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Narration in the Screenplay Text

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Abstract

This thesis examines the narration in screenplay texts. The aim is to explore how the screenwriter, through the screenplay text, communicates the potential film to the reader. The thesis thus situates the screenplay in a communicational context, and argues that the screenplay text is a means of communication. In many cases, the screenplay text is the writer's only means of communicating with a potential investor, thus determining whether the screenplay will fulfil its purpose of becoming a film.

Using a communicational approach enables a close examination of the different extratextual and intratextual narrating voices that communicate the story and the look of the potential film. The thesis relates the screenplay text to narrational theories from literary and film theory, and proposes its own narrative communication model suited to the screenplay. The model places the various narrating voices on different narrative levels that show the voices' relation to the text, the fiction, and the scene. The communication model also identifies the voices' addressees.

Through close readings of screenplay texts, the thesis examines how different narrating voices function and how they can be characterised. The discussions focus on how these voices use different techniques to narrate the story and indicate the look of the potential film. The discussions particularly highlight how the voices influence the readers' visualisation of the potential film, since this is a distinguishing feature of the screenplay text-type.

Narration in the Screenplay Text is an important contribution to text-based screenplay research. It offers a unique approach and a clear terminology that creates a platform for future screenplay research.

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Introduction

Screenplay researchers typically either focus on the screenwriting process or the screenplay text, which leads to a divided research field. Researchers who focus on the screenwriting process argue that a film does not solely originate from the screenplay text but rather from the film's development process, during which the screenplay is continuously revised and rewritten. Researchers who focus on the screenplay text argue that despite the multiple drafts that exist, each draft can be examined in its own right. One point most researchers agree on, however, is that more research is needed.

This thesis focuses on the screenplay text, with the specific aim of examining how the potential film is narrated. Studies of the screenplay text have previously been carried out, but what is unique with this study is that it uses a communicational approach that enables a more extensive and detailed examination of the different types of narrating voices that narrate the potential film. The concept of narration has not yet been discussed sufficiently in relation to the screenplay text. When examining what different types of narrating voices exist in screenplay texts and how they function, it is not only their narration of the story that is relevant but also how the narrating voices direct the readers' visualisations of the potential film.

A communicational approach is chosen for one simple reason: without a successful communication of the potential film between the writer and reader (through the text), the screenplay will not fulfil its purpose of becoming a film. If the communication of the potential film is unsuccessful, the screenplay will not be produced and the screenplay has then failed in its purpose, its raison d'être. The concept of communication therefore lies at the heart of every screenplay. This thesis examines the different types of narrating voices in relation to how they communicate the story and how they direct the reader's visualisation of the potential film. It is through identifying the different types of voices that exist in screenplay texts that makes it possible to examine how the communication between writer and reader functions.

The introduction gives a brief overview of the two strands of screenplay research (screenwriting research and screenplay text research) that dominate the field. It also presents the thesis's aim and approach, gives an outline of the chapters and discusses the selection of screenplays that are used throughout the thesis.

i. Screenwriting research

The key aspect of screenwriting research is that it relates the process of writing to the production of the film. Biographies, autobiographies and screenwriting manuals make up the bulk of texts concerned with screenwriting research while academic texts are in the minority.[1] It is primarily the academic texts that are relevant to this study, and particularly how they regard the screenplay text and the writer's contribution. Screenwriting manuals, despite their lack of academic weight, are also important to discuss since most of them set up rules, principles, and guidelines that seek to dictate what a screenplay text should and should not entail.

i.i. Screenwriting manuals

Screenwriting manuals have existed since the beginning of the twentieth century. Both Fredrick Palmer's book, *Photoplay Plot Encyclopedia: An Analysis of the Use in Photoplays of the Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations and Their Subdivisions*, and Frances Taylor Patterson's book *Cinema Craftsmanship: A Book for Photoplaywrights* were published in 1920. It was not until 1979, however, after Syd Field's *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* was published, that publications of manuals became the industry that it is today. Field refers to Aristotle's dramatic principles that are outlined in the *Poetics*, and he presents an easy to follow step-by-step guide for the novice screenwriter. Another widely read manual is Christopher Vogler's *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Storytellers and Screenwriters*, first published in 1992. Instead of turning to Aristotle's theories, Vogler uses Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* as a starting point when outlining the structural elements that all stories have in common. Robert McKee's position as one of the top screenwriting gurus became even more cemented after he was referred to in the film *Adaptation* (written by Charlie Kaufman, directed by Spike Jonze, 2002). McKee's book *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting*, published in 1997, tries to set itself apart from other manuals by stressing that it does not concern itself with rules but principles. McKee distinguishes between rules and principles as follows: 'A rule says, "You must do it this way." A principle says, "This works … and has through all remembered

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[1] For biographies and autobiographies see for example Richard Corliss (1974), Tom Stempel (1988), Lizzie Francke (1994), Patrick McGilligan (1986, 1991, 1997, 2006), William Froug (1972, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2005), Anthony Minghella (2005), and David Mamet (2007).

time."'[2] A more recent manual that tries to set itself apart from other manuals is Craig Batty's *Screenplays: How to Write and Sell Them*. Batty emphasises that his manual is neither a rulebook nor a set of principles but a guide that a screenwriter can 'come back to again and again'.[3]

Field, Vogler, McKee, and Batty are but four authors of screenwriting manuals of which there are many. Any imaginable problem that a screenwriter might face will have been addressed in one or more of the numerous manuals. There are the conventional manuals with straightforward, self-explanatory titles, such as Constance Nash and Virginia Oakey's *The Screenwriter's Handbook* (1978), Michael Straczynski's *The Complete Book of Scriptwriting* (1982), Irwin Blacker's *The Elements of Screenwriting* (1986), Linda Seger's *Making a Good Script Great* (1987), Michael Hauge's *Writing Screenplays that Sell: The Complete Guide to Turning Story Concepts into Movie and Television Deals* (1988), Laura Shellhardt's *Screenwriting for Dummies* (2003), Linda J. Cowgill's *The Art of Plotting* (2008), Linda Aronson's *The 21ˢᵗ Century Screenplay: A Comprehensive Guide to Writing Tomorrow's Films* (2010), and Joseph McBride's *Writing in Pictures: Screenwriting Made (Mostly) Painless* (2012).

Other manuals use less conventional titles, such as Denny Martin Flinn's *How Not to Write a Screenplay* (1999), Blake Snyder's *Save the Cat!* (2005), and William M. Akers's *Your Screenplay Sucks!* (2008). The majority of these screenwriting manuals provide the reader with tools, step-by-step guides, diagrams and paradigms to follow. Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush take a different approach and instead show the reader how to break the rules of conventional screenwriting in *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules* (2002). All of these manuals, however, have the same aim: to help the reader write a successful screenplay and to convince the reader that s/he can do it. The popularity of the manuals is apparent through their continued publication in new editions.

