



Beyond the media boundaries: Analysing how dominant genre devices shape our narrative knowledge



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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the hypothesis that genres are social-cultural categories that surpass the boundaries of media and shape our narrative expectations. In this pursuit, it proposes analytical methods for analysing significant genre dimensions such as characters' motivations and event developments. Several studies have shown how many aspects of television and cinema exhibit a reliance on genre and how genres operate within industry, audience and cultural practices. By applying the analytical methods of event and motivation in film, comics and novels, this paper unravels just how narrative patterns across these media have some shared generic identity, fitting into well-entrenched generic categories or incorporating similar forms of genre hybridity.

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1. Introduction

This article investigates the hypothesis that genres are social-cultural categories that surpass the boundaries of media and shape our narrative expectations. Several studies have shown how many aspects of cinema or television exhibit a reliance on genre and how genres operate within industry, audience and cultural practices (Neale, 2000; Mittell, 2004). This article extends the hypothesis about genres from moving images to a broader comparison between the media of film, comics and novels. It first reviews the ongoing debate of genre analysis in audio-visual media since the last century and then proposes to approach genre with a complex, multi-level framework. In particular, this article employs *discourse methods* to analyse the dominant genre devices, namely, the methods developed based on the analytical level of discourse semantics within the broader social semiotic theories, such as analytical methods for analysing *narrative event types* (Tseng, 2013a) and *characters' motivations*. The discourse analysis will unravel just how visual, verbal and audio-visual texts across these media have some shared generic identity, fitting into well-entrenched generic categories or incorporating similar forms of genre blending.

In a nutshell, the article can be seen as a contribution to methodology of genre analysis of cross-media narratives, which can effectively address the much debated issues, such as how generically dominant elements are understood in similar or different ways across different media. This will be demonstrated in this article through using concrete analysis of several examples from a film, a graphic novel and a novel.

Section 2 provides a necessarily brief historical overview of the perennial conundrum, namely how to systematically analyse genre in filmic texts, particularly the dilemma of tracing the changes and mixtures of genres in films. Section 3 then links the issue of genre analysis to the more recent discussion of media evolution, tracing the boundaries and connections between media change and genre change. This section is then followed by the presentation of discourse methods developed on the basis of empirical social semiotic theories. It presents three significant genre dimensions—(1) characters' event developments, (2) motivational relations between the events, and finally, (3) types of value and motivation involved in the motivational relations.

The example analysis on the basis of the methods will explicitly show how to empirically and systematically approach the long-debated challenges of genre expectations and media evolutions.

2. Perennial dilemma of analysing genre of filmic texts

Despite several theoretical efforts in the past decades, the issue of genre analysis in filmic texts has been a difficult one. Even within those genres most frequently discussed, including drama, science fiction, thriller and action, no single film can ever exhibit the full range of criteria typifying the genre, and therefore it is difficult to find uniform parameters for genre delimitation.

The discussion of how to approach film genre can already be seen at the beginning of the last century, in the essays written by the Russian Formalists (cf. Eagle, 1981) as an expansion of their literary criticism. For them, cine-genre is a useful *comparative* tool for examining space, time, people, objects, narrative sequences in film and the meanings they create. For example, Piotrovskij (1981)

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distinguishes and compares certain cine-genres (e.g. cine-novel, cine-short-story, comedy), by broadly looking into how film formal elements and narratives are manipulated. In other words, in the formalist framework, genre is regarded as an 'umbrella notion' covering a complex range of the meaning patterns created by filmic devices.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the major question at issue was how genre conventions shape the form and the meaning of individual films (cf. Alloway, 1963; Buscombe, 1970; McArthur, 1972). Genre can be identified through *iconography*, using the 'visual conventions' such as settings, costume, the typical physical attributes of characters and the kinds of technologies available to the characters (cf. Langford, 2005: 13).

However, iconographic analysis has a confined applicability. The materials published on the basis of the iconographic approach were mostly about well-established and familiar genres such as the western and gangster film (cf. Buscombe, 1970; McArthur, 1972), which are particularly suited to iconographic interpretation. Other genres (e.g. comedy, horror, thriller, detective films) do not necessarily have well-defined visual cues. This limitation reveals the fact that there are no uniform parameters for genre delimitation, and any genre film can easily 'cross-breed'. As Bordwell and Thompson (1993) observe, 'you can have a musical Western ... a melodrama that is also a mystery (*The Spiral Staircase*), a combination of science-fiction and horror (*Alien*)'.

In the 1990s, it was precisely this mixture of features found in most film genres, that drove the proposals for a multifaceted approach to genre analysis and genre evolution. Some proposals emerging from this body of work are by Altman (1998, 1999) and Neale (1990, 2000).

Altman (1984, 1999) draws an analogy between cinema and language, sketching a *semantic/syntactic/pragmatic* approach. This approach is a significant step toward combining multiple strengths of genre dimensions. First, he distinguishes two types of approaches to genre as the *semantic* and *syntactic* approaches. The former defines genre in terms of certain signs, that is, the semantic elements or 'lexical choices'. For example, take the *Western* again, the iconographic interpretation—namely identifying conventional visual elements—is a semantic approach: genre is classified according to identifiable elements (the guns, horses, wagons) present in a film. The syntactic approach takes into account the structural and symbolic relationships between the semantic elements. For instance, Cawelti (1975) and Kitses (2004), define *Western* according to how a dialectic between different value systems is constructed throughout a film, for example culture and nature, community and individual, future and past. Apart from semantic cues and syntactic structures, Altman goes on to add a pragmatic dimension to his model (Altman, 1999: 208), that is, the dimension for examining how and when the same textual (semantic/syntactic) patterns can be construed differently according to different contexts and audience groups because 'the meaning of each (textual) level is assured only through its use at a higher (cultural) level' (210). This proposal can already be seen as echoing the Russian Formalist view of combining textual and contextual expectation in genre films.

Neale (1990, 2000) further argues for a complex genre model in delineating *genre evolution*, studying how the dominant properties of filmic genres develop across time. He treats each individual genre as being placed within wider generic and aesthetic formations. Dominant aesthetic features, which identify these genres are constantly changed and displaced in the process of genre evolution. For instance, a genre film with its typical dominant device (e.g. drama with dominant emotional pursuit) can embed other new devices (typical action patterns in horror films), which then become the simultaneously governing devices in this genre film or become a newly emerging genre. This kind of blending of dom-

inant devices from two different genres will be exemplified in the analysis of the film *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2016) in a later section. According to Neale (2000), the focus of genre analysis should rest substantially on highlighting the dynamic configuration of these *dominant devices* within one film and on comparing the degrees of dominance of these devices to show how certain dominant patterns attain the status of being generically significant.

On the basis of Altman's and Neale's multidimensional and dynamic views of film genre analysis, I propose a social semiotics-based discourse approach to film genre (Tseng, 2013b). The strength of the discourse approach within social semiotics rests on its potential for bridging lower-level film devices and higher-level meaning patterns, which can reflect dominant genre devices. At the analytical level of discourse, I formulate two methods for co-patterning film elements and for constructing generically significant patterns: *cohesion*, or systematically tracking and patterning characters, objects and settings throughout a film, and *event types*, patterning actions according to functional semantic categories. Employing these methods, I (Tseng, 2013a, 2013b) have demonstrated how this bottom-up co-patterning of lower-level elements dynamically reflects patterns of genre differences—for instance, how different event configurations of war films and Western films can emerge directly from data analysis in a large film corpus by using these discourse methods (Tseng, 2016).

