

Théories de l'adaptation

Laurent Mellet, Université de
Bourgogne

Shannon Wells-Lassagne, Université
de Bretagne Sud

Focalisation au cinéma

Focalisation: ce que *sait* un personnage

Ocularisation: la relation entre ce que la caméra montre et ce que le héros est censé voir

Auricularisation: les relations entre personnages, spectateur et informations auditives

-François Jost, *L'Œil-caméra — Entre film et roman* (1987), Lyon : Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1989.

Focalisation au cinéma

Focalisation interne: motivée par un regard, caméra subjective

Focalisation externe :

- *« soit lorsque le fait d'ignorer les pensées du personnage entraîne un manque de connaissance sur celui-ci ou sur les actions qu'il exécute ;*
- *soit lorsque la disparité perceptive du spectateur et du personnage manifestée dans l'image, le son ou la mise en scène, implique une disproportion cognitive quant à l'histoire et/ou aux fonctions narratives, en défaveur du spectateur. »*

Focalisation zéro (focalisation lectorielle/spectorielle): lorsque le narrateur en dit plus que n'en sait ou que n'en voit le personnage, afin de rendre le lecteur/spectateur omniscient.

-François Jost, *L'Œil-caméra — Entre film et roman* (1987), Lyon : Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1989.

Le langage du cinéma

« The vocabulary of film is the simple photographed image; the grammar and syntax of film are the editing, cutting, or montage processes by which the shots are arranged. Single shots have meaning much as single words do, but a series of carefully arranged shots conveys meaning much as a composed phrase does. »

-Robert Richardson, *Literature and Film*,
Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1969.

Une équivalence langagière

- le plan est un mot,
- ses composants sont des lettres
- la scène est une phrase,
- la séquence est un paragraphe,
- le film est un texte.

-Christian Metz, *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, Paris : Klincksieck, 1968.

-Christian Metz, *Langage et cinéma*, Paris : Larousse, 197

Le narrateur filmique

« Le filmique serait un objet narratologique *plus complexe* que le scriptural et le scénique du fait qu'il résulterait de la *combinaison* des possibilités narratives de ceux-ci ou, plus précisément, de la *fusion* des deux modes fondamentaux de la communication narrative : la *narration* et ce que j'appelle la *monstration*. »

- **Le monstrateur** « présente » (vision directe)
 - Ce qui est montré, filmé: la mise en scène
- **Le narrateur** « représente » (vision indirecte)
 - Le montage, la « mise en chaîne »

André Gaudreault, *Du littéraire au filmique — Système du Récit*, Paris : Armand Colin, 1999.

« Time in the novel is constructed with words. In the cinema it is constructed with actions. The novel *creates* a world while the cinema *puts us in the presence* of a world which it organizes according to a certain continuity. *The novel is a narrative which organizes itself in a world; the film, a world which organizes itself in a narrative.* »

-James Griffith, *Adaptations as Imitations*,
University of Delaware Press: Newark, DE, 1997, 25.

Absence de narrateur filmique?

- **le perspectivisme:** le spectateur voit et comprend ce que la géométrie de l'espace construit pour lui
- **le constructivisme:** le spectateur joue un rôle central dans la narration du film.

David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, Madison : The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

Interpréter la narration filmique

- Le canal audible
 - bruit, voix, musique, à l'écran ou hors-champ
- Le canal visuel
 - Sa nature: lieu, accessoire, acteur
 - Son traitement: cinématographique (la lumière, la couleur, les angles de vue et les mouvements de caméra), montage

Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (1978), Ithaca et Londres : Cornell University Press, 1989.

Seymour Chatman, *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film*, Ithaca et Londres : Cornell University Press, 1990.



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Séminaire "Texte-image" de l'ERAC
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Before the Curtain

As the manager of the Performance sits before the curtain on the boards and looks into the Fair, a feeling of profound melancholy comes over him in his survey of the bustling place. There is a great quantity of eating and drinking, making love and jilting, laughing and the contrary, smoking, cheating, fighting, dancing and fiddling [...] What more has the Manager of the Performance to say? He is proud to think that his Puppets have given satisfaction to the very best company in this empire. The famous little Becky Puppet has been pronounced to be uncommonly flexible in the joints, and lively on the wire; the Amelia Doll, though it has had a smaller circle of admirers, has yet been carved and dressed with the greatest care by the artist; the Dobbin Figure, though apparently clumsy, yet dances in a very amusing and natural manner; the Little Boys' Dance has been liked by some; and please to remark the richly dressed figure of the Wicked Nobleman, on which no expense has been spared, and which Old Nick will fetch away at the end of this singular performance.

And with this, and a profound bow to his patrons, the Manager retires, and the curtain rises.

-Preface to *Vanity Fair*, 1848

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Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can, impatient to restore everybody, not greatly in fault themselves, to tolerable comfort, and to have done with all the rest.

My Fanny, indeed, at this very time, I have the satisfaction of knowing, must have been happy in spite of everything. She must have been a happy creature in spite of all that she felt, or thought she felt, for the distress of those around her. [...] Scarcely had he done regretting Mary Crawford, [...] before it began to strike him whether a very different kind of woman might not do just as well, or a great deal better: whether Fanny herself were not growing as dear, as important to him in all her smiles and all her ways, as Mary Crawford had ever been[...].

