

A Comparison of State Instability in Ditto ‘동감’ Film and Its Remake: A Semiotic Study

Widya Sekarwati¹ (✉) Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia¹
widyasekarwati@upi.edu¹

Velayeti Nurfitriana Ansas² Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia²
velaansas@upi.edu²

Jayanti Megasari³ Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia³
jayanti_megasari@upi.edu³

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Corresponding Author: ✉ Widya Sekarwati

Article History	ABSTRACT
Received 29-06-2025 Accepted: 08-07-2025 Published: 04-08-2025	Background: This research discusses the comparison of the representation of state instability in the 2000 film Ditto '동감' with its national remake film Ditto '동감' (2022). The interesting point is there are many studies that have analyzed remake films, but few discuss about national remake films. Purpose: This research aims to fill the research gap by specifically highlighting the comparison of representation in national remake films, between film Ditto '동감' (2000) and its remake film Ditto '동감' (2022), especially on the phenomenon of state instability. Method: This research employs a qualitative approach, drawing on John Fiske's semiotic theory, to analyze the differences in signs and symbols used by the two films in representing the phenomenon of state instability. The data used are audio, visual, and verbal elements in both films. Results and Discussion: This research demonstrates that, although national remake films are remade in the same country with a relatively similar culture and ideology, the representation of a phenomenon can vary significantly in terms of what and how it is portrayed. This is because representation is highly dependent on the filmmaker. Conclusions and Implications: The instability of the country in the 2000 film Ditto '동감' is primarily represented through visual elements, including news and scenes with minimal dialogue. Meanwhile, the instability of the country, as represented in the remake of Ditto '동감' in 2022, is more likely to be conveyed verbally through dialogue. This research is expected to contribute to the study of semiotics in film, particularly in the context of intramedium national remake films. It aims to serve as teaching materials for Korean language education students, helping to develop an understanding of semiotics in Korean national remake films.
Keywords:	<i>Representation; Comparison; State Instability; National Film Remake; Ditto '동감'.</i>
	ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Latar belakang: Penelitian ini membahas perbandingan representasi ketidakstabilan negara pada film Ditto ‘동감’ tahun 2000 dengan film remakannya Ditto ‘동감’ tahun 2022. Menariknya, banyak penelitian yang menganalisis film remake, tetapi hanya sedikit yang membahas remake nasional.

Tujuan: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengisi celah penelitian sebelumnya dengan secara spesifik membahas perbandingan representasi dalam film remake nasional, antara film Ditto ‘동감’ (2000) dengan film remakannya Ditto ‘동감’ (2022), khususnya pada fenomena ketidakstabilan negara.

Metode: Melalui metode kualitatif dengan teori semiotika John fiske, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perbedaan tanda dan simbol yang digunakan kedua film dalam merepresentasikan fenomena ketidakstabilan negara. Data yang digunakan adalah elemen audio, visual, dan verbal pada kedua film.

Hasil dan Pembahasan: Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun film remake nasional dibuat ulang di lingkungan yang memiliki budaya dan ideologi yang relatif sama, apa dan bagaimana sebuah fenomena direpresentasikan bisa sangat berbeda. Karena representasi sangat bergantung pada filmmaker.

Kesimpulan dan Implikasi: Ketidakstabilan negara pada film Ditto ‘동감’ tahun 2000 lebih banyak direpresentasikan melalui elemen visual berupa berita-berita dan adegan tanpa dialog. Sedangkan, ketidakstabilan negara pada film remake Ditto ‘동감’ tahun 2022 lebih condong direpresentasikan secara verbal melalui dialog. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi pada kajian semiotika dalam film, khususnya film remake nasional intramedium dan dapat menjadi bahan ajar dalam mahasiswa pendidikan bahasa Korea untuk memahami semiotika dalam film remake nasional Korea.

Kata Kunci

Representasi; Perbandingan; Ketidakstabilan negara; Film Remake Nasional; Ditto ‘동감’.



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INTRODUCTION

Films are often considered a cultural product.[1] Film is a tool of expression that conveys social reality and reflects the cultural values that exist in society. Even though the remake film shares the same core story, its representation of the phenomenon is certainly different, as representation is highly dependent on the filmmaker's ideology and culture.

John Fiske[2] views text as something not fixed and unbound. His concept is applicable to many forms of media texts, including films.[3] Although television is polysemous in that its meaning is not limited by the boundaries of the medium itself, a text has boundaries and structures regarding the possible meanings produced and the stronger meaning. It also assumes that no text is completely raw; all texts are inevitably influenced by reality. Analyzing texts using John Fiske's semiotic theory allows researchers to examine representations in films in greater depth.[2] His theory analyzes the meaning in the film by breaking the sign into three levels, allowing for a deeper understanding of the results. We can see how reality is represented in the film through certain techniques and examine the ideology that constructs the sign.