Following Neale's (2000) multidimensional view of dominant genre devices, and drawing on my previously proposed multi-level genre framework of film, this article will expand the level of discourse to include another discourse method for analysing characters' motivations, which I considered generically-significant device, as we will see in a later section. Fig. 1 maps out the multi-levelled, substantially bottom-up framework for filmic genre analysis. The discourse methods of *characters' motivation* proposed in this paper, along with my previously formulated methods of *cohesion* and *types of event and action* are located at level III, namely the dominant devices of generically significant patterns. It needs to be noted here these dimensions in Fig. 1 are three of the generically significant features that can still be expanded to more dimensions.

In other words, according to this framework, genre expectations should be *modelled dynamically* by at least the three discourse dimensions. Dynamic modelling of genre refers to an analytical method for comparing the generic significant patterns, for example, patterns from the film discourse dimensions outlined in Fig. 1. The method of dynamic modelling in visual texts is first comprehensively mapped out by Bateman (2008) in the analysis of printed documents. This article can be seen as a further expansion of dynamic modelling of genre to filmic texts.

In Fig. 1, each of these generic significant dimensions are complex patterns constructed from the co-patterning of narrative elements at level II, such as characters, objects, settings and different kinds of actions. These narrative elements are realised and manipulated in filmic media through different materials at level I, including different kinds of visual, verbal or audio devices. For instance, a character can be called by name or seen on screen as a human or animal; a character's name can be written on screen; an object can be heard (e.g. a slamming door); different camera movements can suggest the (re)appearance of characters. These materials are employed according to the media affordances, and one kind of material manipulation (e.g. a close-up of a child) can co-pattern with different other devices (e.g. melodramatic music or background voice calling the child's name) and fulfil different discourse functions (e.g. showing the child's psychological state/emotion or showing the identity of the child) depending on how these materials are contextualised. This resonates well with what Altman (1999) advocates: a filmic textual element functions builds on the way it is contextualised. This also links directly to another

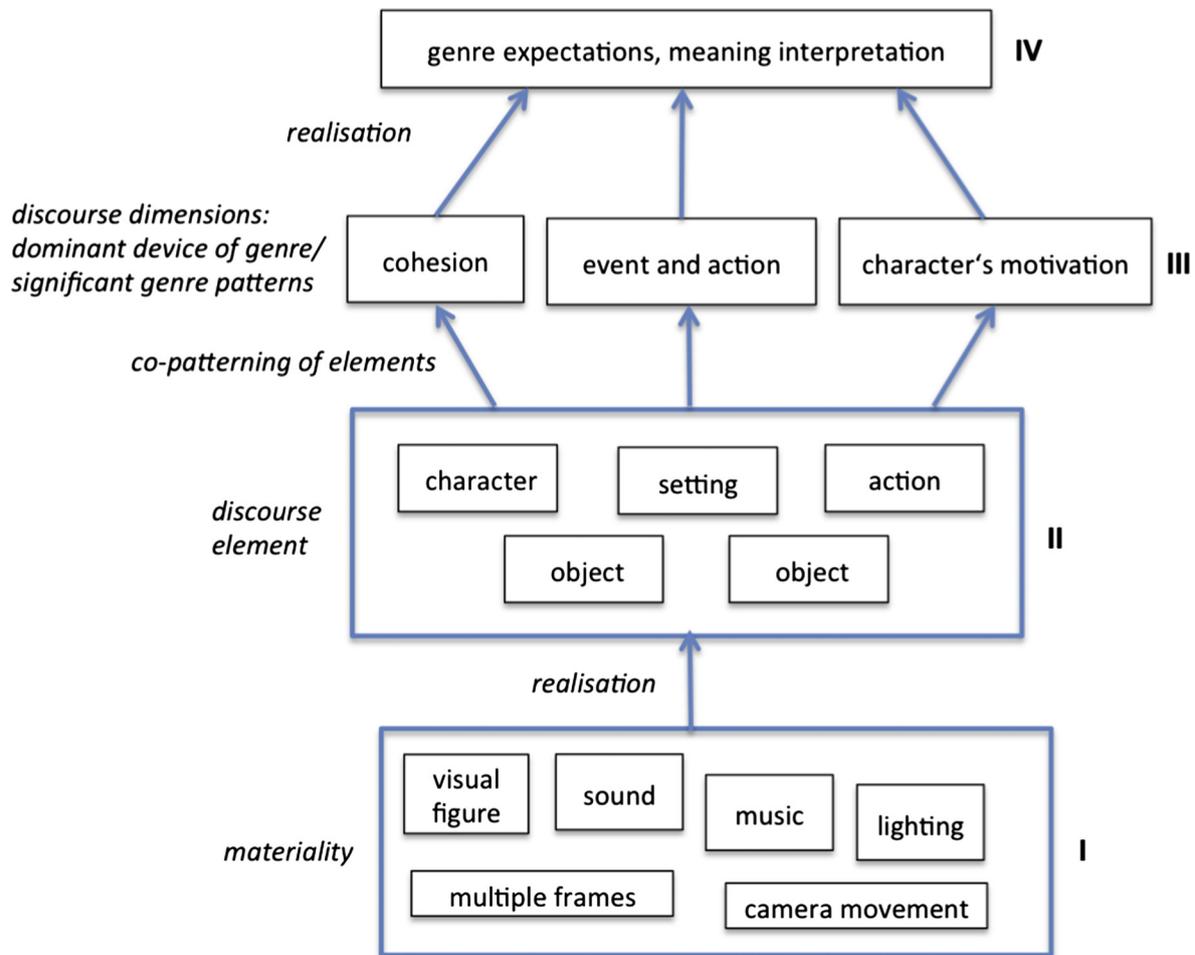


Fig. 1. Further development of a multi-levelled, multidimensional framework of film genre, building on Neale (2000) and Tseng and Bateman (2013).

frequently debated issue regarding the distinction of genre change and media change, more specifically, whether media materiality has a direct impact on the meaning-making processes of media perceivers.

3. Dilemma of distinguishing genre change and media change

In recent decades, a considerable body of research, particularly in the studies of moving images, has proposed how the use of new media technologies and computer-generated images (CGI) in filmic artefacts have an impact on viewers' comprehension of film. For instance, Tudor (2008) contends that films using CGI require the viewers' familiarity with the human-computer interface; Bernard and Carter (2005) insist that dynamic multimedia frames used in film, such as multiple split screens, could disorient the viewers' narrative comprehension. Nevertheless, building on the distinction between materiality and meaning as mapped out in Fig. 1, my previous work problematises those contentions that mash up dynamic materials and the dynamic meaning interpretation process, and explicitly point out how the lack of clear distinction between materiality and discourse meaning could lead to confusion and disorientation in empirical investigations (Tseng, 2016, forthcoming).

As elucidated in the previous section, any single type of material or film device does not lead directly to any specific kind of meaning interpretation. Take two more devices, for example: the film device 'dynamic multiple frames' at level I in Fig. 1 does not directly guide the viewers to interpretation processes that are more dynamic and have multiple meanings; the use of the point-of-view shot does not directly function to enhance character

engagement in film (Smith, 1994: 39). How these materials function depend on the context and how the materials are deployed with other devices. In other words, media affordances constrain the scope of materiality (e.g. no audio materials in comic media but sound effects can be drawn and described in comics), and materiality realises film narrative elements, which then co-pattern to realise dominant discourse dimensions (level III in Fig. 1). And the level of discourse dimensions is directly related to how the viewers' meaning-making process and genre expectations are mobilised.

