on time in film discourse has generally developed in two main directions. The first direction focuses on pragmatic analysis of deixis in cinematic dialogue. Several undergraduate theses that examine *The Age of Adaline* fall into this category. Studies such as "Deixis Used by Adaline in *The Age of Adaline* Movie" and "An Analysis of Deixis in *The Age of Adaline* Movie" analyze personal, spatial, and temporal deixis by identifying and classifying deictic expressions in the film. Similarly, "An Analysis of Deixis in *Pride and Prejudice* Movie" investigates

deixis in movie dialogue, while "Deixis Temporal dalam Film *Good Bye Lenin*" concentrates specifically on temporal deixis. These studies provide useful descriptions of how reference is constructed through contextual pointing expressions in films. However, their analyses remain limited to pragmatic categorization and do not examine how tense structurally encodes temporal relations within narrative discourse.

The second direction approaches time from a theoretical perspective. Articles such as "Temporal Reference: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives" and "Making Sense of Tense: Tense, Time Reference, and Linking Theory" discuss the distinction between speech time, event time, and reference time in explaining temporal interpretation. In addition, works such as "Temporal Experience and the B-Theory of Time" and "Representations of Time in Time-Based Media" explore how time is understood and constructed in discourse and narrative forms. These studies provide a strong theoretical basis for analyzing temporal structure. However, they are primarily theoretical discussions and are not specifically applied to film dialogue, particularly in the case of *The Age of Adaline*.

Despite these developments, limited research integrates structural temporal theory with cinematic discourse analysis. In particular, the application of Reichenbach's S-E-R framework to examine how temporal reference operates within a non-linear film narrative has not been systematically explored. Most film studies focus on visual techniques or narrative structure, while most linguistic studies remain abstract and detached from cinematic data. Therefore, this study positions itself at the intersection of film discourse analysis and temporal reference

theory by examining how speech time, event time, and reference time contribute to the construction of temporal conceptualization in *The Age of Adaline*.

