51. Literary style in the novel and on the screen: The intersemiotic translation of Far from the Madding Crowd

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Abstract

Since Roman Jakobson’s classification of intersemiotic translation as a sub-category of translation, the term has paved the way for many studies on the close relationship between literature and cinema. Among different semiotic systems, the adaptation of literary works to the cinema occupies a central position in intersemiotic translation. In this respect, the present study approaches Far from the Madding Crowd directed by Thomas Vinterberg in 2015 as an intersemiotic translation of Thomas Hardy’s novel under the same title. It aims to evaluate how Hardy’s two major stylistic markers in the novel, i.e. sentence structure and imagery, are brought to the film by Vinterberg. To this end, the notions of transfer and intersemiotic transposition were used to identify related stylistic components in the novel and to compare them with their visual representations in the film. Thus, Vinterberg’s specific choices in reflecting Hardy’s literary style were analyzed. The findings of the present study suggest that Vinterberg paid attention to Hardy’s literary style and attempted to transfer it to the film to a large extent, as he reflected the writer’s sentence structure and imagery through various visual and auditory tools. However, it can be also observed that possibly due to the limited duration of the film, Vinterberg sometimes had to avoid transferring Hardy’s elaborate narration in some scenes.

Keywords: Intersemiotic translation, transposition, stylistic analysis, Victorian literature, Thomas Hardy

Romanda ve beyaz perdede edebi biçim: Çılgın Kalabalıktan Uzak’ın göstergelerarası çeviri

Öz

Roman Jakobson’ın göstergelerarasi çeviriyi çevirinin alt kategorilerinden biri olarak sınıflandırmışından bu yana, ilgili terim edebiyat ve sinema arasındaki ilişkiye ele alan birçok çalışmanın önünü açmıştır. Farlık göstergediği sistemleri göz önünde alındığında, edebi eserlerin sinemaya uyarlanmasını göstergelerarasi çeviri bakımından merkezi bir konuma sahiptir. Bu bakımdan mevcut çalışma, Thomas Vinterberg’in 2015 yılında yönetmiş olduğu Çılgın Kalabalıktan Uzak filmını Thomas Hardy’nin aynı isimdeki romanının göstergelerarasi bir çeviri olarak ele almaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, Hardy’nin romanındanaki iki ana biçemsel unsur olan cümle yapısı ve imgelemin Vinterberg tarafından filme nasıl taşındığını değerlendirerek. Bu bağlamda, romanındaki adı geçen biçimsel unsurları tespit etmek ve bunları filmdeki görsel temsilleriyle karşılaştırmak için aktarım ve göstergelerarasi yer değiştirme kavramları kullanılmıştır. Böylelikle, Hardy’nin edebi biçimini yansıtırken Vinterberg’in yaptığı belirli tervler incelemiştir. Çalışmanın bulguları, Vinterberg’in...
Anahtar kelimeler: Göstergelerarası çeviri, yer değiştirme, biçim analizi, Viktorya dönemi edebiyatı, Thomas Hardy

1. Introduction

Literature and cinema have been closely related with each other since the early twentieth century, and opportunities and limitations that they offer as different media of expression have been discussed much in a number of academic articles and books up to date. For instance, comparing literature and cinema, Bluestone argues that novels and films are different from each other since the former benefits from unlimited time and space with the language being its main tool, while time is fairly limited in the latter, though it may use different spaces to communicate its message (Bluestone, 1961, p. 64). However, most overarching ground between two different territories (McFarlane, 1996, p. 3). Similarly, according to Elliott, it is simplistic to restrict the definitions of novels and cinema to “words” and “images”, respectively, because both may benefit from each other in their respective domains, of which subtitled dialogues in films or illustrated narration in novels are the most well-known examples (Elliott, 2004, p. 1-4). Considering that novels translated into films inevitably involve structural elements of both forms nowadays, her argument seems as an expected outcome in the twenty-first century. The above mentioned discussion takes a different dimension in the field of translation. Translation between two languages has never been confined to the written medium, as a text is not always a written one. As Tymoczko also points out, much of translation history is actually comprised of oral translation, and academic studies in the field of translation studies have so far demonstrated that historical examples of translation practices extend beyond a limited understanding of written text (Tymoczko, 2006, p. 17). Accordingly, the notions of text and translation have been revised and broadened since the mid-twentieth century. In this respect, Roman Jakobson took a new step by categorizing three different types of translation: (1) interlingual translation, (2) intralingual translation, and (3) intersemiotic translation. In this tripartite categorization, intersemiotic translation, which is defined as a process of translating a sign system into another non-verbal sign system (Jakobson, 2000, p. 114), could be considered as a precursor to changing understandings of text in the field of translation studies.