Hence, the recent contentions relating CGI directly to comprehension and interpretation is, according to Fig. 1, to jump from level I directly to level IV and to ignore the complex meaning-making processes across levels II and III; and as we will see in the example analysis in the following sections, an empirically-based investigation of film genre comparison requires multi-levelled analyses as outlined in Fig. 1, particularly for the dynamic modelling of the fine-grained patterns at the level of discourse dimensions. More importantly, as the following sections will also show, this kind of multi-level model, which distinguishes between discourse-meaning construction and media materiality, precisely supports the systematic genre and narrative analysis beyond media boundaries.

4. Genre blending in film

This section employs two discourse methods for analysing event types and character motivations to unpack a particularly interesting example of genre blending in a recent film, *Pride and*

Prejudice and Zombies (2016). This film is adapted from a parody novel of the same title, written and published by Seth Grahame-Smith in 2009. It is a genre mash-up combining Jane Austen's classic 1813 novel *Pride and Prejudice* with elements of modern zombie fiction. In 2010, before the film was made, this parody novel was first adapted into a graphic novel (Lee et al., 2010) and the newspaper *USA Today* published an interesting article titled '*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies' digs into next genre*.¹ As the title suggests, this article explicitly points out the special and subtle manipulation of genre blending in this work and its adapted graphic novel:

Seth Grahame-Smith's 'mash-up' of the undead with Jane Austen's classic *Pride and Prejudice* is so hilariously effective because it allows readers to imagine well-known and much-beloved literary characters battling zombies while staying true to the source story.

This section shows precisely how this particular 'mash-up' could possibly be realised—how the much-beloved literary characters in Jane Austen's original novel retain their character developments and relationships and how the typical Austen themes about marriage and the preserved emotions of man and woman in a feudal society are kept intact, while some dominant devices of zombie genre are vividly inserted into the plot lines.

The background of Grahame-Smith's *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (hereafter PPZ), as well as the film adaptation, is set in an alternate England in the 1800 s. The story opens with the main character Mr. Darcy, whose main task is to investigate and fight against the emergence of zombies, travelling to the home of a wealthy family and discovering that many people in this family have turned into zombies. The beginning scene is linked to the narration of Mr. Bennet about the origin of the zombie outbreak—the Black Plague hit London and began to create zombies. A wall was built to separate London from the zombies, leaving them in an area called The In-Between. It is said that the Four Horsemen are ready to rise up from Hell and bring about the apocalypse. In PPZ, Mr. Bennet's five daughters—Elizabeth, Jane, Kitty, Lydia and Mary—have all been trained in the martial arts after being sent abroad to China by their father. But like in Austen's novel, the character of Mrs. Bennet wants her daughters to be married off to wealthy suitors. As it turns out, the Bingley family has moved in nearby and are throwing a ball, whereby Mrs. Bennet hopes that the young and handsome Mr. Bingley will marry one of her girls.

The Bennets attend the ball. Young Mr. Bingley instantly sets his eyes on Jane. Mr. Darcy is in attendance and takes notice of Elizabeth, but he deliberately makes comments that she is unattractive, which Elizabeth overhears. She walks outside tearfully and encounters Mrs. Featherstone, a woman she knew who has now turned into a zombie. Mrs. Featherstone is about to tell Elizabeth something until her head is blown off by Mr. Darcy. After this scene, a horde of zombies then attacks the party and the Bennet sisters as well as Darcy spring into action, slaying every zombie in combat.

This ballroom scene is depicted in the screenshots in Fig. 2, in which Mr. Darcy comments on Elizabeth (images 1 to 6), Elizabeth overhears him (image 4), walks out to the garden (images 7 and 8), meets the zombie Mrs. Featherstone (image 10) and finally Mr. Darcy shoots off the zombie's head (images 11 and 12).

4.1. Analysing action and event in film

Employing Tseng's (2013a) discourse method for analysing narrative events, the characters' actions and interactions in this scene

can be modelled as the patterns in Fig. 3. The upper part of the figure depicts the interaction between the three characters in the ballroom: Darcy and Bingley *talking about* the Bennet sisters, while at the same time the two men are *looking at* Elizabeth, and Elizabeth also looks back. These patterns are modelled drawing on functional categories of the transitivity system defined originally by social semiotic theory (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). This distinguishes major semantic categories of dynamic and conceptual relations between people, places and things, including direct or indirect actions between people and things (e.g. touching, walking), gazing (or looking), thinking (dreaming or any other mental actions) and other conceptual relations such as showing identities or part-whole relations of people, places and things. These semantic relations, hereafter termed event actions, tie together people, places and things in the narrative and construct event patterns, which reflect the most dominant narrative features within the events.²

The interaction between Darcy, Bingley and Elizabeth is then linked to the following sub-event by Elizabeth's walking out to another location, the garden, in which she further encounters (by talking to) the zombified Mrs. Featherstone before the zombie was shot by Mr. Darcy. This sub-event is modelled in the lower part of the patterns in Fig. 3. The circle singles out the interactions involving the zombie, Darcy and Elizabeth, and the entire diagram shows how the actions and interactions typical of a zombie film, namely characters interacting with and shooting zombies, are attached to the end of the ballroom scene. In other words, the action patterns in Fig. 3 highlight the combination of two sets of the interactions: the interaction between the original Austen characters Elizabeth, Bingley and Darcy, and the interaction between these characters and the zombie. The mash-up of Austen's drama and the zombie genre is realised in this way in many scenes of PPZ—the zombie-combating actions often follow the interactions depicted in Austen's original narrative line. Nevertheless, to this point, employing this discourse method does not yet show just how scenes in this film, although replete with insertions of action patterns typical of the zombie genre, manage to remain true to the narrative development in Austen's original version. This feature needs to be elucidated on the basis of another discourse dimension, namely analysis of characters' motivations.

4.2. Discourse analysis of characters' goals and motivations

This discourse method is developed on the basis of combining event and action patterns elucidated in the previous section with the empirical findings by Trabasso et al. (1989), particularly his framework of the causal network discourse analysis originally designed for examining children's understanding of coherent verbal narrations of events and narrative goals.

Causal logical relations in filmic texts have been investigated by several social semiotic studies (van Leeuwen, 1991; Bateman, 2007; Wildfeuer, 2014). These studies have all suggested systematic methods for constructing fine-grained analyses of discourse relations across various meaningful analytical units in moving images, such as units of shot relations and event relations. Building on these works on logical relations in film, but focusing on another type of analytical unit, namely event actions, the tool for analysing characters' goals and motivations maps out a goal-oriented analysis, uncovering how the main characters are motivated and enabled to achieve their goals or experience certain outcomes building on a series of event progression.

¹ The full article can be read from the following link: <https://goo.gl/j2VTDY> (retrieved on November 17, 2016).

² The application of the transitivity system to filmic text is described in full by Tseng (2013a).



Fig. 2. Screen shots of a scene in the film *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2016) (00:14:54 – 00:16:21).