A noteworthy concern with the manuals is their position within the academic world. Many screenwriting students regard the screenwriting gurus as the field's authorities and screenwriting manuals sometimes make up the required reading lists. Even in 1945, Raymond Chandler stated that there could be no 'art of the screenplay' until there existed an 'available body of technical theory and practice'.[4] Steven Price and Ian Macdonald have launched more

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[2] Robert McKee, *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principle of Screenwriting* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 1997), p. 3.
[3] Craig Batty, *Screenplays: How to Write and Sell Them* (Harpenden: Kamera Books, 2012), p. 11.
[4] Raymond Chandler, 'Writers in Hollywood', *Atlantic Monthly*, 176.5 (1945), 50-54 (p. 53).

recent critiques of the manuals' position in screenwriting schools. Price remarks that the reading list of a literary student would not entail a how-to-book but acclaimed theoretical works such as Wayne C. Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction*.[5] Ian Macdonald similarly finds that screenwriting schools teach practice but not theory, and he therefore calls for more theoretical works that can be of use for screenwriting students.[6] Macdonald advocates 'a shift away from only considering the wise words of various masters […] towards an understanding of how the field relates to the field of power, how the field works internally, and how individual habitus subscribes to that field', which he finds can be achieved through a '"Bourdieu-an" critical approach'.[7]

Even though the manuals lack theoretical weight and are given too much influence in screenwriting courses, they are important to this study since the majority of them state what a screenplay text should entail and how the screenplay text should look. Macdonald highlights that manuals outline the current standard script format as well as the conventions of the field but 'why a screenplay must take that form is rarely explained or analysed, still less questioned'.[8] In this study it will become apparent that successful screenwriters do not adhere to the rules or guidelines set out by the manuals, which further highlights the need to question the manuals' content. The rules, principles and guidelines that the manuals prescribe will be discussed in more detail further on in this introduction.

Attempts to merge the less academic tone of the manuals with an academic approach have been made. David O. Thomas uses what he refers to as 'street language' to recognise whether a screenplay succeeds in achieving 'communion' between the screenplay and the reader, that is, whether or not the reader is involved in the text while reading.[9] Batty takes a somewhat different approach through expanding an existing model from manuals. Batty outlines existing material concerned with the protagonist's 'journey' (mainly referring to Vogler's *The Writer's Journey* [1992] and Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* [1993]), and assembles the material in a 'creative-critical' space in order to offer a re-examined and enhanced model of the hero's journey, which takes into account the

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[5] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 27.

[6] Ian Macdonald, 'Manuals are not Enough: Relating Screenwriting Practice to Theories', *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 1.2 (2004), pp. 260-74 (p. 260).

[7] Macdonald, 'Manuals are not Enough', pp. 268, 270.

[8] Macdonald, 'Manuals are not Enough', p. 267.

[9] David O. Thomas, 'Moments, Experiential Density, and Immediacy: The Screenplay as Blueprint for Communion', *Journal of Film and Video*, 36.3 (1984), pp. 43-49 (p. 43).

protagonist's emotional as well as physical journey.[10] A third attempt to bridge the gap between academic language and the language of manuals is made by Patrick Cattryse who seeks to clarify definitions given by manuals in order to create an 'interlingua' that meets academic standards but is accessible to the practitioner.[11] Cattrysse mainly focuses on redefining what the manuals refer to as the protagonist's needs and wants. His redefinition not only incorporates the manuals' definitions, but also the narratological distinction between story and plot. The attempts by Thomas, Batty, and Cattrysse successfully merge the tone of the manuals with a theoretical approach, but more attempts are needed in order to change screenwriting manuals' influence.

Returning to the manuals' prescribed rules and guidelines, the majority of manuals focus on structure, plot, and character. The focus on structure, plot, and character is not only apparent in manuals but also in academic works. J.J. Murphy's *Me and You and Memento and Fargo: How Independent Screenplays Work* (2007) is a good example of this. Despite arguing against the formula advocated by the most popular manuals, Murphy focuses mainly on structure, plot, and character, which is apparent since he devotes one part to the protagonist, one part to plot, and two parts to structure.[12] Discussions of how to actually write down the story in the screenplay text are given much less space. Instead most manuals highlight how important it is that a writer formats the screenplay text correctly, that is, the manuals emphasise that a screenplay needs to look 'accurate' according to industry standards. Shellhardt, for instance, writes that 'your format is your best shot at a good first impression. […] If your format looks professional, the readers will assume that you're a professional.'[13] She even goes as far as stating that 'a screenplay isn't a screenplay without the format. It's merely a set of ideas with no vehicle.'[14] Hauge similarly finds that the use of '[i]mproper format reduces the reader's emotional involvement'.[15] The format itself is often presented through a list of a screenplay's elements (slug line, description, character name, and character dialogue), followed by an example from a screenplay that follows the described formatting

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[10] Craig Batty, 'The Physical and Emotional Threads of the Archetypal Hero's Journey: Proposing Common Terminology and Re-examining the Narrative Model', *Journal of Screenwriting*, 1.2 (2010), pp. 291-308 (p. 293).

[11] Cattrysse, Patrick, 'The Protagonist's Dramatic Goals, Wants and Needs', *Journal of Screenwriting*, 1.1 (2010), pp. 83-97 (p. 84).

[12] J. J. Murphy, *Me and You and Memento and Fargo: How Independent Screenplays* Work (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007), p. v.

[13] Laura Shellhardt, *Screenwriting for Dummies* (New York: Wiley Publishing, 2003), p. 191.

[14] Shellhardt, p. 191.

[15] Michael Hauge, *Writing Screenplays that Sell: The Complete Guide to Turning Story Concepts into Movie and Television Deals* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 2011), p. 142.

standard.[16] Most manuals choose to not go into too much detail on the exact format (how much a dialogue line should be indented or how many spaces there should be between the action description and the dialogue), and instead more recent manuals recommend the writer to use screenwriting software that automatically formats the text (e.g. Final Draft and Celtx).[17]

Before leaving the discussion of format behind, it needs to be highlighted that many academic researchers advocate a change. Murphy, for instance, turns to the independent filmmakers in order to find possible alternatives. He argues that the screenplay format and the sheer volume of dialogue constitutes an obstacle for the director's interpretation, and especially his or her cinematic visualisation of the story. The use of improvisation, psychodrama, and visual storytelling can help directors to approach the actual making of the film as a discovery instead of a transformation from one medium to another. Murphy lists sketches, notes, outlines, treatments, storyboards, diagrams, photographs and short stories as alternative working tools during filming. Murphy concludes that 'the whole notion of what constitutes a screenplay should be fluid and adaptable to the aesthetic needs of a particular project'.[18]

Kathryn Millard shares Murphy's viewpoints, and she investigates how formatting conventions restrict innovations within the screenwriting practice. Millard highlights that many innovative filmmakers use cinematic scriptwriting techniques. During the development stage, Millard finds that many original, innovative screenplays are forced to be contained within strict, traditional formatting rules, and she emphasises the importance of the development stage being a process and not an end in itself. Since Millard believes that the screenplay format should allow for cinematic elements to be present from the start, she finds comics and graphic novels especially suited as models for the screenplay. Millard also suggests that improvisation should not be limited to acting but made available to all aspects of the film production. Since the new screenwriting software, Celtx (2009), enables the screenwriter to incorporate videos, images, and sounds along with the text, Millard concludes the article by stating that 'the digital era offers the possibility of reuniting screenplay and film production in an expanded notion of the screenplay'.[19]

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[16] See Shellhardt (2003) p. 192, Nelmes (2012), pp. 22-23, Flinn (1999) pp. 7-11.
[17] See for example Shellhardt (2003) p. 194 and Field (2005) p. 293.
[18] J. J. Murphy, 'No room for the fun stuff: the question of the screenplay in American indie cinema', *Journal of Screenwriting*, 1.1 (2010), pp. 175-95 (p. 193).
[19] Kathryn Millard, 'After the Typewriter: The Screenplay in a Digital Era', *Journal of Screenwriting*, 1.1 (2010), pp. 11-25 (p. 23).