As far as different text types are concerned, the adaptation of novels to films emerges as the first and foremost example of intersemiotic relationships. World classics have been adapted to the screen since the earliest times of cinema, making the link between literature and cinema one of the most popular topics in intersemiotic translation. Not surprisingly, the canonical position of a highly-respected literary work gives audiences the opportunity to compare the book and film within the limits of their own perceptions, which runs the risk of creating viewers dissatisfied with the film maker’s end product, while, unfortunately, such expectations may also narrow down intersemiotic aspects of a film to an infertile discussion of fidelity to or violation of the literary text (McFarlane, 1996, p. 7-8). Potentially decisive factors that could enrich a film’s narrative are thus overlooked, since “irreducible differences” between two fields which make some intersemiotic transfers almost impossible are not sufficiently perceived by the audience (McFarlane, 1996, p. 10-12). Becoming aware of these differences, McFarlane uses the word...
“transfer” to denote the process by which narrative elements in a novel are “amenable” to visual representation in film rather than labelling them as “violation” or “distortion”, both of which assume the supremacy of the printed material (McFarlane, 1996, p. 13-22).

In the light of Jakobson’s categorization and McFarlane’s conception of transfer, the present study focuses on the intersemiotic translation of the *Far from the Madding Crowd* by Thomas Hardy into a film under the same title by the Danish director Thomas Vinterberg in 2015. Although the film was analysed from different thematic perspectives such as gender roles (Carelse, 2017; Niemeyer, 2019), love (Rokosz-Piejko, 2020), representation of British culture (Galpin, 2020) or ecology (Benyoucef, 2021), it was usually evaluated as an adaptation rather than being treated as an example of intersemiotic translation. Additionally, these studies usually focus on thematic aspects of the novel, and as such, the representation of Hardy’s literary style in the film has been ignored to date. To fill this gap, the present study deals with particular ways in which the director attempts to bring the author’s literary style to the screen and explores intersections and divergences between two artworks from a translation studies perspective.

2. Theoretical framework and methodology

As intersemiotic translation focuses on the close relationship of two different semiotic systems, it often poses a problem to identify standard textual components for such an analysis. Labelling Jakobson’s definition of intersemiotic translation as “ambiguous” in terms of finding common “signs” between two different textual entities, Clüver and Watson argue that a lack of standards for intersemiotic analysis produces a “radical” type of translation that may come out as “untranslatable” (Clüver & Watson, 1989, p. 59). Therefore, despite some semantic compromises, similar to McFarlane’s approach towards intersemiotic transfers as “transpositions” (McFarlane’s, 1996, p. 22), they offer “intersemiotic transposition” as a practical method to assess the function and role of such translations in the target culture. Within their framework, for a concrete comparison between two semiotic systems, “signifying practices” which “carry the greatest weight” in terms of textual meaning are determined to later find “equivalents in the system accessible to the audience” in the target text (Clüver & Watson, 1989, p. 61). During this process, changes and various differences between structural devices are considered as textual decisions signalling the “translator’s voice” in a different sign system rather than “distortions and omissions”, thus causing “no real loss” in the translation process (Clüver & Watson, 1989, p. 70-76).

For the analysis of the intersemiotic relationship between the novel and film in question, I will resort to Clüver and Watson’s (1989) notion of intersemiotic transposition to explicate the transitions from the written into the visual medium. To this aim, I will first standardize two types of stylistic components in the novel, i.e. sentence structure and imagery, for a systematic comparison with their potential equivalents in the film. Afterwards, I will demonstrate through various examples how Vinterberg attempted to reflect Hardy’s stylistic features via different cinematic tools such as casting, camera movement, and visual and audio effects. I will thus gain insight into the extent to which the director opted to represent the writer’s literary style in the film.