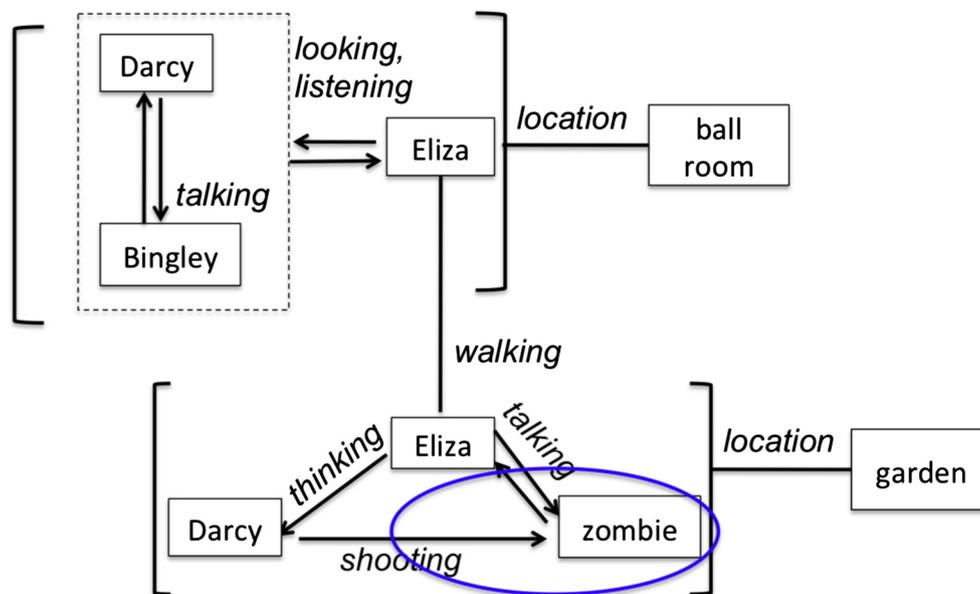


Fig. 3. Event pattern of the ballroom scene depicted in Fig. 2. The circle highlights the actions involving the zombie character Mrs. Featherstone.

According to Trabasso's framework of goal-plan in narratives (Trabasso et al., 1989; Trabasso and Nickels, 1992), the main types of causality between narrative episodes are *enabling*, *motivational*, *physical* and *psychological*, and with these analytical categories Trabasso and his colleagues have successfully shown how goals and motivations in the process of narrative readers' comprehension can be mapped out for further empirical investigation. As the remainder of this section will show, the application of these discourse categories to filmic texts³ effectively highlights how the pro-

gression of characters' event actions is motivated, enabled, and psychologically or physically triggered.⁴

Fig. 4 adds the discourse analysis of characters' goals and motivations to the event patterns of Fig. 3. The event in the ballroom setting, namely Darcy and Bingley's conversation and Elizabeth's irritation, prompts Elizabeth to leave the ballroom and to complain about Darcy in the garden, where there happens to be a zombie. In other words, the ballroom event motivates Elizabeth's actions (thinking and complaining about) related to Darcy but does *not*

³ See the empirical work by Magliano et al. (2005) in testing viewers' comprehension of characters' goals, drawing on Trabasso's discourse categories.

⁴ Employing this discourse method to analyse complex narratives, elsewhere I also show how a non-linear film such as *Mr. Nobody* (2010) (Tseng, 2017) actually embeds tightly networked goal and motivation plans, which cue the viewers to the explicit interpretation of the characters' intention and outcome of their interactions.

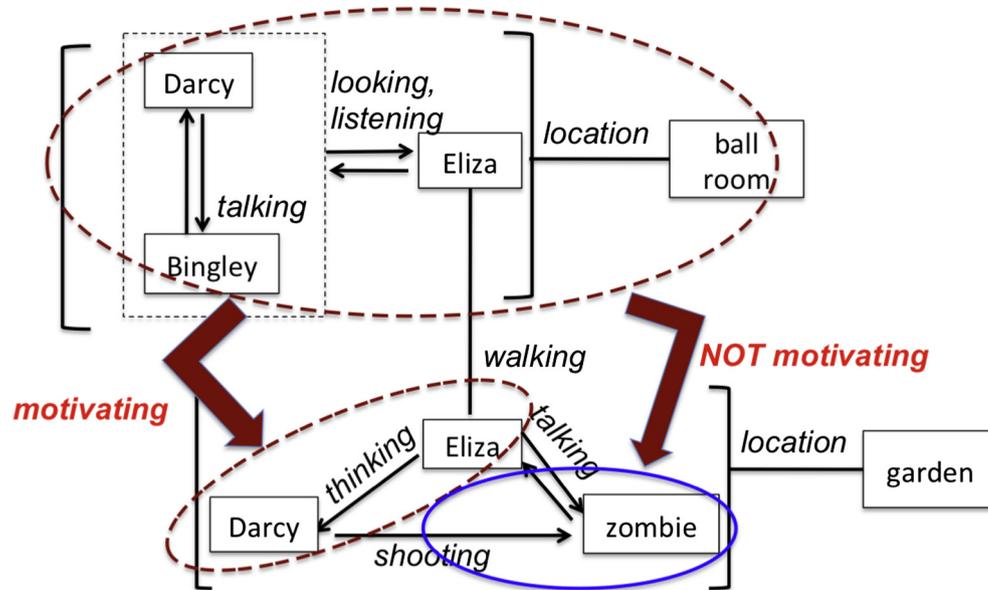


Fig. 4. Characters' motivational relations between event actions in the ballroom scene in Fig. 3.

motivate the part of zombie actions, the portion of the patterns circled out in Fig. 3.

The analysis of event and motivation in Fig. 4 exemplifies the typical patterns of genre blending in most parts of this film: the genre mash-up is seen as attaching the dominant zombie genre actions to an original scene in Austen's story, while the event actions of the zombie genre remains detached from the motivational relations in Austen's original narrative. Considering the two dimensions simultaneously, we can link this finding directly to the special trait of genre blending pointed out by the article in *USA Today* quoted above, particularly on how PPZ can mash up two very different genres but stay true to the original Austen story – namely, the motivational relations of characters' actions of the two genres remain separate and hence the original Austen's characters motivational relations can stay unaffected by the motivational relations of the zombie genre.

The next section will apply the same combination of the two discourse methods to the similar ballroom scene in the graphic novel adaptation of PPZ.

5. Discourse analysis of dominant genre devices in graphic novels

This section shows how discourse methods for analysing events in films can be expanded to the medium of graphic novels and can unravel how genre blending is achieved in a similar manner in both the film and the graphic novel adaptations. Fig. 5 shows four pages (pages 38–41) of a ballroom scene in the graphic novel adaptation of PPZ (Lee et al., 2010). Pages 38 and 39 show that Mr. Darcy invites Elizabeth to dance but they sarcastically talk and comment about her being trained as a warrior and about their acquaintances of another person, Mr. Wickham, but their interaction ends unpleasantly before page 40, where Elizabeth's cousin Mr. Collins comes to her and mentions his intention to confront Mr. Darcy. While Elizabeth turns furious at Mr. Collins, Mr. Bingley shows up and says he cannot find any servant to take empty plates. He then asks Elizabeth to accompany him to the kitchen, where, on page 41, they find that the servants have all turned into zombies. Darcy joins Elizabeth at this point to start combating zombies. While slaying zombies, Darcy and Elizabeth continue to talk to

each other in the similarly sarcastic way as in the previous dancing scene.

The overall event patterns of these four pages are mapped out in Fig. 6. The first part (pages 38 and 39) shows the interactions (dancing and talking to each other) between Darcy and Elizabeth in the ballroom. The next event pattern models further interactions between Elizabeth, Mr. Collins and Mr. Bingley, who complains about empty plates (page 40). The bottom part of the patterns depicts the scene on page 41 where the characters discover and slay zombies in the kitchen.

Similar to the event configurations in Fig. 3, a zombie-related pattern is attached to the event progression of this scene and similar to the film version, the genre mash-up is also realised by adding a zombie fight to Austen's dramatic scene. Fig. 7 applies the discourse method of characters' goals and motivations to the event patterns and establishes the motivational relations of these event actions. The left part of the pattern reflects the causal chain of the original Austen narrative features—the interaction of Darcy and Elisabeth motivates Elisabeth's fury and their later quarrels. The right part of the pattern shows the contextualisation of the zombie scene—Mr. Bingley's complaint about empty plates enables their discovery of zombies in the kitchen. The causal chain between Mr. Bingley's complaints and the zombie fight has no causal link with the interaction of Darcy and Elisabeth. The two parallel chains of characters' goal plans reappear throughout the entire narrative of PPZ. The combined analysis of the two discourse methods effectively shows how characters' features, relationships and developments stay authentic to the original narrative in Austen's novel, despite the mash-up of dominant actions patterns of the two different genres.