When it comes to the question of how the formatting rules of the screenplay have been shaped, Steven Maras finds that after taking away the content of the rules all that is left is a 'gesture of particularism' that he defines as 'a process where discourse is wrapped around a particular industrial grouping or formation, with group interests embodied in a particular aesthetic orientation or preference'.[20] This leads Maras to call for formats that challenge the existing preferred aesthetic orientations. Maras further argues that new forms of scripting can open up new ways of thinking about production beyond the blueprint, which separates the conception from the execution stage.

The important point to keep in mind when discussing new and alternative ways to format screenplays is to not discount any of the texts as potential objects of research, but instead view the new and expanded idea of the screenplay text as an opportunity to widen the field of textual screenplay research. As this thesis focuses on screenplay texts that follow the current industry format, it is more relevant to discuss how the manuals encourage or discourage writers to use certain techniques. Manuals are quite particular when it comes to directing what the writer should and should not put into the text. These directions centre on four main points: only write what the spectator of the film will be able to see, avoid camera directions, keep descriptions short, and be cautious with 'we-formulations'.

All manuals looked at for this study emphasise that the writer should only write what can be seen on screen. What this means is, as Hauge states, that '[n]othing goes on the page that doesn't go on the screen'.[21] A screenplay text therefore should not contain a character's interior thoughts or background information. McBride emphasises that this is the most important 'rule' for a writer: '*Don't write what we can't see or hear*. If I can leave you with one basic rule about screenwriting, this is it.'[22]

The second most emphasised point in is that a writer should avoid 'directing on paper', that is, telling the director exactly how the film should be shot through giving camera directions.[23] Field emphasises that the 'writer's job is to tell the director *what* to shoot, not *how* to shoot it.'[24] Instead of using camera directions to convey how the potential film should

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[20] Steven Maras, *Screenwriting: History, Theory and Practice* (London: Wallflower Press, 2009), p. 155.

[21] Hauge, p. 140.

[22] McBride, p. 63 (emphasis in original).

[23] Linda Aronson, *The 21st Century Screenplay: A Comprehensive Guide to Writing Tomorrow's Films* (Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 2010), p. 467.

[24] Syd Field, *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting: A Step-by-Step Guide from Concept to Finished Script*, rev. edn (New York: Random House Publishing, 2005 [1979]), p. 218 (emphasis in original).

be visualised, the manuals encourage writers to describe the scene visually. Dennis Martin Flinn, for example, urges the writer to 'SEE your scene from the best angle. Without using camera talk, describe what you see.'[25] Hauge more specifically finds that in order 'to create a close-up in the mind of the reader, simply describe in detail the object the camera would move in on.'[26] Even though most manuals encourage the writer to use descriptions to indicate camera angles, they emphasise that the descriptions need to be short. Jill Nelmes stresses that '[t]he screenplay is condensed; every word should be essential to the story, and any excess trimmed to create a powerful momentum', and Flinn similarly warns against overwriting and encourages the writer to only '[w]rite the essence of the scene.'[27]

The last point that most manuals stress is that 'we-formulations' should be used with caution or not at all. McKee strongly argues against the use of it: 'Eliminate "we see" and "we hear." "We" doesn't exist.'[28] Most manuals, however, allow its use but simply caution against overuse. Shellhardt, for example, states that 'I usually caution against relying on this technique [the use of we] too frequently', and Flinn similarly finds that the writer 'must be careful not to overuse the audience-point-of-view [we]' as it 'can become strained'. [29]

All of these four points that the manuals emphasise will be returned to in the different chapters, where it will become clear that professional writers do not always follow the 'rules' and 'guidelines' that the manuals prescribe. The reality is that the style of writing differs greatly between writers. Nelmes finds that '[t]here is no set way of writing; the range of writing styles in screenwriting are many, even though it's often considered a formulaic medium and screenplay layout is standardized.'[30] What the manuals are lacking, then, are discussions that focus on style: what styles are available to a writer, and how the different styles can be used to communicate the potential film to the reader. In this study, different techniques that are used by writers are mentioned and, more importantly, what effects the different styles have are examined and discussed.

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[25] Denny Martin Flinn, *How Not to Write a Screenplay: 101 Common Mistakes most Screenwriters Make* (Los Angeles: Lone Eagle, 1999), p. 111.
[26] Hauge, p. 152.
[27] Jill Nelmes, *Writing the Screenplay: The Expert Guide* (London: Robert Hale, 2012), p. 15; Flinn, p. 81.
[28] McKee, p. 397 (emphasis in original).
[29] Shellhardt, p. 49; Flinn, p. 71.
[30] Nelmes, p. 32.

i.ii. Academic screenwriting research

The other area of screenwriting research to discuss is academic screenwriting research. What unifies the academic researchers that focus on the screenwriting process is that they regard the screenplay text as secondary to the film's development process. Ian Macdonald, for example, argues that the film originates from the 'screen idea' rather than the screenplay text. The term 'screen idea' was first used by Philip Parker who defined it as 'any notion of a potential screenwork [the potential film] held by one or more people, whether or not it is possible to describe it on paper or by other means'.[31] Macdonald defines the screen idea as 'the essence of the future screenwork that is discussed and negotiated by those involved in reading and developing the screenplay and associated documents.'[32] The screenplay text is then defined as only a partial record of the screen idea, intended to 'convey (or at least record) the screen idea, but the idea itself is formed in the minds of all those involved in its production'.[33] Through regarding the text as a partial record of the screen idea, Macdonald is able to assign the text to its secondary position.