3. Thomas Hardy’s literary style in *Far From the Madding Crowd*

Literary style is one of the most significant markers for writers and offers great information regarding their language use. Great writers have always attained a “unique” and “memorable” literary status through stylistic choices in the literary community (Chapman, 1990, p. 36). This does not mean that
literary style can be fully grasped in a single text, because writers modify their linguistic tendencies for producing texts in different genres. Nevertheless, it is usually through textual extracts that one can form a general opinion of a writer’s style (Chapman, 1990, p. 157). This can be achieved by a close analysis of the number of specific linguistic items within a text such as words, sentences and figures of speech. As such, it is unsurprising that stylistic analysis is often “implicitly quantitative” (Childs & Fowler, 2006, p. 229). Taking this view as a departure point, I will now take a closer look at Hardy’s grammatical, lexical and literary choices in Far from the Madding Crowd (henceforth FMC) to determine two central elements of his style: sentence structure and imagery.

3.1 Sentence structure

Due to his heavily subordinated sentences full of participles, “long” and “complex” would be two appropriate adjectives if we were to define Hardy’s sentence structure in FMC, which sometimes leads to an “uncomfortably ingenious style” (Hartwell, 1970, p. 150; Gatrell, 1990, p. 77). However, it was a frequent manner of Victorian literature to condense numerous thoughts into a single sentence (Chapman, 1990, p. 94), and one of its functions is the description of subsequent actions (Chapman, 1990, p. 78).

(1) Beside her Oak now noticed a little calf about a day old, looking idiotically at the two women, which showed that it had not long been accustomed to the phenomenon of eyesight, and often turning to the lantern, which it apparently mistook for the moon, inherited instinct having as yet had little time for correction by experience (Hardy, 2005, p. 19).

(2) One night, at the end of August, when Bathsheba’s experiences as a married woman were still new, and when the weather was yet dry and sultry, a man stood motionless in the stockyard of Weatherbury Upper Farm, looking at the moon and sky (Hardy, 2005, p. 285).

In the first example, Oak looks through the roof of Bathsheba’s small hut where she lives with her aunt. Thanks to participles and relative clauses, readers can follow Oak’s eye movements as he gazes at all objects in the room one by one. Similarly, in the second example, Hardy again describes how the standing man, Oak, looks at the sky at night and reflects on his emotional pain following Bathsheba’s marriage with Troy. Subordinated sentences depict the setting in which the scene takes place, while the participle describes Oak’s actions, all of which help readers visualize the course of actions in detail.

The second role of long and complex sentences is to portray detailed pastoral scenes in the novel (Chapman, 1990, p. 160):

(1) The thin grasses, more or less coating the hill, were touched by the wind in breezes of differing powers, and almost of differing natures, one rubbing the blades heavily, another raking them piercingly, another brushing them like a soft broom (Hardy, 2005, p. 14).

(2) The grass about the margin at this season was a sight to remember long—in a minor sort of way. Its activity in sucking the moisture from the rich damp sod was almost a process observable by the eye. The outskirts of this level water meadow were diversified by rounded and hollow pastures, where just now every flower that was not a buttercup was a daisy. The river slid along noislessly as a shade, the swelling reeds and sedge forming a flexible palisade upon its moist brink. To the north of the mead were trees, the leaves of which were new, soft, and moist, not yet having stiffened and darkened under summer sun and drought, their color being yellow beside a green beside a yellow (Hardy, 2005, p. 150).

The first example is one of the first pastoral descriptions in FMC and gives readers a glimpse of the location where Oak is engaged in animal husbandry. In addition to depicting its vast green environment, participles also refer to other senses such as touching, making readers feel the shivering effect of the
breeze across the land. The second example is extracted from another scene where Hardy narrates the first signs of spring in Bathsheba’s farm before sheep-shearing season. It differs from the first one in that it draws attention to different locations such as meadows, a river and trees in the same area. Thus, Hardy creates a cinematographic narrative using subordinated sentences and participles in a way similar to a moving camera and changes readers’ focus from one pastoral feature to another in the same paragraph.

3.2 Imagery

Hardy mainly relies on “sights” and “sounds” of the nature to construct diverse auditory and visual effects (Pinion, 1968, p. 27; 1977, p. 34). However, his use of imagery is not limited to his descriptions of pastoral scenes. He also appeals to readers’ sensory realm at two different levels, i.e. visual and auditory, to maintain a more dynamic and realistic narration (Chapman, 1990, p. 68).