Ditto ‘동감’ (2022) is a national remake of the 2000 film of the same name.. It means that Ditto ‘동감’ 2022 is remade in an environment with the same culture and ideology, and does not undergo a translation process that can interfere with the original value of the film. People from the same culture tend to share similar concepts, images, and ideas, so they often perceive things

similarly. [4] However, in remake films, the reflection of original values may be disrupted due to cultural shifts that occur over time. [1] Interestingly, both Ditto ‘동감’ films are set during a time when Korea was experiencing two major crises. The first Ditto ‘동감’ (2000) film is set during a period of political instability, while the remake, Ditto ‘동감’ (2022) is set during an economic crisis. Moreover, because a different director made it, the remake has many differences from the original movie. Each director of Ditto ‘동감’ films has their preference for use different signs and symbols in represent the instability.

This research aims to contribute to the study of semiotics by comparing a national remake film with the original film. Most previous studies have focused on the representation of a phenomenon in a film. While other studies compare the representation of phenomena in films with that of different films or national remake films across mediums. Research on national remake films is less popular than research on transnational remake films. The representation of a phenomenon does not only occur when a film is remade in a foreign country. Other factors, such as cultural shifts and filmmakers’ preferences, also influence the representation in national remake films. Therefore, this research aims to fill the research gap by specifically highlighting the comparison of representation in intramedium national remake films, between the 2000 film Ditto ‘동감’ and the 2022 film Ditto ‘동감’, especially on the phenomenon of state instability. This research is expected to broaden the perspective of semiotic studies and can be used as teaching materials for Korean language education students to help develop an understanding of semiotics in Korean national remake films.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Representation

Representation is the process of producing meaning in a text, which is not only a verbal expression but also an audio-visual one. Representation is also a means of exchanging meanings that are influenced by the culture and ideology of the creator. [4] In short, representation is the depiction of a phenomenon.

2. National film remake

A film remake is a reproduction of an existing film, which can be done nationally or transnationally. National remake films are remade in the country of origin of the original film and do not alter the target audience, unlike transnational remake films, which are made in foreign countries with different target audiences. In making remakes, the film industry adopts universal values that are perceived by the audience as an attempt to fulfill the community’s wishes. [5]

3. Film Ditto ‘동감’ (2000) and Film Ditto ‘동감’ (2022)

Ditto ‘동감’ is a South Korean film that was first released in 2000, blending genres of melodrama, slice-of-life, and the supernatural. Its tremendous popularity and timeless theme became the reason for director Seo Eun-young to produce a remake of the film with the same title in 2022.

These films represent the state’s instability through different phenomena. The film Ditto ‘동감’ (2000) was set in Korea at 1979 and 1999. The remake film’s setting was Korea in 1999 and 2022. Interestingly, 1979 was a time of political instability in Korea. There was resistance from the opposition to President Park Chung Hee, who ruled in an authoritarian manner. Meanwhile, in 1999, Korea faced economic instability as a result of the IMF post-crisis.

Many researchers have studied film representation using a semiotic approach, applying various theories, including John Fiske’s semiotic theory and Charles Sanders Peirce’s semiotic

theory. Research using Charles Sanders Peirce's theory (Kartini, et al., 2022[6]; Kezia & Ahmadi, 2020[7]; Natalia & Ratriandita, (2022)[8]; Palinoan et al., 2024[9]; Puspitasari, 2021[10]; Safrina & Firmannandya, 2025[11], Fitrinasyah & Nurussa'adah, 2023[12]; Zain et al., 2021[13]; Leasfita & Goliesman, 2025 [14])and John Fiske's semiotic theory (Tuhepaly & Mazaid, 2022[15]; Arlina & Nuraeni, 2022[16]; Fania et al., 2024[17]; Rahmah et al., 2024[18]; Salsabyula & Mutiah, 2024[19]; Fitriyah et al., 2024[20]; Majid, 2020[21]). Kezia & Ahmadi's research (2020)[7] examines the comparison of women's images in the 2020 live-action film *Mulan* and the 1998 animated film *Mulan*, focusing on the character of *Mulan* from each film. However, in their research, Kezia and Ahmadi (2020)[7] focused more on discussing the differences in the narrative content of the two *Mulan* films compared to the socio-cultural values underlying these differences. Meanwhile, Rahmah et al.'s (2024)[18] compared the representation of black racial characters between three black characters in three different films whose representations rely on Western stereotypes of the black race, thus not highlighting the meaning of each character's role in Japanese culture.