In order to analyse the screen idea, and screenwriting, Macdonald refers to work by Roland Barthes whose focus on the reader, as opposed to the writer, allows Macdonald to investigate how the readers of the screenplay collectively de- and reconstruct the screen idea during the process of developing the screenwork. Giving the collective reader a persona leads Macdonald to distinguish a second level of readership. The individual reader, thus, comes to occupy a lower level of readership and the collective reader a higher level of readership. This distinction, again, puts emphasis on the development stage where the collective reader exists. Since readers of the screen idea interact with the text, Macdonald, using Barthes' terms, defines the screen idea as a 'writerly' text, and the screenwork, since it is not interactive, as 'readerly'.[34] The term writerly refers to a text that 'is not a finished product ready for consumption', whilst a 'readerly' text is a finished product and a text that 'we know how to read'.[35]

Furthermore, Macdonald uses Barthes's distinction between 'plaisir' and 'jouissance' in connection to how a screenplay is evaluated by its reader. The term 'plaisir' is connected to the readerly text and signifies a general pleasure, while 'jouissance' is a pleasure that

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[31] Ian Macdonald, 'Disentangling the screen idea', *Journal of Media Practice*, 5.2 (2004), pp. 89-99 (p. 89).
[32] Macdonald, 'Disentangling', p. 89.
[33] Macdonald, 'Disentangling', p. 90.
[34] Macdonald, 'Disentangling', pp. 94-95.
[35] Macdonald, 'Disentangling', p. 94.

discomforts, unsettles, and forces the reader to question his or her assumptions.[36] In 2003
Macdonald carried out a survey that was aimed at exploring how the readers of screenplays,
or screen ideas, evaluate and respond to the texts. The result shows that readers call for more
originality while simultaneously not wanting a text that is too unfamiliar. Connecting the
result from 2003 with Barthes' terms, Macdonald comes to the conclusion that readers want
to experience an emotion of jouissance but they also want to be given the reassuring feeling of
plaisir. Macdonald connects the reader's need for plaisir with the fact that in the end the
screenwork, that is the film, has to be readerly (a finished product).

Returning to Macdonald's definition of the screen idea as a writerly text (an
unfinished product), and his argument that the writerly development of the readerly
screenwork includes creating successive versions of the screenplay, it can be argued that each
successive version of the screenplay is in fact a readerly text, and that it only is when
members of a film's production team start to interact with one of the versions that it becomes
writerly. Regarding each successive draft of the screenplay as a readerly text would also
indicate that the screenplay text is an object in itself, which can be separate from the screen
idea. When discussing the screenplay text during a film's production stage, the version being
discussed can be regarded as a writerly text that is a partial record of the screen idea, but the
text itself can also be regarded as a readerly text if the text would be taken out of the
production process.

Millard, similar to Macdonald, argues that the screenplay text should not be regarded
as the sole source of the potential film, since the screen idea is created and recreated during
the development stage. The creation and recreation of the screenplay text is also the reason for
Millard opposing the blueprint metaphor, since the metaphor lends a technical element and a
sense of stability to the screenplay that she believes it does not possess.[37] Millard instead
argues that the screenplay should be considered as an 'open text' that remains 'fluid'
throughout the production of the film, and viewed as 'a creative record of a screen idea – an
idea in flux and transition, an idea on the way to becoming a film'.[38] Similarly to Macdonald,
Millard finds that the text is secondary to the development process and that the text itself is a
work in progress, that is, an unfinished product.

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[36] Macdonald, 'Disentangling', p. 95.
[37] The blueprint metaphor compares the screenplay to an architectural drawing that is used during the
construction of a house.
[38] Millard, pp. 15, 17.

Maras, in line with Millard, argues that a screenplay never reaches a stage of completeness. This leads him to introduce the 'object problem', which refers to the difficulty in defining an 'object' of screenwriting that can be studied.[39] The object problem can be seen as one of the core issues that surround screenplay research, and it can be identified as one of the dividing factors between the two strands of research. Screenplay text researchers obviously regard the text as an 'object' worthy of studying independently of the production of the film, while screenwriting researchers argue that there is no 'object' to study and instead focus on the production of a 'screen idea', a 'writerly' text that is in a constant state of fluidity and motion.

Maras also argues against regarding the screenplay as a literary form as this, in his view, separates it from the film production, restricts its intermediality, and lets it be treated as an autonomous work. Maras concludes that '[b]y seeing the script as autonomous from the film, the screenplay as literature approach risks painting a poor picture of the relation between film and script.'[40] Maras thereby clearly argues that a screenplay should be researched in relation to the production of the film.

The main concern with screenwriting research is not its focus on the development process but the consistent efforts to disregard the screenplay text as an object in itself. Macdonald refers to the written text, the screenplay, as a partial record of the collective screen idea, and Millard refers to it as a creative record. By defining the screenplay as a *record* of something, Millard and Macdonald simplify the screenplay text and reduce the screenwriter(s)' contribution to that of a scribe, a note-taker. Macdonald further states that 'the assumption – whether generally negative or not – appears to be that better treatment for screenwriters lies in recognizing their authority as true originators of the screen idea'.[41] Again, this statement diminishes the role of the screenwriter. Screenwriters do often create the original screen idea and participate in the development process but they, more importantly, write each successive draft of the screenplay during the development process. Screenwriters transform the fluid writerly screen idea into a fixed readerly text that expresses the essence of the screen idea in an engaging way. Screenwriter William Goldman finds that non-writer participants in 'creative meetings' do not understand the work that is demanded of the screenwriter to execute the suggested changes while keeping the story intact and

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[39] Maras, pp. 11-15.
[40] Maras, p. 48.
[41] Ian Macdonald, '"…So it's not surprising I'm neurotic" The Screenwriter and the Screen Idea Work Group', *Journal of Screenwriting*, 1.1 (2010), pp. 45-58 (p. 47).

functioning.[42] Even though a screenplay text can be considered to be 'fluid' and constantly changing, the fact remains that there is a writer who has to write down each change and produce each successive draft of the screenplay text. Claudia Sternberg highlights the importance of each draft when stating that 'the equality of all versions still enables the analyst […] to examine each individual text in its own right'.[43] Considering that a written text always exists, it is important to examine what that text contains and how that text communicates the potential film.

In chapter 1 of the present study the communicational approach is introduced, and it is argued that the approach can not only be used by screenplay text researchers but also by researchers that focus on the screenwriting process. It is not the intention of this thesis to disregard or discount screenwriting research, but rather to present an approach that can unify the two strands.

ii. Screenplay text research

Screenplay text researchers do not focus on the screenwriting process but on the screenplay text. Kevin Alexander Boon, for example, finds that 'the primary object under examination in screenplay studies should be the written text'. [44] Boon further regards the screenplay as the ideal modernist work, and argues that the screenplay is as amenable to literary criticism as stage plays, novels, and poetry. In order to define the specific literary style of the screenplay's scene descriptions, Boon refers to the imagist movement's principles as defined by Amy Lowell and Ezra Pound, and he finds that the screenplay form shares many of the characteristic elements of the imagist movement. Boon concludes that '[t]he screenplay […] would tend […] to be the literary form most conducive to capturing experience as it allows little room for authorial commentary or psychological musings.'[45] Boon also emphasises Aristotle's dominance over the craft of writing and applies Aristotle's theories to the screenplay.[46] Through focusing on Aristotle, however, Boon ends up concentrating more on

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[42] William Goldman, *Adventures in the Screen Trade: A Personal View of Hollywood*, 2nd edn (London: Abacus, 1996 [1983]), pp. 95-99.