(1) His weary face now began to be painted over with a rich orange glow, and the whole front of his smock-frock was covered with a dancing shadow pattern of thorn-twigs—the light reaching him through a leafless intervening hedge—and the metallic curve of his sheep-crook shone silver bright in the same abounding rays (Hardy, 2005, p. 53).

(2) Outside the front of Boldwood’s house a group of men stood in the dark, with their faces towards the door, which occasionally opened and closed for the passage of some guest or servant, when a golden rod of light would stripe the ground for the moment and vanish again, leaving nothing outside but the glowworm shine of the pale lamp amid the evergreens over the door (Hardy, 2005, p. 433).

Light occupies a particular position in Hardy’s visual imagery (Chapman, 1990, p. 92), as exemplified by these two examples. In the first example, Hardy describes how the glow of the fire and shadow of the branches fall upon Oak’s clothes and crook soon after he realizes the fire outbreak in Bathsheba’s farm.

The narration artfully moves from Oak’s upper body to the end of his crook in a cinematic fashion, manifesting the magnitude of the disaster at the same time through referring to orange rays of fire. In a similar manner, the second example successfully illustrates how the light in the house shines upon the road through the house door, while the men sent by Troy wait secretly near Boldwood’s house for Bathsheba’s arrival before the Christmas party. Hence, readers can imagine the contrast between light and darkness on the ground of Boldwood’s garden.

The second important element of Hardy’s visual imagery is architectural depictions. Since Hardy studied architecture in his youth, his field of expertise seems to have affected his detailed account of buildings (Chapman, 1990, p. 70-71). Not surprisingly, buildings in rural locations in FMC bear the traces of his knowledge about artistic and aesthetic aspects of architecture:

(1) By daylight, the Bower of Oak’s new-found mistress, Bathsheba Everdene, presented itself as a hoary building, of the early stage of Classic Renaissance as regards its architecture [...] Fluted pilasters, worked from the solid stone, decorated its front, and above the roof the chimneys were panelled or columnar, some copped gables with finials and like features still retaining traces of their Gothic extraction. Soft brown mosses, like faded velveteen, formed cushions upon the stone tiling, and tufts of the houseleek or sengreen sprouted from the eaves of the low surrounding buildings. A gravel walk leading from the door to the road in front was encrusted at the sides with more moss — here it was a silver-green variety, the nut-Brown of the grave (Hardy, 2005, p. 83).

In this example, Hardy turns his attention to classical architecture and compares Bathsheba’s bower to a classical piece of Renaissance art. Architectural vocabulary such as “solid stone”, “Gothic” and “columnar” increases the credibility of the scene in readers’ eyes and enhances the magnificence of the building in their imagination.
(2) Whether the barn had ever formed one of a group of conventual buildings nobody seemed to be aware; no trace of such surroundings remained. The vast porches at the sides, lofty enough to admit a wagon laden to its highest with corn in the sheaf, were spanned by heavy-pointed arches of stone, broadly and boldly cut, whose very simplicity was the origin of a grandeur not apparent in erections where more ornament has been attempted. The dusky, filmed, chestnut roof, braced and tied in by huge collars, curves, and diagonals, was far nobler in design, because more wealthy in material, than nine-tenths of those in our modern churches. Along each side wall was a range of striding buttresses, throwing deep shadows on the spaces between them, which were perforated by lancet openings, combining in their proportions the precise requirements both of beauty and ventilation (Hardy, 2005, p. 172).

The second description is extracted from the chapter where Hardy describes Bathsheba’s large barn comprising of different buildings. He again focuses on architectural features such as “porch” and “arches of stone” as well as other design elements. In addition, drawing attention to the similarity between barn buildings and modern churches, he somehow ascribes a holy atmosphere to the architectural structure of the barn. Similar to the bower, Hardy’s architectural knowledge in this description too serves as an opportunity to convince readers of the grandeur of Bathsheba’s barn.

The second sub-category, auditory imagery, comes into existence in natural sounds, particularly those in the farm (Chapman, 1990, p. 145).

(1) Soon soft spirits alternating with loud spirits came in regular succession from within the shed, the obvious sounds of a person milking a cow (Hardy, 2005, p. 22).