While previous comparative studies on film remakes have often focused on narrative differences, they have tended to lack a systematic analysis of the semiotic functions—audio, visual, and verbal—that construct new meanings within shifting socio-historical contexts. This study addresses this gap by comparing how the broader phenomenon of state instability is represented. Therefore, the analytical framework for this study is presented below.

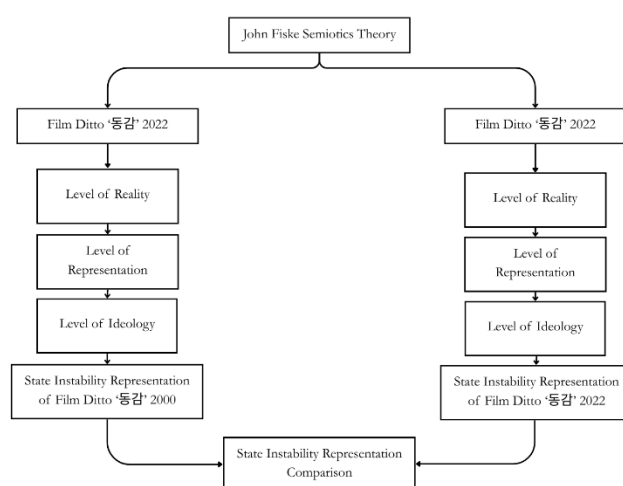


Figure 1. Analytical framework

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a semiotic approach to analyze the representation of state instability in the film *Ditto '동감'* (2000) and its remake *Ditto '동감'* (2022). This method was chosen because it is in line with the objectives of qualitative methods designed to examine the nature of a phenomenon and analyze the causes of observed patterns[22], to be able to explain representation through signs and meanings contained in audio, visual, and verbal elements in the film. The semiotic approach was chosen because it is one of the most interpretive research methods in text analysis and can provide complex results.[23]

This research uses John Fiske's semiotic theory known as television codes.[2] This theory divides television codes into three levels. The first level is the level of reality that is analyzed through

aspects that can be perceived by the five senses, such as appearance, symbolic signs, speech, expressions, gestures, and behavior. The second level is the level of representation, which refers to how reality is constructed within the film through certain techniques that shape the plot. This level is analyzed through various elements, including shooting techniques, dialogue, lighting, background music, and sound effects. The third level is ideology, where codes are organized based on ideological coherence.

The data used in this research are audio, visual, and verbal elements from the remake film Ditto '동감' (2022) by Seo Eunyoung, and the film Ditto '동감' (2000) by Kim Jungkwon. The film Ditto '동감' (2000) was watched through the YouTube website, while the remake version of Ditto '동감' (2022) was accessed through the iQIYI platform. In film. Visual elements analyzed include cinematography, characterization, setting, and lighting, while audio data includes dialogue, speaking style, background music, and sound effects.

Data for this study were collected using a purposive sampling method. The primary criterion for selecting the key signs from each film was the explicitness of the semiotic evidence, prioritizing tangible signs—visual, audio, and verbal—that directly and overtly represented the theme of state instability. The collected data was then classified into John Fiske's three levels of semiotics: level of reality, level of representation, and level of ideology. After being analyzed, the data from both films were compared.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The content of the results and discussion presents the findings of the research, based on field data collected through questionnaires, surveys, documents, interviews, observations, and other data collection techniques.

John Fiske's semiotic theory is very relevant in analyzing the representation of state instability in the 2022 remake of Ditto '동감'. This theory allows the researcher to analyze the different realities and ideologies in the two Ditto '동감' films, as well as how each director constructs these ideologies and realities into the film with certain techniques.

This researcher selected data related to social representations, particularly those depicting the instability of the Korean state.

a. Analysis of the representation of state instability in the 2000 film Ditto '동감' using John Fiske's semiotic theory.