[43] Claudia Sternberg, *Written for the Screen: The American Motion Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 40.

[44] Kevin Alexander Boon, *Script Culture and the American Screenplay* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008), p. ix.

[45] Kevin Alexander Boon, 'The Screenplay, Imagism, and Modern Aesthetics', *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 36.4 (2008), pp. 259-71 (p. 270).

[46] Boon, *Script Culture*, pp. 45-85. See also Boon (2001).

structure than on the components of the text, and he does not discuss how the text narrates the story or how it indicates the reader to visualise the potential film.

Jeff Rush and Cynthia Baughman, in line with Boon, view the screenplay as a literary text. Rush and Baughman examine how the use of language determines meaning and focus in screenplay texts, and they find that 'screenplays can be understood only as a form of writing that communicates much of its meaning through the connotative nuances of language'.[47] Their statement is easy to link to this thesis's argument that a screenplay not only needs to communicate the story of the potential film but also indicate how the reader should visualise it, especially considering that indications of how the film should be visualised are often given indirectly. Rush and Baughman further argue that 'reading a screenplay is like any other interpretative reading, a matter of both looking through language to see what is represented and looking at language to understand how it reflects back on the writer.'[48] Related to a communicational approach, this statement can be regarded as identifying the need to both look at the communicating narrating voices that exist within the text as well as how their narrations reflect back on the writer. Another useful distinction that Rush and Baughman introduce is the distinction between a screenplay text's dramatic and narrative voices; the dramatic voice referring to the events as they would appear even if no one were there to report them, and the narrative voice referring to the shaping of the events that takes place as they are being told. Rush and Baughman use the separation to help them locate the meaning in stories that, instead of focusing on the working out of the events themselves, focus on the tension between the events and their telling. This distinction will be relevant when identifying and defining the fictional narrating voices of the screenplay text, which will be the purpose of chapter 4 of this study.

Possibly the most influential article that discusses the screenplay as a text is Pier Paolo Pasolini's 'The Screenplay as a "Structure that wants to be another Structure"'. Pasolini argues that the main characteristic of the screenplay, and its primary structural element, is that it alludes to a potential cinematographic work. If a screenplay successfully accomplishes this allusion it can, according to Pasolini, be defined as an autonomous work. It is thereby a screenplay text's allusion to the potential film that defines it as a screenplay. Pasolini identifies a sign in the screenplay as being oral (phoneme), written (grapheme), and visual (kineme) at the same time. He states that the reader of a screenplay needs to integrate the

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[47] Jeff Rush and Cynthia Baughman, 'Language as Narrative Voice: The Poetics of the Highly Inflected Screenplay', *Journal of Film and Video*, 49.3 (1997), pp. 28-37 (p. 28).
[48] Rush and Baughman, p. 30.

normal path of sign-meaning with the abnormal path of sign-as-kineme-meaning in order to
identify the full meaning in a screenplay. Pasolini concludes:

> In the case of the screenplay-text the characteristic technique is a special and canonical
> request of collaboration from the *reader to see the kineme in the grapheme, above all,*
> *and thus to think in images, reconstructing in his own head the film to which the*
> *screenplay alludes as a potential work.*[49]

The word of the screenplay is thereby the sign simultaneously of a narrative structure and a
cinematic structure, but Pasolini emphasises that the screenplay also has a structure of its
own; a structure that is 'diachronic' – an actual process consisting of a dynamic tension that
moves between the narrative structure and the cinematic structure.[50]

It is particularly Pasolini's emphasis on the screenplay text's allusions to the potential
film that is relevant to this thesis. Pasolini's identification of the cinematic allusions as the
key aspect of a screenplay is typical for both screenplay and screenwriting research. Even in
1942, Dudley Nichols argued for the incorporation of cinematic visualisations in screenplays
when urging screenwriters to write '*as* a camera', and Alain Robbe-Grille stated that the
screenplay's style lies in its cinematic form in 1961.[51] Sternberg declares that it is through the
use of 'multimedial devices' that 'the particularities of filmic realization and a writing style
characteristic of the text-type are manifest'.[52] Maras, in turn, refers to Béla Balázs, who places
'the production of "specific visual effects" and not literary effects at the centre of
scriptwriting'.[53] Gary Davis argues that 'a screenplay is a story told with word-pictures', but
he emphasises that the screenplay 'must use and display the best literary quality possible' in
order to make the director recognise the visualisation intended by the screenwriter.[54] Davis
concludes that '[i]t is upon the imagistic suggestions of the screenplay, through the writer's
selection of words, that the film will develop its tone and timbre'.[55] Davis's conclusion that a
film's 'tone and timbre' is developed in the screenplay is opposed by Douglas Garrett

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[49] Pier Paolo Pasolini, 'The Screenplay as a "Structure that Wants to Be Another Structure"',
American Journal of Semiotics, 4.1-2 (1986), pp. 53-72 (p. 59, emphasis in original).
[50] Pasolini, p. 59.
[51] Dudley Nichols, 'Film Writing', *Theatre Arts*, 26.12 (1942), pp. 770-74 (p. 773, emphasis in
original).
Alain Robbe-Grillet, 'Introduction', in *Last Year at Marienbad* (London: John Calder Publishers Ltd.,
1962), pp. 5-14.
[52] Sternberg, p. 66.
[53] Maras, p. 47.
[54] Gary Davis, 'Rejected Offspring: The Screenplay as a Literary Genre', *New Orleans Review*, 11.2
(1984), pp. 90-94 (p. 92).
[55] Davis, p. 93.

Winston, who argues that it is impossible for a screenplay to indicate 'how a film will breathe and pulsate'.[56] Neither argument, however, mentions whether a screenplay has to breathe and pulsate or have a tone and timbre of its own.

Within screenplay research more emphasis is often put on the potential film than on the screenplay text. Price argues that it is necessary for screenplay researchers to stop validating the screenplay through connecting it to other forms, such as the potential film, and regard the screenplay as a text in its own right instead of as a mere shadow of the form it is being compared to. He refers to Sternberg's repeated comparisons between the screenplay and the dramatic play as one example of this.[57] Another example, also discussed by Price, is Boon's analysis of screenplay dialogue. For his analysis Boon studies David Mamet's adaptation of his own stage play *Glengarry Glen Ross*, which Price points out makes the analysis more a study of a stage play than a screenplay. Considering how consistently the screenplay is validated through relating it to other text-types, and how often the screenplay is regarded as secondary to the film, one aim of this thesis is to emphasise the screenplay text. Theories from other research areas (film theory, literary theory, etc.) will be used, but only as a point of departure; the actual discussions and examinations will solely focus on screenplay texts.