(2) To the shepherd, the note of the sheep-bell, like the ticking of the clock to other people, is a chronic sound that only makes itself noticed by ceasing or altering in some unusual manner from the well-known idle twinkle which signifies to the accustomed ear, however distant, that all is well in the fold. In the solemn calm of the awakening morn that note was heard by Gabriel, beating with unusual violence and rapidity. This exceptional ringing may be caused in two ways—by the rapid feeding of the sheep bearing the bell, as when the flock breaks into new pasture, which gives it an intermittent rapidity, or by the sheep starting off in a run, when the sound has a regular palpitation. The experienced ear of Oak knew the sound he now heard to be caused by the running of the flock with great velocity (Hardy, 2005, p. 43).

In the first example, Oak visits Bathsheba and her aunt’s hut. While they speak in front of the hut, Oak hears some sounds showing that Bathsheba’s aunt is milking her cow, and Hardy describes how changes in the sounds of spirit intermingle with Bathsheba and Oak’s dialogue outside. The second one is another excellent example of auditory imagery, as Oak overhears growing sounds made by sheep in his barn. In this scene, Hardy narrates these animal sounds one after another to demonstrate that Oak gradually realizes the danger faced by his sheep.

Onomatopoeia is another striking feature of Hardy’s auditory imagery, reflecting the different sounds of the countryside and farming equipment. For instance, Bathsheba hears the sound of whetting when she visits Oak in his small cottage near her farm (Hardy, 2005, p. 156). The birds also complement sounds of the nature. Oak hears the “cuuck, cuuck” of a pheasant when he travels to Weatherbury to look for a job (Hardy, 2005, p. 50). Similarly, when Bathsheba spends a night in a swarm near her farm after her traumatic discovery of Troy’s relationship with Fanny, she is wakened by the “chee-wheeze-wheeze-wheeze” of a finch and “tink-tink-tink” of a robin (Hardy, 2005, p. 358). All of these auditory elements constantly remind readers of the fact that main characters are surrounded by a pastoral environment throughout the novel.
4. The intersemiotic translation of *Far From the Madding Crowd*

Although my stylistic analysis of the novel is divided into two parts to present a clearer and more systematic view of intersemiotic equivalents to be compared with the film, I will analyse Hardy’s sentence structure and imagery together under the same section, as the director often combines these components thanks to different cinematographic tools and techniques. As such, I will firstly deal with the way in which Vinterberg generates Hardy’s step-by-step description of actions and detailed pastoral narration.

One of the most vivid representations of Hardy’s description of actions in the film is the house party organized by Troy following his marriage with Bathsheba. In this scene, Oak tries to save hay stacks from the approaching storm and heavy rain, whereas Troy and Bathsheba’s workers do not care about the incoming danger and abandon their entertainment. Oak’s rescue efforts start with a wide angle shooting of meadows around Bathsheba’s farm. Just as Hardy switches between workers dancing in the house party and Oak’s struggle under the storm and rain, Vinterberg adapts this technique to his film and switches between outdoor and indoor locations to concretize Oak’s deep concern for Bathsheba’s farm in contrast to Troy’s and other workers’ indifference. Thus, the distinction between indifference and responsibility is delivered to the audience dramatically. Besides, in an attempt to bring a different dimension to the scene and relive the auditory imagery in the novel, the director makes us hear the sound of wind and shoots scattered movements of small animals on the soil closely to the writer’s descriptions.

Christmas party in Boldwood’s house also greatly exemplifies Hardy’s sentence style because preparations in Boldwood’s and Bathsheba’s houses and Troy’s men waiting near Boldwood’s house to spy on Bathsheba’s arrival are narrated simultaneously in the novel. Although the scene bears a potential to integrate Hardy’s sentence style into the film, Vinterberg visualizes only a certain section of it, with only Boldwood’s servants hurrying around the house to complete party preparations. Hence, he does not prefer transferring two other related events in the same scene, i.e. Troy’s men waiting near the house and Bathsheba’s preparations, to the film, which results in the non-existence of light contrast between Boldwood’s house and garden as a significant piece of Hardy’s visual imagery. Furthermore, narrative transitions between two locations in the novel are not included in the film, which, surprisingly, can be considered as a missed opportunity for the director, given that it was not challenging to transfer such a narrative tool to the screen.