The film Ditto '동감' 2000 takes place in Korea in 1979 and 1999. Historically, 1979 in Korea was the end of Park Chung Hee's reign which is often labeled as the era of military dictatorship, before he was assassinated in October 1979.^[24]



Picture 1.1. Screenshot of film Ditto '동감' 2000 (53.23-53.31)

The first sign juxtaposes Yoon Soeun's dialogue from 1979 about political turmoil with the visual of a shocked Ji In from 1999 confirming the events through internet archives. Shown the level of reality by a symbolic sign in the form of a collection of news on the internet, accompanied by Yoon Soeun's definite tone dialogue delivering today's news about Chairman Kim Young Sam being dismissed from the National Assembly. The zoom-in camera movement technique conveys a sense of tension and accentuates Yoon Soeun's expression. Ji In's part was done with a medium-shot technique to highlight Ji In's disbelief expression and gestures staring at the news collection on the laptop. A close-up technique was used to shoot the laptop screen, displaying news articles from 1979, which emphasizes the information on the highlighted object. There is the hiss of the HAM radio as a sound effect, but no background music. Yoon Soeun's dialogue is as follows:

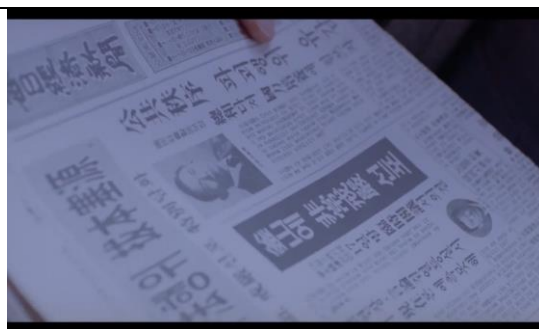
“윤소은: 오늘 연신 김영삼 총재가 국회에서 제명 당한 기사가 머릿기사였고요. 그밖에 학생들 시위 기사 역시 끊이지 않고 나오고요.”

[Yoon Soeun: oneul yeonshin Kim Young Sam chongjaega gughweeseo jemong danghan gisaga meoritgisayeotgoyo. Geubakke haksangdeul shiwigisa yeoksi kkeuniji anhgo naogoyo.]

“Today's news about Chairman Kim Young Sam being dismissed from the National Assembly continues to make headlines. In addition, news of student demonstrations continues to appear.”

This scene represents the ideology of authoritarianism. Authoritarianism is the justification for the exercise of political power that serves to remove limitations on power under the pretext of mutual benefit.^[25] The main information in this scene is the news about the dismissal of National Assembly Speaker Kim Young-sam and the student demonstrations that were held as a form of protest against the government.

Historically, the dismissal of the National Assembly's Kim Young-sam occurred in 1979. President Park Chung Hee often decided to ban and prosecute the opposition.^[24] Authoritarian ideology during the reign of the then-president, President Park Chung Hee. Meanwhile, the demonstration scene is a form of popular resistance to government authoritarianism.



Picture 1.2. Screenshot of film Ditto '동감' 2000 (56.21-56.29)

The second sign is the front page of black and white 1979 newspaper. The newspaper uses hanja and hangeul, the headline says:

“釜山에 非常戒嚴 선포.”

[*Busane bisanggye-eom seonpo*]

“Martial law has been declared in Busan.”

The news in the newspaper highlights the reality of the Busan area being under military control. A close-up shot with no background music creates the impression of emphasizing the information in the news story.

The codes at the level of reality and representation depict a militaristic, authoritarian ideology in which the government assigns the military to maintain the country's stability. According to Sheikh & Ahmed,^[26] One form of militarism involves placing the military in civilian affairs, allowing it to indirectly, thoroughly, and continuously take control of the civilian government. This sign explicitly depicts Busan under military control, serving as a representation of militaristic authoritarian ideology.



Picture 1.3. Screenshot of film Ditto '동감' 2000 (66.26-66.47)

The third sign shows Yoon Soeun running while covering her nose and mouth with a handkerchief, behind the demonstrating people. The demonstrating students are seen wearing white headbands on which was written:

“독재 타도”

[*dokjae tado*]

“Overthrow the dictatorship!”

Several small explosions cause smoke shows. Students are seen carrying blockwood, and some students wear masks. Meanwhile, the police are wearing protective gear, including safety

helmets, shields, and batons. Clashes break out between student demonstrators and police on guard. The officers start to chase and beat the demonstrators, which emphasizes the impression of anarchy.

First, a long shot technique shows the subject and its surrounding environment. The scene of the clash between the police and the students was shot using a medium close-up technique to emphasize the impression of anarchy. The blurred lighting of the smoke emphasizes the dark and tense atmosphere. The absence of dialogue and background music highlights the sound effects of explosions and commotion, including the cries of the protesting students. Emphasizes the anarchism that occurred during the demonstration.

This scene constructs the ideology of authoritarianism that the students have resisted through the demonstration. Resistance to authoritarianism can occur because restrictive policies have their limits and cannot overcome inner morality.[27]



Picture 1.4. Screenshot of film Ditto '동감' 2000 (66.47-67.16)

The fourth sign is located in the campus room, where some students are preparing demonstration supplies. There is a banner with a partially obscured sentence that features the name of the Korean president who ruled at that time, in 1979.