The most extensive studies that focus on the screenplay text are Claudia Sternberg's *Written for the Screen: the American Motion-Picture Screenplay as Text*, published in 1997, and Steven Price's *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism*, published in 2010. Sternberg's aim is to 're-direct research on the genre of the screenplay' from research that records 'difficulties of screenplay text production in an abstract form' to research that submits screenplays to a 'textual, functional and aesthetic investigation.'[58] Price discusses the value of screenplay texts, and relates the elements of the screenplay to critical theories from literature and film. Neither Sternberg nor Price, however, discuss the concept of narration sufficiently.

Sternberg and Price mainly examine the concept of authorship, the existence of multiple textual drafts, and the elements that make up the screenplay text. It is primarily their discussions of a screenplay's textual elements that are relevant to this thesis, but Sternberg makes the important reflection that prior screenplay research has by 'constantly questioning

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[56] Macdonald, 'Disentangling', p. 90.
[57] Price, pp. 32-33.
[58] Claudia Sternberg, *Written for the Screen: The American Motion-Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 230.

authorship [...] indirectly negated the existence of a text'.[59] She thereby emphasises the importance of acknowledging all screenplay texts independent from their author. This study discusses the question of authorship in relation to the concept of communication instead of in relation to a text's validity, focusing on how a writer, through the screenplay text, communicates the potential film to the reader. The concept of the writer and its communication is the main topic of chapter 2, but it will also be discussed in chapter 3 where it is put in relation to the concept of the implied author (or implied writer in the case of screenplay texts). The concept of the implied writer has not been discussed within screenplay research. This thesis argues that the concept is better suited and more useful to research that focuses on screenplays than to research that focuses on other text-types. What makes the concept better suited to screenplays is the uncertainty that surrounds the authorship of screenplays (ghost-writers, multiple authors, subsequent rewrites by different authors, etc.); precisely what it is that Sternberg argues makes researchers deny the existence of the text.

Both Sternberg and Price divide their discussion of the elements of the screenplay text into examinations of the scene text and the dialogue text. Sternberg finds that the scene text consists of the comment, description, and report mode. She argues that screenplays, in addition to the 'literary comment' that explains or interprets the events and the characters, also contain 'technical' and 'paratechnical' comments.[60] Technical comments refer to instructions for the camera, sound, and technical crew, and paratechnical comments refer to indirect technical instructions that are often expressed through the use of 'we-constructions'.[61] Through distinguishing between technical and literary comments Sternberg makes a distinction between story information and allusions to the potential film. Sternberg does not, however, comment on or discuss this distinction further. The separation between information concerned with the fictional world and information concerned with how the potential film should be visualised is in this thesis used as a way of distinguishing between different narrating voices. Chapter 1 discusses and examines the separation between the different types of information.

Price, on the other hand, emphasises the importance of not separating what he calls the 'literary' aspects of a screenplay text from the 'industrial' aspects, and of regarding them as effects of a screenplay's dynamic structure.[62] Even though this thesis will distinguish between

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[59] Sternberg, p. 22.
[60] Sternberg, p. 73.
[61] Sternberg, pp. 74-75.
[62] Price, p. 115.

fictional information and allusions to the potential film, both of these types of information are often integrated and used simultaneously to narrate the potential film. Since both types of information ultimately serve the narrational needs of the screenplay, the terms 'technical' and 'industrial' are avoided, and allusions to the potential film are instead referred to as 'extrafictional' information.

Price further finds that screenplay texts differ greatly in their use of the comment mode, and that it is the descriptions of camera movement together with the report mode's focus on character action that gives the screenplay its 'characteristic quality of dynamic movement in time'.[63] Even though both Price and Sternberg identify the comment mode of a screenplay to be the narrational mode that distinguishes the screenplay as a text-type, they do not discuss or separate the different types of comments sufficiently. Chapter 5 of this study identifies the different types of comments that exist in screenplay texts, and it examines how the different types of comments function in the text to narrate the potential film in detail.

It is the concept of narration and the existence of a 'narrating agent' in screenplay texts that most requires further examination. Price argues that the screenplay is the textual medium that comes closest to 'showing' an event without narrating it, but that it is impossible for a screenplay to truly 'show' an event.[64] How an event is narrated, however, is not discussed further. Sternberg finds that a narrating agent does not exist in screenplay texts, but she identifies two narrating voices: the impersonal narrative voice and the personal narrative voice.[65] Since Sternberg defines the impersonal narrative voice as 'the narrative *agent* that guides the choices of images' while stating that a narrating agent does not exist in screenplay texts, her argument is inconsistent.[66] The need to discuss whether or not a narrating agent (a narrator) exists in screenplay texts is great, but it is even more important to examine what benefits there are to positing such an agent and how that agent communicates the potential film.

Regarding the concept of a narrating agent, the emphasis on the film in most critical discussions is once again evident. Barbara Korte and Ralf Schneider, for example, argue that the scene text is 'essential in suggesting the later film's narrativity'.[67] Korte and Schneider do not, however, discuss the narrativity of the screenplay, but only conclude that comments on

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[63] Price, p. 114.
[64] Price, p. 52.
[65] Sternberg, p. 133.
[66] Sternberg, p. 133 (my emphasis).
[67] Barbara Korte and Ralf Schneider, 'The Published Screenplay – A New Literary Genre?', *AAA – Arbeiten aus Anglistik and Amerikanistik*, 25.1 (2000), pp. 89-105 (p. 98).

the characters and the action are reminiscent of narrational comments in the novel. Sternberg finds that a narrating agent is possible in the film, but she, as previously stated, is inconsistent in her discussion of the screenplay's narration. Price argues that narration must take place in the screenplay, but he does not identify the origin of that narration, and he does not discuss the existence of a narrating agent. Price concludes that the screenplay could be regarded as the source of the film's narration, but the question of the *screenplay's* narrational source remains unanswered. Without a clear understanding of how a screenplay text's narration functions, that is, how the story is told and who tells it, there can be no complete understanding of the screenplay as a text-type. The existence of a narrating agent is discussed in chapter 4, where a definition suited to the screenplay text is proposed. How that agent communicates and functions is then examined in chapter 5.

The other element of the screenplay text that Price and Sternberg discuss is the dialogue. Despite stating that the dialogue text is not subordinate to the scene text, Sternberg devotes considerably fewer pages to it. Price regards Sternberg's marginalisation of the dialogue as typical of screenplay research.[68] Both Sternberg and Price refer to Manfred Pfister's categorisation of the verbal communication in drama when discussing screenplay dialogue, but while Price applies Pfister's categories in his analysis, Sternberg does not. Price finds that the difference between stage play and screenplay dialogue is the proportion of dialogue that belongs to each of Pfister's categories.[69] Since this thesis focuses on a screenplay text's narration, the dialogue will be examined in relation to the concept of narration, that is, a character's narrating voice. It is not regarded as being subordinate to the scene text, but, as both Price and Sternberg highlight, the defining aspect of screenplay texts is the allusion to the potential film, which takes place in the scene text. The scene text is therefore of greater interest, and it is examined through discussing how the allusions to the potential film appear in the text, and what different narrating voices are responsible for them. Examinations of the dialogue will therefore not be allocated an equal amount of pages in comparison to the scene text, but chapter 6 is solely devoted to discussions of how characters can narrate the potential film.