6. Motivation types as dominant genre devices across media

This section adds the analysis of motivation types to characters' motivational relations on the basis of the discourse method of characters' motivational development. It shows how to assign specific motivation types to the motivational relations between event actions. Before I start elucidating the method, it is necessary to clarify the analytical units dealt with in this discourse dimension. As the analytical pursuit rests on types of motivations, the



Fig. 5. A ballroom scene in the graphic novel adaptation of PPZ: pages 38–41. Figure details: Tony Lee, Seth Grahame-Smith, reproduced/(2010) *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, Del Rey, with permission from Penguin Random House.

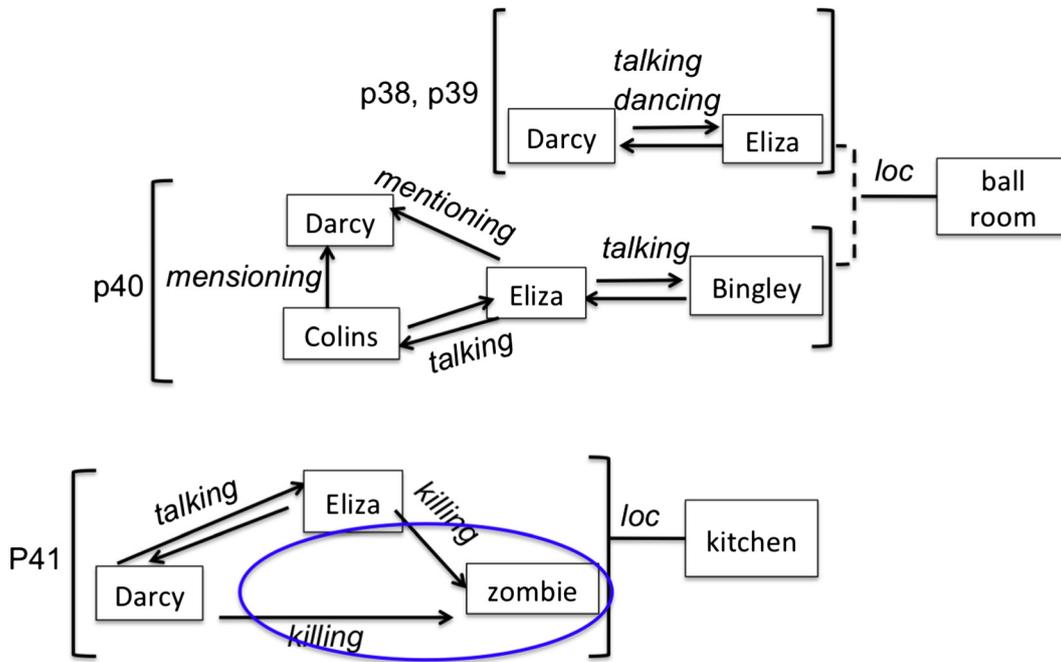


Fig. 6. Discourse analysis of event patterns of the four pages in Fig. 5.

analytical units are the main event actions, which establish motivational relations in the film. Take the patterns in Fig. 7 for instance, the target for analysis is the left part of the figure. The event actions at the right are not relevant in this discourse dimension since it constructs no motivational relations.

The typology of motivations for this framework is formulated by drawing on the recent physiological and psychological findings about human social-cultural motivational systems. For instance, empirical findings of the moral foundation theory by Graham et al. (2011) suggest that at least the six domains of motivations—care, fairness, ingroup affiliation, hierarchy, liberty, purity—can be found in different cultures and subcultures. Gilbert (2014, 2015) proposes three main types of motivations which drive different kinds of behaviour: excite/vitality, content/safe and anxiety/anger. The recent brain studies (de Vignemont and Singer,

2006) also categorise human motivation systems into specific types—for instance, self-centred interest (such as power, achievement, consumption), more pro-social values such as care and ingroup affiliation, and finally the negative motivations such as fear and anger.

Drawing on these related motivational systems from the empirical findings to date (de Vignemont and Singer, 2006; Graham et al., 2011; Gilbert, 2014, 2015), I will now propose an integrated model suitable for narrative event analysis. The integration of motivation categories is shown in Fig. 8. The left part of the figure shows four domains of motivation types:

- Personal drive: this category deals with motivations of self-centred interest such as personal power, achievement, and consumption.

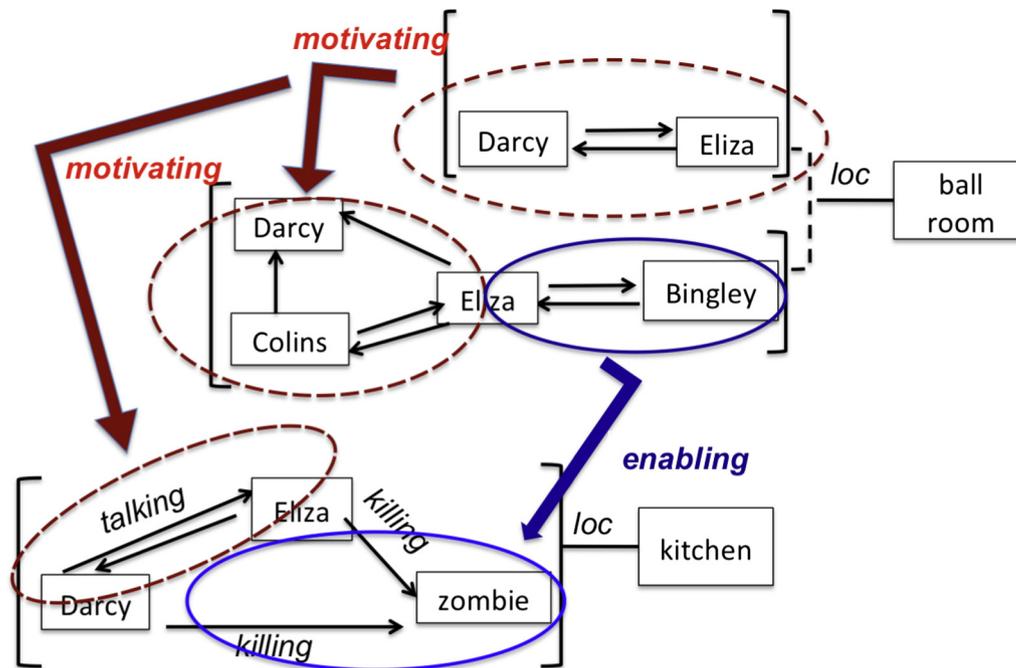


Fig. 7. Discourse analysis of the graphic novel adaptation of PPZ: combining event patterns and characters' goals and motivations.