“박정희”

[Park Chunghee]

A male student frowned when talking about Donghee’s injured condition.

Other students are busy preparing items, walking back and forth while tidying up banners, posters, and other materials with flat expressions and without dialogue. The scene is captured with a wide shot technique, highlighting the busy situation in the room as the students prepare the demonstration supplies.

This sign also contains dialogue as follows:

"남학생: 동희... 데모 도중에 다쳤어. 후문 건너편에 계정병원이라고 있지요. 지금 그 곳에 입원해있어요."

[Male student: Donghee... demo dojunge dacebosseoyo. Humun geonneopyeone gyejeongbyeongwonirago issjiyo. Jigeum geu goseso ibwonhaessoyo]

“Donghee... He got hurt during the demo. There is Gyejeong Hospital across the back gate. He’s being treated there.”

The sound effects of people tidying up banners and posters, along with background music

in the form of slow piano, create a concerning atmosphere.

The codes shown at the level of reality and the level of representation construct resistance to the ideology of authoritarianism. As agents of change, students protested against the authoritarian government by holding demonstrations. Students, as agents, play a role in bringing about change in various fields that influence society.[28] The involvement of students in demonstrations, both direct and indirect, is often depicted visually and verbally.



Picture 1.5. Screenshot of film Ditto '동감' 2000 (92.33-92.40)

The fifth sign is a black-and-white television broadcast scene related to the death of President Park Chung-hee. A newspaper cover appears on screen, displaying several headlines:

Headline 1:

“朴正熙大統領逝去”

[Park Chunghee daetongnyong seogo]

“President Park Chung-hee passed away.”

Headline 2:

“崔總理 權限代行...全國에 非常戒嚴”

[Choi Chongni gwonhandachaeng ... Jeonguge bisanggye-eom]

“Prime Minister Choi taking over the presidency ... Nationwide martial law.”

This scene was shot using a close-up technique that emphasizes the details of the object. Shows with no background music. The anchor's dialogue is displayed in the form of sound effects. There is an anchor dialogue as follows:

“뉴스 앵커: 여기 바다를 막아 농토를 얻는 거대한 민족의 대역사 충청남도 삽교천 방조제 준공을 마지막으로 그 분은 세상을 떠나셨습니다. 가난이 싫어, 오천년의 가난이 싫어 우리도 한번 잘 살아보자고 외치며 일하고 또 일했던 박대통령은 실로 이 땅에서 가난을 몰아내고 번영을 기틀을 마련해....”

[“Nyuseu aengkeo: Yeogi badareul mak-a nongtoreul eodneun geodaehan minjog-ui daeyeoksa Chungcheongnam-do Sapgyocheon bangjoje jungong-eul majimak-euro geu buneun sesangeul tteonashyeosseumnida. Ganan-i silh-eo, ochonyeon-ui ganan-i silh-eo urido hanbeon jal sarabojago oechimyeo ilhago tto ilhaessdeon Bak daetongnyeong-eun silro i ttang-eseo ganan-eul mol-aenaego beonyeong-ui giteul-eul mar-yeonhae....]

“Here, a great national project to reclaim farmland by blocking the sea, the completion of the Sapgyocheon Seawall in Chungcheongnam-do, was the last thing he did before he passed away. President Park, who hated poverty, hated five thousand years of poverty, and worked tirelessly to improve our lives, truly drove poverty out of this land and laid the

foundation for prosperity...”

This sign constructs authoritarian ideology that has not ended even after the death of President Park Chung-hee. The news in the newspaper showed on television that Prime Minister Choi is taking over the presidency. Historically, Korea held its first elections in December 1960, and subsequent elections were not held until the 1990s.[24] Based on this statement, it can be seen that Prime Minister Choi assumed the position of president without going through an election. A country’s failure to hold and respect free and fair elections is authoritarian.[29] The state of instability is also evident in the news that the nation is now under a state of emergency.



Picture 1.6. Screenshot of film Ditto '동감' 2000 (93.03-93.13)

The sixth sign shows soldiers checking the identity of all students who wish to enter the university environment. The symbolic sign, a poster written:

‘휴업공고’

[*hyeobeobgonggo*]

‘Closure Notice’

There is no dialogue in this scene. Military guards check everyone who wants to enter the campus area, and military guards who do not check IDs are on standby around the entrance. The military guard’s expression is flat, and the student’s expression is flat, showing the tension between them.