A concept that is barely mentioned within screenplay research (both text-based and screenwriting-based) is the concept of focalisation. The term was coined by Gérard Genette to refer to the answer to the question 'who sees?'.[70] Sternberg briefly mentions the concept, and

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[68] Price, p. 137.
[69] Sternberg, p. 93, Price, pp. 146-49.
[70] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p. 186.

she finds that screenplays can indicate the focalisation of the potential film, which again puts more emphasis on the film than on the screenplay text.[71] Sternberg does, however, state that character focalisations exist in screenplay texts when a character's specific point of view is given, and in a footnote she acknowledges that if a character is not present to focalise, the focalisation 'must then be related to the impersonal narrative "voice"'. [72] This in itself is not a sufficient discussion of possible focalisations in relation to screenplays. Considering that it is through focalisation points that the space of the potential film can be indicated, it is bewildering that the concept is not discussed more within screenplay research, especially as it is the visual element of the screenplay that most researchers emphasise. Chapter 7 offers a definition of the concept of focalisation and examines how it appears and is used within screenplay texts.

Even though they are not an element of the screenplay text, the readers of screenplays also need to be examined. Sternberg provides the most detailed discussion of a screenplay text's different types of readers. Her different types of readers are identified based on where in the potential film's production process they are situated. The identified readers are the 'property' stage reader that either invests in the screenplay or rejects it, the 'blueprint' stage reader who is a member of the potential film's production team and is responsible for transforming the text into the film, and the 'reading' stage reader who reads the screenplay after the film has been produced.[73] Sternberg's discussion of a screenplay's addressees, however, lacks one key element: potential intratextual addressees. Sternberg only focuses on the extratextual addressees that exist outside of the text without mentioning who the fictional narrating voice addresses. In the final chapter of this thesis, chapter 8, both a screenplay's extratextual and intratextual addressees are defined and examined. The receiving section of the narrative communication model suited to the screenplay text will then be postulated, which completes the model.

iii. The thesis's aim and approach

The aim of this thesis is to examine how screenplay texts narrate the potential film. The main focus is therefore on identifying the different narrating voices that exist within screenplay texts and discerning how they function. The thesis follows the strand of screenplay research

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[71] Sternberg, p. 141.
[72] Sternberg, p. 141.
[73] Sternberg, p. 48.

that focuses on the screenplay as a text-type, and the screenplay text is therefore regarded as a 'literary text' where every version (every draft) can be examined in its own right.

In order for a screenplay to be produced it needs to successfully communicate the potential film to an investor, which often is a producer or a director. If the communication is unsuccessful the screenplay will not succeed in fulfilling its purpose of becoming a film. Considering that the communication between the writer and reader is essential to achieving this purpose, this thesis uses a communicational approach in its examinations of the narrating voices. Each identified narrating voice is thus defined in relation to what it communicates, to whom it communicates, and how the voice's communication relates to the other narrating voices, the story, and the text.

As was seen in the review of existing screenplay research, researchers neither agree on whether a narrating agent exists, nor on how it should be defined. It is crucial to identify and examine these narrating voices in order to gain an understanding of how the screenplay text communicates the potential film to the reader. Even though the potential film forms a significant part of the screenplay text, this thesis's focus is on the text and not the film: how the film exists in the text will be examined but the film itself will not be referenced. The focus on the text is apparent in that only six films (as opposed to 38 screenplays) are mentioned in the thesis, and in those instances only briefly. The strict focus on the text is primarily because the text is the screenwriter's main, and often only, way of communicating the potential film to investors. The completed film plays no part in the communication's success and is therefore irrelevant when examining how a screenplay text's narrating voices communicate the potential film.[74] The strict focus on the text also emphasises that the screenplay text does not need to be compared to other text-types in order to be validated.

This thesis provides a set of terms for the different narrating voices that exist in screenplay texts. Through identifying the voices and placing them in a communicational context, it is possible to examine how a screenplay text's narration functions in greater detail, and to what effect the different narrating voices can be used.

iv. Outline of chapters

The use of a communicational approach where the identified narrating voices are placed in a hierarchical model offers a unique opportunity to structure the thesis according to the levels of a communication model. Chapter 1 introduces the communicational approach used

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[74] It is, of course, of interest to examine how the completed film differs from the potential film communicated in the screenplay text but this is not the focus in this thesis.

throughout the thesis, and argues that the different narrating voices that occupy the different levels of the communication model can be separated by the information that they communicate. The chapter concludes by offering a narrative communication model suited to screenplay texts. The model identifies the following narrating agents: the writer, the extrafictional voice (the implied writer), the impersonal fictional voice, the personal fictional voice, and characters. Two chapters are devoted to the writer and the extrafictional voice. Chapter 2 identifies and defines the two narrating voices, and chapter 3 examines the extrafictional voice's communication and its relation to the real writer. Chapters 4 and 5 are dedicated to the two fictional narrating voices: the impersonal fictional voice and the personal fictional voice. The voices are defined in chapter 4, and how they function and can be characterised is the focus of chapter 5. Chapter 6 focuses on how characters narrate in screenplay texts, and chapter 7 examines how the space of the potential film is indicated in screenplay texts through the use of different focalising agents. The final chapter (chapter 8) is devoted to identifying and examining the extratextual and intratextual receivers of the narrating voices' communications.

Each narrating voice is discussed with two purposes in mind: defining the voice in relation to the screenplay text, and examining how it functions. In order to define a voice, how the voice is discussed and defined within literary and film theory is first considered. How the voice functions is then examined through how the voice appears and is used in screenplay texts. The twofold purpose makes the chapter references unbalanced: the discussion of how to define a voice in relation to the screenplay text relies heavily on references from literary, film, and screenplay research, whereas the examination of how a voice functions relies on screenplay quotations. The amount and length of screenplay quotations are necessary since the purpose of the thesis is to show how the narrating voices communicate the potential film, which can only be accomplished through substantial examples from screenplay texts that display how the voices communicate. Where a screenplay quotation is given, the typical font (courier) and format of screenplays is used in order to clearly separate screenplay quotations from other quotations. The selection of screenplays chosen for this study is discussed further on in the introduction, but first each chapter is presented in more detail.

Chapter 1 aims to raise and answer the following questions: why communication is a central concept for screenplay researchers, how a screenplay can be regarded as both a means of communication and as a result of a communication, who it is that can communicate through a screenplay, and what a screenplay communicates. After an introduction that relates the screenplay to the concept of communication, the chapter considers existing

communication models from literary and film theory before proposing a narrative communication model specifically suited to screenplay texts. The proposed narrative communication model displays the different narrating voices that exist in screenplay texts and positions the voices hierarchically in relation to each other, the text, and the fictional story. The voices are then further identified in relation to the information they communicate, that is, whether they provide the reader with *fictional* or *extrafictional* information. Fictional information concerns the fictional story (e.g. the story, the characters, the action, etc.), whereas the extrafictional information concerns the real world where the potential film will be produced (e.g. camera directions, production notes, etc.). The separation between fictional and extrafictional information provides a clear way of differentiating the identified narrating voices, and it leads to a better understanding of how the screenplay communicates the story and indicates how the reader should visualise the potential film.