As for pastoral narration, it becomes clear at the beginning of the film that a particular importance was attached to pastoral aspects in Hardy’s novel, since Vinterberg also points out that he took special journeys to determine filming locations (Aguilar, 2015) which would remain “respectful to Hardy’s work” and “meet people’s expectations of how Hardy saw the landscape” (Vinterberg, 2015). The director’s selection of filming locations for the representation of pastoral narration in the novel was acclaimed by some film critics such as Hunter (2015) due to his success in capturing pastoral scenes. As a result, it would be hard to deny that Vinterberg’s efforts towards finding “suitable” locations yielded effective results, as many outdoor scenes throughout the film rely on available environmental factors for cinematographic visualization of pastoral elements in the novel. For instance, the film opens with a wide-angle presentation of the scene where Oak sees Bathsheba for the first time. A few minutes later, the director offers a general view of meadows in the vicinity of Oak’s hut where he talks with Bathsheba about his sheep and dog. Another example is the scene where Bathsheba’s men, including Oak, wash sheep as a spring tradition. Similar to Hardy’s depiction in the novel, the sunny weather and fertile
meadows are shown to the audience as introductory frames before the sheep washing. In addition to these, the director does not hesitate to make frequent use of landscapes and farm animals for scene transitions to remind the audience of the fact that they are watching a pastoral story.

The scene in which Troy impresses Bathsheba through his swordsmanship in the fern also needs attention as a valuable stylistic example which combines Hardy’s description of actions and pastoral narration. As Vinterberg also states that he carefully selected this location as a result of his awareness on the function of the setting in the novel (Aguilar, 2015), he manifests his close attention to environmental details in the scene by shooting the woods from different angles to draw attention to Troy and Bathsheba’s isolation from the crowd, which plays a vital role in the former’s seduction. The actor’s and actress’ performances also correspond to descriptive actions in the novel. For instance, the actor’s movements with the sword around the actress’ body are in line with those depicted in the novel. Similarly, the actress reflects her excitement through her hesitant walk and breathing. Thus, the director’s specific choices such as location, camera and casting come together as a whole to visualize the writer’s pastoral descriptions in the novel.

Considering its crucial position in Hardy’s visual imagery, fire breakout during Troy’s house party is embodied via a spectacular visual representation in the film. In particular, the director skilfully illustrates the panic and danger which urge Oak to hurry outside his room and put the fire out in Bathsheba’s farm immediately. Similar to Hardy’s vivid description in the novel, the camera turns to Oak’s face and clothes to exhibit how the glow of the fire shines upon his face, jacket and crook. The moment when Oak rescues hay stacks from fire and climbs up a ladder to pour water on the fire, while other workers scream upon seeing the flames, is also another outstanding evidence of the director’s continuous efforts to externalize the writer’s visual and auditory imagery.

Sheep and birds sometimes display a good harmony with visual and pastoral elements in the novel with their natural sounds. Two key scenes in the novel involve Oak who loses his herd after he realizes the problem thanks to the sounds of the sheep and the final moment when he gazes at his dead sheep from the top of the cliff. Vinterberg (Indiewire Contributor, 2015) states that he tried to make this well-known scene “real” and “scary”. Accordingly, in the film, Oak hears the sheep while sleeping in his hut and follows their noise, only to find out their bitter ends. Later, the audience sees Oak stand desperately on the top of the cliff and watch his herd lying dead on the ground. Thus, Vinterberg utilizes visual and auditory materials to converge the scene to Hardy’s descriptions in the novel.

The director combines visual and auditory imagery related to the nature in two other scenes. In the first one, Oak whets his scissors for a sharper sheep shearing. In the novel, Bathsheba hears the scurr of shearing as she comes closer to Oak’s hut. This auditory detail exists as a background noise in the film and reveals Vinterberg’s efforts to bring Hardy’s stylistic skills even in a scene lasting a few seconds. In addition, farming tools which occupy a large space in the room are shown through slow camera movements. The second scene takes place when a fatal disease spreads among Bathsheba’s sheep. Again, Vinterberg endeavours to do justice to Hardy’s visual and auditory imagery here, because a lot of sheep lying motionless on the ground and onomatopoeic sounds arising out of their intermittent respiration reflect the seriousness of the disease as described in the novel.