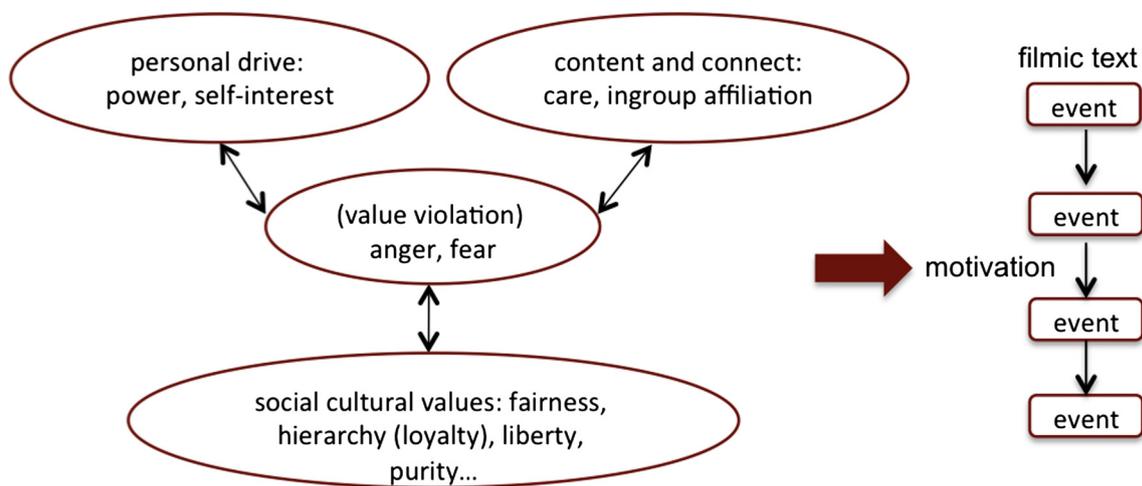


Fig. 8. Left: Types and systems of human motivations and values. Right: Instantiation of values and motivational choices in the events of an unfolding filmic text.

- Content and connect: this category includes motivations such as care and ingroup affiliation, which drive pro-social behaviours.
- Social-cultural values: this category deals with motivations defined and driven by social norms or widely accepted ideology within cultures and subcultures.
- Violation of the above values: motivations caused by harm, betrayal, deterrence in gaining personal interest, violation of social-cultural accepted values, etc. lead to aggressive and defensive behaviours and actions.

The right side of Fig. 8 shows the instantiation of the motivation systems in filmic event analysis. That is, choices from the main categories of motivation systems and their subcategories are mapped onto the unfolding event actions when a motivational relation is highlighted. Fig. 9 exemplifies the instantiation of motivation systems in the analysis of the PPZ event patterns shown in Fig. 7.

In the event patterns, motivational relations are constructed between Darcy, Elisabeth and Collins. The interaction between Darcy and Elisabeth motivates the quarrels between Elisabeth and Collins over Darcy as well as the later conversation between Elisabeth and Darcy when they are combating zombies. These relations are driven by the motivation of *care* and the violation of it. As Grizzard et al. (2016) suggest in their recent empirical study, the value of *care* is the most strongly highlighted motivation in the genre of romance drama. Drawing on this link between genre comprehension and human moral values, the discourse method of motivational analysis proposed in this paper can be seen as supporting their empirical findings of close relations between genre and values and providing a more fine-grained annotating scheme, combining types of actions, events and motivations. The following example analyses precisely elucidate just how this discourse method also allows systematic comparisons of motivation types across filmic texts, as well as address how *conflicts* and *incompatibilities* of motivation types trigger certain actions.

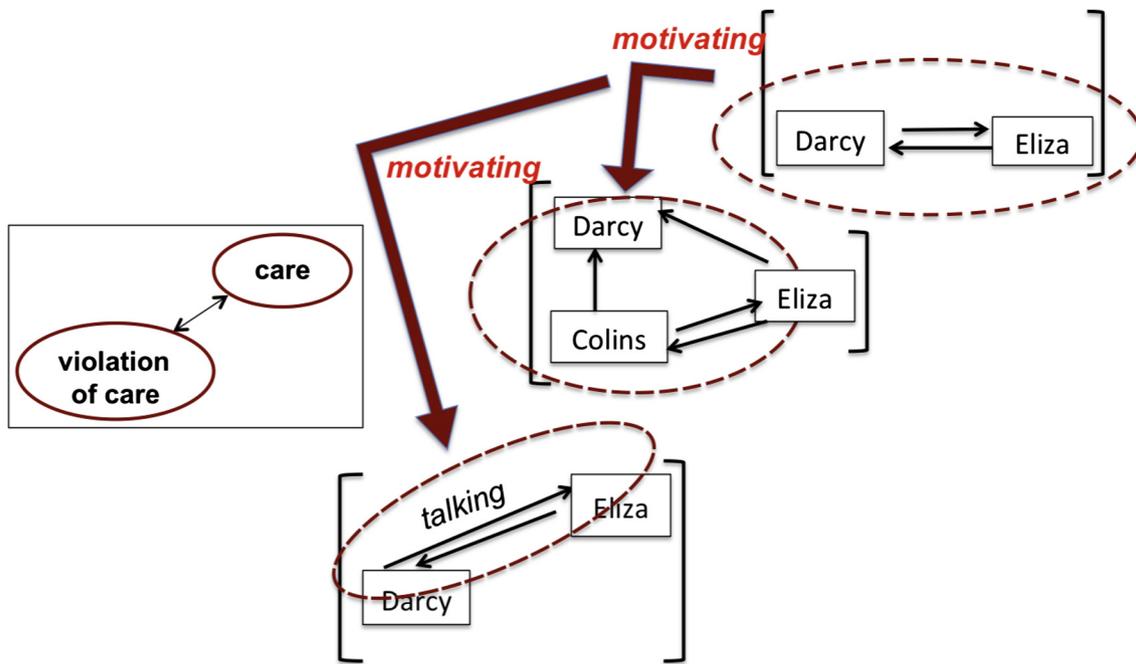


Fig. 9. The model of motivation types instantiated in the PPZ event patterns of Fig. 7.

6.1. Motivation analysis in Kurosawa's *High and low*

In this section, the discourse method for analysing motivation type is applied to the film *High and Low* (Kurosawa, 1963). The film is a detective/thriller genre, adapted from the detective novel *King's Ransom* by Ed McBain (1959). This section will show how the method proposed in this paper unravels the main characters' developments of motivations.

The story of this film starts with the struggle of the main character, wealthy businessman Kingo Gondo, to gain power in his company National Shoes, while insisting on the quality of the company's products. The first scene is set in his living room where his colleagues show their proposal for producing stylish designs with low quality. This meeting ends with quarrels between Gondo and the colleagues. After the guests leave, Gondo tells his personal assistant that he has secretly set up a leveraged buyout to gain control of the company by mortgaging the house and his entire wealth.

This is then followed by the scene in which he receives a phone call from someone claiming to have kidnapped his son, Jun. Gondo immediately agrees to pay the ransom; however, when Jun comes in from playing outside, Gondo and his wife discover that the kidnapers have abducted the wrong boy, Shinchi, the child of Gondo's chauffeur. In another phone call, the kidnapper reveals that he has discovered his mistake but still demands the same ransom.

Gondo is then forced to make a decision about whether to use the money for his investment in the company or to pay the ransom to save the child, which also means going into debt and throwing the family's futures into jeopardy. Under pressure from his wife and the chauffeur, Gondo decides to pay the ransom. Following the kidnapper's instructions, the money is thrown from a moving train; Shinchi is rescued. Although Gondo is forced to leave the company and to move out of his house, he is widely reported by the media as a hero and moral example. The rest of the film is a narrative mixture, showing the moral compliments and respect Gondo received and the detectives' effort to arrest the kidnapers.

Due to limited space, I am not able to provide a detailed analysis of event actions of each main event. Rather, the main events, which establish motivational relations within the film are delineated in

Table 1. Each main event can be seen as verbal description of event actions, which can be visualised into units within action patterns in Fig. 9. As Table 1 shows, there are around 19 main events in this film.

Fig. 10 connects these events through the motivation types instantiated from the typological system mapped out in Fig. 8. As the figure shows, event 2, when the colleagues are driven from the house is motivated by event 1, the quarrels and disagreement between Gondo and these board members, drawing on two main types of motivations, fairness and personal interest—Gondo insists on the fair quality of shoe productions but the other faction intends to pursue cheaper price and low quality. The conflict of the two values leads to and motivates the actions in event 2.