Low shot technique gives the subject a strong, dominant, or threatening impression. Shown without dialogue, background music, or sound effects, which adds to the impression of tension. Shown without dialogue, background music, or sound effects, which adds to the impression of tension.

Despite the absence of dialogue, the scene constructs a militaristic authoritarian ideology through a powerful combination of codes. The symbolic sign of the ‘휴업공고’ [*hyeobeobgonggo*] (Closure Notice), the behavior of soldiers checking student IDs, and the use of a threatening low-angle shot all represent an ideology that allows the military to forcibly close and tightly guard a university campus.

In the 2000 film Ditto ‘동감’, state instability is depicted through scenes showing news of demonstrations, military control over the Busan area and the university campus, and a presidential succession without an electoral process. The scenes focus on the behaviors, dialogues, and symbolic signs.

b. Analysis of the representation of state instability in the 2022 film Ditto '동감' using John Fikse's semiotic theory

Ditto ‘동감’ remake film 2022, sets in South Korea in 1999 and 2022. Historically, 1999 was a time of instability for the country, post the IMF crisis in 1997 as mentioned in Lyubov Heshmati.[30] IMF programs contribute to economic and labor market weakness, leading to

financial hardship for families and difficulty finding employment.[31]



Picture 2.1. Screenshot of Film Ditto ‘동감’ 2022 (11.39-11.46)

The first sign in the film Ditto ‘동감’ 2022, is set in Korea 1999, shows a television broadcast that delivers news about the difficulty of finding jobs. Shown with a background photo of a person holding his head, looking worried, with a caption displayed on the television screen as below:

‘하필이면 올해 졸업’

[hapirimyeon olhae jeoreob]

‘Of all years to graduate... this year?’

In the speech aspect, the anchor uses a high-level formal speech style or 격식체 ‘gyeoksikche’

The close-up technique gives the impression of emphasizing the information. The anchor dialogue is as follows:

“뉴스 앵커: 여전히 취업의 문은 바늘구멍입니다. 요즘 대학생 4 학년 사이에서는....”

[Nyuseu aengkeo: Yeojeonhi chwieobe muneun baneul gumongimnida. Yojeum sabaknyeon saieseoneun...]

“Job opportunities are still narrow. Lately, among final semester students...”

Based on the codes at the level of reality and representation, the first sign constructs an effect of neoliberalism, which is a term used to describe efforts to establish market competition as the basis for economic coordination, social distribution, and individual motivation.[32]

Shown verbally and visually through the news of the difficulty of finding a job. Historically, in 1999, Korea was unstable in the aftermath of the IMF crisis.



Picture 2.2. Screenshot of Film Ditto ‘동감’ 2022 (22.21-22.34)

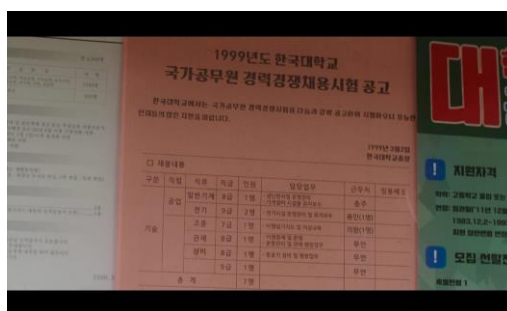
The second sign is a scene in which the character Kim Yong is reading a poster on the campus bulletin board about civil service job openings for engineering students. In terms of appearance, Kim Yong is wearing a sweatshirt and a backpack, giving the impression of a typical student. Kim Yong is looking at a civil service job opening poster on the campus bulletin board. Kim Yong speaks in a low tone, sighing and moving his body, lowering his head with a worried expression. A close-up technique emphasises the character’s emotions. The soft outdoor lighting, slow-tempo piano music, and the sound effects of people chatting and moving around evokes a natural feel. Dialogue from the character Kim Yong:

“김용: 내년엔 졸업반인데 그냥 종말이 오는 게 낫겠다. IMF 때문에 학교 분위기도 살벌하고 어휴, 저주받은 학번이라니까”

[Kim Yong: Naenyeone jeoleobaninde geunyang jongmali oneun ge natgetta. IMF ttaemune bagyo bunwigido salbeolhago eohyu, jeojubadeun hakbeoniranika]

“I’ll graduate next year, but it would be better if the apocalypse came. The IMF crisis has everyone (campus atmosphere) on edge. Ugh... It’s like we are cursed (graduation batch).”

This sign constructs the failure of neoliberalism brought by the IMF. The IMF crisis had a significant impact on the Korean economy, including weakened job markets and increased unemployment rates[33], which caused difficulties for everyone in Korea, as shown visually and verbally through Kim Yong’s dialogue, which he delivered.