Bathsheba’s special dinner to celebrate the recovery of her ill sheep is also rich in exemplifying Hardy’s sentence variety and visual and auditory imagery. Therefore, resorting to a wide camera angle, Vinterberg shoots the scene around a table at which Bathsheba’s all workers can be seen sitting together.
He also visualizes festival-like atmosphere in the novel through various decorative objects distributed in the room. From an auditory perspective, singing performances of Joseph Poorgrass and Jan Coggan must not be overlooked, as both actors remind the audience of English country songs in the novel. In the following sequences of the scene, Vinterberg does not ignore Bathsheba and Troy’s first encounter in a fir plantation at the night, either. The whole setting reflects the director’s neat attention to detail since even onomatopoeic sound of the wind can be heard. In short, the director displays a great effort to embody the writer’s visual and auditory elements in the scene.

The scene where Troy drowns himself in the sea should not be overlooked as another successful visual representation of a famous scene in the novel. It bears importance because the incident occurs after Troy learns Fanny’s death, causing him to experience an immense grief. The director shoots Troy’s presence in the sea from a certain distance to unite the seashore and cliffs behind it on the screen. In addition, sounds of waves and seagulls contribute further to the naturalness, demonstrating that Vinterberg wishes to overlap with Hardy’s long depictions of the same scene as much as possible.

It can be stated that Vinterberg preferred buildings which would portray the historical architecture of Dorset region in the film. In a similar vein, Oak’s hut and Bathsheba’s hut where she lives together with her aunt are furnished in a manner peculiar to such a cozy and humble atmosphere. The director also reflects the magnificence of the Bathsheba’s new house in her farm in Weatherbury through a wide angle shooting of the building. It must be noted that he selected a stone structure for this purpose, which probably aims at matching to the one depicted in the novel. Finally, the wide and large church hall in which Fanny and Troy’s marriage ceremony is held imitates the church described in the novel. In the same scene, the relatively low number of guests creates a contrast with the architectural grandeur of the church, which can be regarded as Vinterberg’s attempt to find a common point with the novel, as Hardy also draws attention to the discrepancy between the number of people and size of the hall. Overall, Vinterberg can be said to be certainly aware of the architectural nuances in the novel that are rooted in Hardy’s architectural knowledge.

5. Conclusion

The intersemiotic analysis of FMC as a novel and film indicates that Vinterberg has taken Hardy’s style into account to a great extent throughout the film. The writer’s two stylistic features, i.e. sentence structure and imagery, are covered at various points of the film as much as cinematic tools such as script writing, costumes, camera angles, shooting locations and visual and audio effects enable. Vinterberg often prefers shooting scenes in the nature, particularly in the countryside, to transfer Hardy’s lengthy pastoral narration to the film. In addition, he combines visual imagery with auditory imagery such as nature and animal sounds to portray Hardy’s use of such literary devices until the end of the film. In the same manner, he gives his audience the opportunity to grasp the atmosphere of Victorian England thanks to his precise selection of shooting locations, contributing to the visual representation of environmental and architectural details in the novel.

Due to obvious temporal limits of cinema as an artistic medium, it is very likely that Vinterberg attempted to fit the novel into a duration of two hours, which undoubtedly forced him to omit some visual and auditory details in the writer’s style and thus produce a narrower film version of the novel. He also acknowledges that the need “to film a lot of materials” and complications of shooting a period film were great challenges during his film making process (Aguilar, 2015), which may have required him to shorten the duration. Nevertheless, it can be still concluded that Vinterberg recognized the canonical
status of Hardy’s novel and thus intended to touch upon his various stylistic features that could familiarize the audience with the writer’s distinctive language use.

Since the present study focused on only two different stylistic elements in FMC and their reflections in cinema, future studies may be carried out from an intersemiotic translation perspective to explore convergences between Hardy’s stylistic features in his other novels and their more recent film versions. In this way, the impact of Hardy’s works on different forms of art can be better understood, and, more importantly, the reasons for and results of directors’ and/or script writers’ preferences during an intersemiotic translation process can also be evaluated with a more holistic and objective point of view. Ideally, this approach can also pave the way for exploring directors’ changing interpretations of the same novel over the years.

References