Event 3, when the board members offer Kawanishi a new director position but are disdained by Kawanishi, is motivated by the quarrel over personal interests in event 1 and Kawanishi's loyalty. Gondo's revelation about his plan to regain power of the company is also motivated by the quarrels about personal interests in event 1. These events are followed by the kidnapping events, revealed by a phone call in event 5 and this motivates event 6, the immediate agreement of Gondo, a caring father, to pay the ransom. When it becomes clear in event 7 that it is Shinchi who has been abducted, this motivates event 8, Gondo's refusal to pay. Nevertheless, the moral pressure from his wife and the chauffeur in event 9 motivates event 10, in which Gondo finally agrees to pay the ransom. In event 11, Kawanishi, seeing that his boss is going to lose everything, calls other board members and betrays Gondo for his personal promotion, motivated by the offer in event 3. Event 12 includes a series of sub-events about Gondo's assistance in the rescue and handing over of the ransom, motivated by the moral obligation in event 10. Motivated by Gondo's heroic act in event 12, event 13 shows how the media report widely on Gondo and the public cares about his dire situation. Event 14 includes a series of actions for the police tracking down the hideouts and identity of the kidnapper and his accomplices, motivated by the value of fairness against the crime of kidnapping, conducted in event 7. Motivated by the helping and caring actions of Gondo in event 12, the police in event 15 care about and are touched by Gondo's loss of

Table 1
Major events in *High and Low* with motivational relations.

1	In Gondo's house, Gondo quarrels with his colleagues. Everyone becomes furious
2	Gondo asks his colleagues to leave his house
3	Outside Gondo's house, the colleagues offer Gondo's assistant Kawanishi a director position if he reveals Gondo's secret deal
4	Gondo talks to his wife, Kawanishi and business partners in Osaka about his secret buyout
5	Gondo receives a call saying his son Jun has been abducted
6	Gondo immediately agrees to pay the ransom
7	Jun appears and they realise his chauffeur's son Shinchu was abducted. Gondo calls the police
8	Gondo refuses to pay the ransom
9	His wife and chauffeur beg him to pay the ransom.
10	Gondo finally agrees
11	Kawanishi calls Gondo's colleagues and reveals his dilemma and secret deal
12	Gondo helps to prepare and hand over the ransom. Shinchu is rescued
13	Gondo's sacrifice is widely reported. He is worshiped by the policemen and the media
14	The policemen take actions and collect information about the kidnapper
15	The policemen constantly express their respect to Gondo
16	The chauffeur takes his son Shinchu out to look for the kidnapper's hideouts. They found that the accomplices are murdered
17	Further clues lead to the identity of the kidnapper, a medical intern at a nearby hospital, but there is no hard evidence linking him to the accomplices' murders
18	The police lay a trap by first planting a story in the newspapers implying that the accomplices are still alive, and then forging a note from them demanding more drugs
19	The kidnapper, after being arrested, requests to meet Gondo and tells him how jealous he was when seeing Gondo's luxurious house from his shack

house and company position. From the same motivation, the chauffeur takes his son Shinchu to look for the crime scene in event 16. Event 17 reveals more clues and criminal motivations about the kidnapper, which motivate the police to take action and arrest the kidnapper in event 18. Finally, in event 19, the kidnapper requests to meet Gondo and reveals that his kidnapping in event 7 was motivated by his experience with the unfairness in society between the rich and the poor.

From the patterns in Fig. 10, we can see that three types of motivation are instantiated: fairness, care and personal interest. If we compare the instantiation to the characters, Gondo's motivations start with fairness and personal interest but then quickly develop to care throughout the film. Moreover, although the

second half of the film deals with tracking down the boy and the kidnapper, the motivation type mostly highlighted is actually care: care by Gondo for Shinchu and the care by the media, the policemen and chauffeur about Gondo's loss. This is rather different from the motivation patterns in the original novel, McBain's *King's Ransom*.

6.2. Motivation analysis in McBain's detective novel *King's ransom*

This subsection applies the same discourse method for unpacking motivation types to the detective novel from which Kurosawa adapted his film. In particular, the comparative analysis will show not only how the discourse methods can be employed to generically analyse dominant devices beyond media boundaries but also how some dominant devices within the detective genre are adapted in different authors' work.

The story in the novel starts with the same narrative line in which the main character, now Douglas King, a wealthy American industrialist, is putting together a secret deal that will effectively give him control of his shoe company, Granger Shoes. The first scene is also set in King's house. King is pressured by other colleagues to lower the quality of the shoe production and to overthrow the current president. He loses his temper and drives them out. He reveals to his assistant Peter and wife Diane that he in fact has his own plans to buy up the controlling interest in the company. This shocks Diane, but she knows that she cannot hold back her husband's desire for corporate success. Similar to the film, just as he's about to put his plan into motion, a kidnapper calls King and tells him that the kidnapper and his partner have abducted King's young son, Bobby. If King wants his son back alive, he needs to pay the ransom. This is initially dismissed as a hoax when Bobby walks into the room, but it quickly becomes clear that it's actually the chauffeur's son Jeff that has been taken by mistake.

The major difference between the film and the novel lies in King's refusal to pay the ransom, while Gondo in Kurosawa's film is a moral example and widely respected, most characters in the novel disdained King. After realising that the chauffeur's son Jeff has been kidnapped, King and his wife Diane call the detective Steve Carella and his colleagues from the 87th Precinct to spring into action. The remainder of the novel reveals the dilemma now facing King: whether or not to pay the ransom. King, who quickly irritates the police with his high-handed attitude to them, chooses not to pay, much to the disgust of Carella and Diane.

Another plot difference of the novel is the considerable emphasis placed on the kidnappers' actions. The actions of the novel are

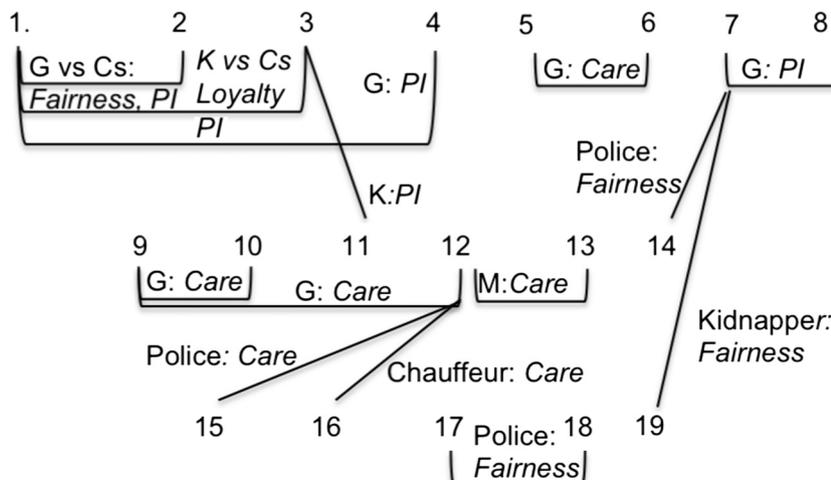


Fig. 10. Motivational relations and types of the main events delineated in Table 1. The numbers refer to event numbers, lines show the linking of motivational relations and each motivation type is specified following the character identities. G = Gondo, K = Gondo's assistant Kawanishi, Cs = colleagues, M = media.

Table 2
Major events in *King's Ransom* with motivational relations.