Picture 2.3. Screenshot of Film Ditto ‘동감’ 2022 (22.20-22.26)

The third sign is showing job vacancy posters for civil servants as a symbolic sign. On the civil servant test announcement poster, it is written:

“1999 년도 한국대학교/국가공무원 경력경쟁 채용시험 공고.”

[1999nyeondo hangugdaehakyo/ gukgagongmunwon gyeongnyeokgyeongjaeng chaeyong shibeom gonggo]

‘1999 Hankuk University Announcement/ Career Competitive Recruitment Examination for National Civil Servants.’

In the 채용 내용 (Recruitment Details) section of the poster, it states that for industrial engineering graduates, only two entry-level positions are available. The General Machinery sector (일반 기계) at the 8th grade level (직급) and the Electrical sector (전기) at the 9th grade level (직급) each require only one worker, with a staff count of 1 person (인원 = 1 명). The setting is a bulletin board on the campus grounds.

Filmed using the close-up technique, focusing closely on the subject to emphasize the information on the object. Outdoor lighting gives a natural feel. It is shown slow piano background music and the sound effects of people chatting and walking by.

This sign constructs the ideology of the impact of neoliberalism. The third sign addresses the issue of the difficulty in hiring civil servants, as indicated by the text on the poster. For industrial

engineering graduates, only two positions are available at the lower rank level, “직급 (rank level) = 8 급 (level 8) and 9 급 (level 9), with each requiring only one worker, 인원 = 1 명 (number of people = 1 person).”



Picture 2.4. Screenshot of Film Ditto ‘동감’ 2022 (22.37-23.25)

The fourth sign in the 2022 film Ditto ‘동감’ is a continuation of the second and third signs. Seo Hansol speaks in a low tone, staring blankly at the poster, recounting the bankruptcy of her father’s company due to the IMF crisis, and then appears confident when discussing his dream of helping small businesses. Seo Hansol speaks while looking at the bulletin board, then looks at Kim Yong, and returns his gaze to the bulletin board.

Filmed using close-up techniques, capturing the subject up close to emphasize the character’s emotions, and over-the-shoulder shots to show the character’s perspective. The soft outdoor lighting, accompanied by slow-tempo piano music and the sound effects of people chatting and moving around, creates a natural ambiance.

Seo Hansol’s dialogue:

“서한솔: IMF 때문에 부더가 나서 아빠 공장도 문 닫았어요. 아빠가 입학하기 전에 한설아 무슨 일이 있어도 대기업에 들어가야 돼. 그게 성공하는 길이야. 그랬어요. 정작 아빠를 망하게 한 건 그 대기업인데, 웃기죠? 저 기계과에 관심 있어서 온 거 맞아요. 우리 학교가 로봇 공학에 투자도 많이 하고 있고 개인적으로는 아빠 같은 영세한 공장에 도움 줄 수 있는 제조 시스템 일을 하고 싶거든요. 조금만 바꾸면 효율이 더 늘어날 텐데 다들 변화에 두려워해서 나서질 않아요. 그래서 도움을 주고 싶어요.”

[Seo Hansol: IMF ttaemune budeoga naseo appa gongjangdo mun dadeosseoyo. Appaga iphakagi jeone Han Seora museun iri isseodo daegieobe deureogaya dwae. Geuge seonggonghaneun giriya. Geuraesseoyo. Jeongjak appareul mangage han geon ge daegieobe inde utgiyo? Jeo gigyegwae gwansim isseoseo on geo majayo. Uri bakgyoga robot gonghage tujado mani bago itgo gaeinjeogeuro neun appa gateun yeongsehan gongjange doum jul su inneun jejo sistem ireul bago sipgeodeunyo. Jogeumman bakkumyeon hyoyuri deo neureonal tende dadeul byeonhwaee duryeonhaeseo naseojil anhayo. Geuraeseo doumeul jugo sip-eoyo.]

“My father’s company went bankrupt because of the IMF. Before entering school, my father said to me, ‘Hansol, no matter what happens, you have to join a big company. That is the path to success.’ However, it was a big company that caused my father’s company to go bankrupt, which is ironic, isn’t it? I joined because I was interested in mechanical engineering. Our school also invests in robotics, and I want to work helping small factories like my father’s. If we make even small changes, efficiency can improve; however, people

are often afraid of change, so no one wants to take action. That’s why I want to help.”

The dominant ideology criticised in this scene is neoliberalism. The verbal element explicitly constructs the impact of the IMF crisis, which is the bankruptcy of small businesses.