I purposely abstain from dates on this occasion, that every one may be at liberty to fix their own, aware that the cure of unconquerable passions, and the transfer of unchanging attachments, must vary much as to time in different people. I only entreat everybody to believe that exactly at the time when it was quite natural that it should be so, and not a week earlier, Edmund did cease to care about Miss Crawford, and became as anxious to marry Fanny as Fanny herself could desire.

-Mansfield Park, Ch. 48

All art, therefore, appeals primarily to the senses, and the artistic aim when expressing itself in written words must also make its appeal through the senses. [...] My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*. That—and no more, and it is everything.

-Joseph Conrad, préface à *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (1897), Londres : Dent, 1945, 4-5.

George Bluestone, *Novels into Film* (1957),
Berkeley : University of California Press, 1971.

Mutations are probable the moment one goes from a given set of fluid, but relatively homogeneous, conventions to another; changes are *inevitable* the moment one abandons the linguistic for the visual medium.

-George Bluestone, *Novels into Film*, 5.

What happens, therefore, when the filmist undertakes the adaptation of a novel, given the inevitable mutation, is that he does not convert the novel at all. What he adapts is a kind of paraphrase of the novel—the novel viewed as raw material.

George Bluestone, *Novels into Film*, 62.

James Griffith, *Adaptations as Imitations—Films from Novels*, Newark : University of Delaware Press, 1997.

Brian McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*, Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1996.

If you want the same experience (and believe you can have just that experience twice) that you had in reading the novel, why not simply reread the novel? It's much more likely to produce the desired effect. Fidelity is obviously very desirable in marriage; but with film adaptations I suspect playing around is more effective.

Brian McFarlane, « It wasn't like that in the book... », in James M. Welsh and Peter Lev, eds., *The Literature/Film Reader – Issues of Adaptation*, Lanham, Maryland : Scarecrow Press, 2007, 3-14, 6.

[...] historical narrative is transformed into spectacle; heritage becomes excess, not functional *mise-en-scène*, not something to be used narratively, but something to be admired. [...] This heritage presence is enhanced by the visual style that the film-makers have adopted, what I've called the aesthetics of display—that is, a particular use of the camera and a particular way of editing that works superbly to display as spectacle this range of heritage properties.

-Andrew Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama since 1980*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2003, 39 et 172.

Geoffrey Wagner, *The Novel and the Cinema*,
Rutherford : Fairleigh Dickinson University Press,
1975.

Dudley Andrew, *Concepts in Film Theory*,
Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1984.

Deborah Cartmell, et Imelda Whelehan, eds.,
*The Cambridge Companion to Literature on
Screen*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press,
2007.

What fascinates us here is not so much the taxonomies themselves, which reflect disciplinary preferences and often the privileging of one medium over another, but this *will to taxonomize*, which is symptomatic of how the field has tried to mark out its own territory.

Deborah Cartmell, et Imelda Whelehan, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2007, 2.

Thomas Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents—From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ*, Baltimore : The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007.

- curatorial
- adjustment
- neoclassic imitation
- revisions
- colonization
- (meta)commentary or deconstruction
- analogue
- parody and pastiche
- secondary, tertiary or quaternary imitations
- allusion

- Robert Stam, *Film Theory—An Introduction*, Oxford : Blackwell, 2000.
- Robert Stam, et Alessandra Raengo, eds., *A Companion to Literature and Film*, Oxford : Blackwell, 2004.
- Robert Stam, et Alessandra Raengo, eds., *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, Oxford : Blackwell, 2005.
- Robert Stam, et Alessandra Raengo, eds., *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation*, Oxford : Blackwell, 2005.

A 'faithful' film is seen as uncreative, but an 'unfaithful' film is a shameful betrayal of the original. An adaptation that updates the text for the present is upbraided for not respecting the period of the source, but respectful costume dramas are accused of a failure of nerve in not 'contemporizing' the text. If an adaptation renders the sexual passages of the source novel literally, it is accused of vulgarity; if it fails to do so, it is accused of cowardice. The adapter, it seems, can never win.

-Robert Stam, « The theory and practice of adaptation », in Robert Stam, et Alessandra Raengo, eds., *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, 1-52, 8.

Adaptation criticism has tended to emphasize the cinema's impairments and disabilities vis-à-vis the novel—its putative incapacity to convey tropes, dreams, memories, abstraction—yet, on almost any plane one might mention, cinematic adaptation brings, whether for good or ill, not an impoverishment but rather a *multiplication* of registers.

-Robert Stam, « The theory and practice of adaptation », in Robert Stam, et Alessandra Raengo, eds., *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, 1-52, 20.

Kamilla Elliott, *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2003.

- - *the psychic concept of adaptation*
- - *the ventriloquist concept of adaptation* : « it blatantly empties out the novel's signs and fills them with filmic spirits. [...] The adaptation, like a ventriloquist, props up the dead novel, throwing its voice onto the silent corpse. »
- - *the genetic concept of adaptation*
- - *the de(re)composing concept of adaptation*
- - *the incarnational concept of adaptation*
- - *the trumping concept of adaptation*

Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, New York : Routledge, 2006.