1	In King's house, King quarrels with his colleagues. Everyone becomes furious
2	King asks his colleagues to leave his house
3	Outside King's house, the colleagues offer King's assistant Peter a director position if he reveals King's secret deal
4	King talks to his wife Diane about his secret buyout. Diane expresses that she is shocked and worried
5	King receives a call saying his son Bobby has been abducted
6	King immediately agrees to pay the ransom
7	Bobby appears and they realise the chauffeur's son Jeff has been abducted. King calls the police
8	In King's home, in front of the detectives and his wife, King announces he will not pay the ransom
9	The kidnappers (Sy, Eddie, Kathy) and the chauffeur's son Jeff are in their shack. Kathy takes care of Jeff
10	Pete betrays Douglas King by calling other board members to reveal King's dilemma
11	Kathy takes care of Jeff
12	The chauffeur Reynolds begs King to pay, but King refuses
13	In the kidnapper's shack, Kathy tries to protect Jeff
14	King participates in the rescue of Jeff, but he still refuses to pay the ransom
15	Case solved. The detectives talk about the case and express their disgust for King

worked out along fairly straightforward parallel lines between two main locations: the King household and the shack where Jeff is being kept hostage by tough career criminal Sy along with Eddie and his wife Kathy, a couple who dream of better things but quickly develop qualms about abducting Jeff, especially when it becomes clearer that Sy is likely to kill Jeff to facilitate their getaway. The final part of the novel includes a big chase by the detectives to track down Jeff. At the end of the story, the kidnappers are arrested. Douglas King remains wealthy but scorned by the policemen in the final scene. The main events with motivational relations in the novel are delineated in Table 2.

Fig. 11 connects these events through the motivation types instantiated from the system in Fig. 8. Similar to the beginning of the film version, event 2 in which King's colleagues are driven from the house is motivated by event 1, when King and his colleagues quarrel about two main types of motivations: fairness and personal interest (King insists on the fair quality of shoe productions but the other faction intends to pursue cheaper price and lower quality). The conflict of the two values leads to and motivates the actions in event 2.

In Event 3, the board members offer Peter the position of director, motivated by the quarrel over personal interests and their intention to find out King's secret. In event 4, King reveals his secret deal to his wife Diane and Peter. But Diane expresses her

shock and worry about his deal and his risk of their mortgage for his desire to gain personal power. Different from the film version in which Gondo's wife does not have any dominant role, King's wife Diane expresses the motivation of care more explicitly in several parts of the novel.

The first phone call in event 5 motivates King's immediate agreement to pay the ransom in event 6. It then becomes clear in event 7 that it is Jeff who is abducted. This motivates events 8 and 12, King's refusal to pay. In events 9, 11 and 13, set in the kidnappers' shack, Kathy takes care of Jeff, showing disagreement over the kidnapping crime in event 7. Event 10 is the betrayal by Peter, motivated by his personal interest. Finally, in event 14, the policemen take the action of rescuing Jeff and arresting the kidnappers; King appears to assist with the action but still refuses to pay the ransom. In event 15, set in the police station, the detectives express their contempt for King, motivated by King's sole concern for his personal interest.

The comparison of Kurosawa's film with the novel from which it was adapted shows that the two stories share similar story elements: the introduction of characters' roles in the beginning, how the crime happens and the dilemma facing the main characters in the middle, and the policemen's efforts to arrest the kidnappers at the end of the story. These are probably the typical elements included in most detective genres. Nevertheless, Figs. 10 and 11 reflect another dimension of generic dominant devices, namely just how characters' motivations develop. Although the motivation patterns in Kurosawa's film and in the novel both unpack the dominant uses of the three main types of values—fairness, personal interest and care—the main difference in the patterns lies in the less dynamic character development in the novel. For instance, while the film shows Gondo's development from personal interest to care, in the novel, King's dominant motivation remains his personal interest. Moreover, gender differences are more dominant in the novel, in which the actions of most male characters (King, Peter, the policemen) are motivated by fairness and personal interest, while the motivation of care is mostly exhibited by the two female characters, Diane and Kathy. In contrast, the motivation patterns of the film show how the narrative emphasis centres substantially on actions and motivations of Gondo and for Gondo, highlighting his moral growth and others' moral admiration for him.

7. Conclusion

In this article, I reviewed the development of genre theories in the last century and proposed a multidimensional model for genre analysis, echoing the suggestions by the Russian formalists, Neale

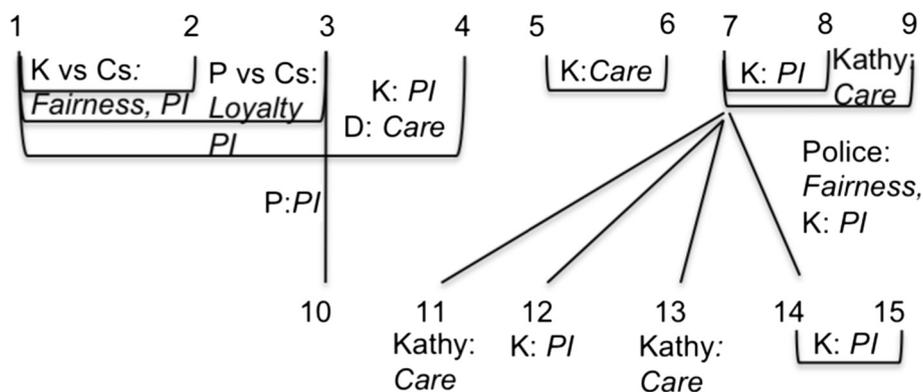


Fig. 11. Motivational relations and types of the main events delineated in Table 2: The numbers refer to event numbers, lines show the linking of motivational relations and each motivation type is specified following the character identities. K = Douglas King, P = King's assistant Peter, D = Diane King.

(2000) and Altman (1999), to dynamically compare patterns of different dominant genre devices. I then unravelled some discourse methods based on functional semiotics for analysing dominant genre devices, such as cohesion, event analysis and characters' motivations. I also showed example analyses based on these methods to elucidate how narrative knowledge shapes our genre expectations beyond the boundaries of media.

The first example showed how a blend of zombie and romance genres in a film and a graphic novel can be drawn on similar event and action structures, while differing in terms of character motivation. Furthermore, the discourse methods of characters' motivation types were employed to examine a detective novel and its adaptation to film. This comparison showed that the typical plot structures of the detective genre remain similar but characters' motivation patterns are distinctive in the American novel and in the Japanese film by Kurosawa.

This comparison also highlights the main contribution of this article – providing the means for systematically analysing how meaning patterns are construed. These patterns may be seen as reflecting high-level interpretation of cross-genre or cross-cultural differences.

As the empirical study of media psychology conducted by Grizzard et al. (2016) suggests, the value of care is dominant in the romance genre while the action genre highlights fairness. The close relation between genres and the values typically reflected in genres can also be seen in my findings—drawing on the discourse method of motivation types and our example analysis, a hypothesis can be formulated that in the detective genre, the motivations of fairness, care and personal interest are often highlighted. The difference of the genre in different cultures or by different authors can then be further examined on the basis of the discourse methods. For instance, one future direction using this discourse method is the systematic analysis of authorship; Kurosawa adapted several Western literary works to Japanese films and with this discourse analysis of motivation type, a systematic, corpus-based *auteur* study (Tseng and Bateman, 2013) of Kurosawa's adaptations can be analysed. The corpus study of authorship can reflect whether Kurosawa employed similar strategies to adapt character developments to his films.

Finally, by showing the comparative discourse analyses in the media of film, comics and novels, this article has also shown the subtle relationship between the concept of media and genre—dominant genre devices are the main force in shaping our narrative knowledge beyond media boundaries.

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