This sign represents the concept of social solidarity as an ethical form of resistance against neoliberalism. Seo Hansol’s resistance is not manifested through physical action but through personal commitment represented by verbal elements in the form of dialogue. Seo Hansol’s attitude and dialogue represent social solidarity. In social science, solidarity is understood as a willingness to sacrifice to help those in need.^[34] This sign indicates solidarity that strengthens in the face of a failure in a state system. In line with the statement by Ciornei and Ross^[35] some scientific arguments state that crises can increase solidarity.

c. The relationship between the film *Ditto* ‘동감’ 2000 and the remake of the film *Ditto* ‘동감’ 2022

The film *Ditto* ‘동감’ 2000 and its remake *Ditto* ‘동감’ 2022 both represent the issue of national instability through audio, visual, and verbal elements. Each film features television news scenes as a symbol of the ongoing instability. There is also a similarity in symbolic signs in the form of print media, where the 2000 film *Ditto* ‘동감’ explicitly addresses the issue through daily newspapers and protest banners opposing authoritarianism. Meanwhile, the remake of *Ditto* ‘동감’ 2022 conveys the issue implicitly through job vacancy posters on campus bulletin boards, whose meaning is further represented through the main character’s dialogue.

Broadly speaking, both *Ditto* ‘동감’ films represent the instability of the state based on two main ideologies in reality, neoliberalism and authoritarianism. Both are connected through the same covert control mechanisms that aim to regulate the people. As Lee (2019) states,^[36] neoliberalism in practice does not merely produce freedom, but instead creates subjects who are eminently governable.

Additionally, both films’ ‘동감’ portray students as agents of change. In the 2000 film, student resistance against instability is depicted through demonstrations, represented through audio, visual, and verbal elements. The protesting students use symbolic signs, such as banners and headbands, bearing messages of rejection against authoritarianism. The filming technique employs wide shots with dim, smoky lighting, created by small explosions, along with explosion sounds and chaos, which enhances the anarchic feel of the representation of resistance against government authoritarianism.

Political instability is strongly emphasized through visual elements such as scenes of students demonstrating and preparing banners and headbands to express their rejection of government authoritarianism. Most signs are displayed without background music. In some signs, the addition of sound effects, filming techniques, and lighting aspects contribute to the tense atmosphere in the film.

Meanwhile, in the 2022 film *Ditto* ‘동감’, student resistance to economic instability is represented verbally through Seo Hansol’s dialogue, which is realized through his determination to improve the efficiency of small companies using the knowledge he gained through his studies. The signs in the form of dialogue are captured using close-up techniques such as close-ups and over-the-shoulder shots to emphasize the characters’ expressions. In the audio elements, some signs are accompanied by slow-tempo piano background music, emphasizing the melancholy of the students facing instability as the aftermath of the IMF crisis.

The 2022 film *Ditto* ‘동감’ tends to represent national instability primarily through verbal elements,

such as character dialogue or news broadcasts, and relies more on background music to emphasize the atmosphere. In contrast, the original 2000 film tends to use visual elements to depict the atmosphere, where its audio elements are only supplementary. The ideological divergence between the remake and the original film is a logical consequence of adapting the narrative to a new socio-historical context. By shifting the setting from an era of political repression (1979) to one of economic anxiety (1999), the remake effectively shifts its critique from authoritarianism to the impacts of neoliberalism.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study demonstrate that the national remaking of Ditto ‘동감’ serves as a barometer for socio-political shifts in South Korea. Although both the 2000 and 2022 versions share similarities in conveying reality, each film represents the phenomenon of state instability through a different ideological lens. The original Ditto ‘동감’ (2000) represents instability stemming from a political crisis that reflects a lingering authoritarian ideology, through a dominant visual aspect with minimal dialogue. In contrast, its remake, Ditto ‘동감’ (2022), articulates instability born from a post-economic crisis within a neoliberal framework, relying predominantly on verbal dialogue.

This research offers significant theoretical implications for both representation and remake studies. Theoretically, this study provides a framework for examining how national film remakes can evolve to reflect cultural and ideological shifts over time. Practically, this analysis can be utilized as a pedagogical tool in higher education, particularly for Korean language education students, who can foster critical thinking and ideological literacy. This study enables them to deconstruct how media, such as film, represent complex social issues and shape public understanding of socio-political challenges.

Finally, this study opens up several promising avenues for future research. These include exploring the narrative implications of the genderswap, conducting a comparative linguistic analysis of the characters' dialogues, examining other shared themes like the apocalypse issue, and analyzing different symbolic systems, such as the use of religious symbols, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the films cultural contexts.

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