Chapter 2 focuses on defining the two highest levels of narration, which are occupied by the real writer and the extrafictional voice (the implied writer). The screenplay as text-type is unique in that more than one writer is often involved in the writing process and not all writers receive official credit for their contribution. How the writer comes across through the screenplay text, and how the image that the reader creates of the writer relates to the real writing situation, is therefore of interest. The screenplay text, because of its complicated writing situation, is more suited to the concept of the implied writer than other text-types, such as novels and films. The chapter discusses how literary and film researchers either accept or reject the concept of the implied author, and after giving arguments of why the concept is valid in case of screenplays, the chapter proposes a definition of the implied writer suited to screenplay texts. The chapter also identifies the extrafictional voice as the implied writer's textual representation, which provides the reader with information concerned with the real world where the production of the film will take place. Since the screenplay text's allusions to the production of the potential film are often direct (rather than indirect) through the use of abbreviations, technical jargon, and camera directions, the implied writer has a unique position in screenplay texts as it communicates directly with the reader throughout the text. In other text-types, such as novels, the implied writer can only communicate directly to the reader through forewords.

Chapter 3 focuses on exactly how the implied writer communicates through the extrafictional voice. The extrafictional voice carries out a direct communication as well as an indirect communication. The direct communication consists of direct allusions to the production of the potential film, and the indirect communication involves the communication

of the implied writer's attitude and beliefs. In addition to discerning how the extrafictional voice communicates, the chapter also discusses the extrafictional voice's relation to the reader and the real writer(s). The discussion mainly focuses on how a reader's knowledge of the writer influences their construction of the implied writer, but also on the fact that different readers can engage with different aspects of the implied writer's communication. A reader who is part of the potential film's production team, for example, engages more with the extrafictional voice's allusions to the potential film than a reader that reads the screenplay after it has been produced. The discussion concerned with the implied writer's relation to the real writer(s) focuses on differences between the two communicating voices, and the chapter argues that a writer can choose to create an implied writer that is more or less similar to themselves.

Chapter 4 and 5 are devoted to the third and fourth levels of narration: the impersonal fictional voice and the personal fictional voice. Chapter 4 mainly discusses whether or not the fictional narrator is a viable concept in the case of screenplay texts, and the chapter argues that positing the concept is more valid within screenplay research than within literary or film research. Positing an impersonal fictional narrator serves a very clear function: it separates the fictional information the reader is provided with from the extrafictional information provided by the extrafictional voice. The concept of the impersonal fictional voice also provides the researcher with a tool to examine the defining feature of the screenplay text: the simultaneous narration of the fictional story of the potential film and indications of how it should be visualised. The personal fictional voice is generally accepted as a valid concept within both literary and film theory. In screenplays it exists in the dialogue section of the text, and it is defined by its personal voice and its clear origin. Considering that the personal fictional voice is not as questioned a concept as the impersonal fictional voice, it is not given as much space in the chapter.

Chapter 5 examines how the impersonal fictional voice and the personal fictional voice function in the text and how the voices can be characterised. When discussing the communication by the impersonal fictional voice it becomes clear that most professional screenwriters do not follow the rules or guidelines prescribed by screenwriting manuals. The main functions that the fictional voices carry out are their reporting of the action and their descriptions of characters and locations, their indirect allusions to the potential film, and their explanatory, interpretative, evaluative, and reflective comments on the action and on the characters. The fictional voices can be characterised through their degree of perceptibility, their knowledgeability, their communicativeness, and their self-consciousness. How

perceptible, knowledgeable, communicative, and self-conscious a voice is, is mainly due to how much they comment and what type of comment they make. It is also through the use of comments that it becomes most apparent that professional screenwriters do not follow the advice given by screenwriting manuals.

How characters narrate their own stories within the story of the potential film through embedded narratives is the focus of chapter 6. This makes chapter 6 the chapter that focuses on dialogue since characters' narrations exist in the dialogue. Since the focus is on characters' narrations, the chapter discusses characters as narrators rather than as speakers. A character can narrate in two main ways: through providing inside views of themselves or through telling embedded narratives that are either told or shown. A character can narrate inside views of themselves through a voice-over that communicates their thoughts directly. A character can also give their thoughts through free indirect discourse in the scene text. The characters' narrations do not therefore solely exist within the dialogue section of the screenplay, but also in the scene text. The most straightforward way for a character to narrate is to tell its own story through showing and telling it in an embedded narrative. An embedded narrative, however, is not always completely told by the character as the embedded narrative often contains information that the character does not possess. An embedded narrative can thus often be attributed to the impersonal fictional voice instead of a character. This, however, makes it even more important to examine the difference between an embedded narrative that is attributable to a character from one that is attributable to an impersonal fictional voice.

Chapter 7 focuses on how the space of the potential film is created through the use of different focalisation points. The concept of focalisation, as already stated, is barely discussed within screenplay research despite the fact that most researchers emphasise the importance of a screenplay's 'cinematic' and 'pictorial' elements. The chapter argues that Genette's question of 'who sees?', which he uses as a way to identify the focaliser, should be substituted for the question 'who constructs the space of the potential film for the reader?' in the case of screenplay texts. When answering that question the extrafictional voice, the impersonal fictional voice, and the characters are identified as possible focalisers in screenplay texts. In addition to identifying the possible focalising agents that exist in screenplays, the chapter also examines the objects of focalisation, which are either perceptible or imperceptible, as well as the relationship between the focaliser and the focalised object.

Chapter 8 discusses the receiving end of the communication model, and answers the questions 'who do the narrating voices address?' and 'how are they addressed?' The addressee of each narrating voice is thereby identified and examined. When identifying and

defining the different addressees, existing terminology from screenplay research, film research, and literary research (both narratologcial research and rhetoric research) are considered. The identified addressees are: the actual audience (the real reader), the extrafictional audience, the fictional audience, and the characters. What makes the addressees of the screenplay unique are the actual audience and the extrafictional audience. The actual audience (the reader) is unique since the reader is often a member of the potential film's production and thereby interacts with the text. The extrafictional audience (the reader that the writer has in mind when writing) is also unique since the writer of a screenplay usually writes to a reader that is part of the film industry. For the writer, this is the only reader that matters, as it is the film industry reader that either puts the screenplay through to production or rejects it.

v. Screenplay selection

The screenplay selection for this thesis comprises 38 screenplays which were chosen following four criteria: the screenplay has been published, the screenplay was published after 2000, the screenplay has either won or been nominated for an award within the screenwriting category (e.g. an Oscar, Bafta, Writer's Guild of America, Independent Film Award, etc.), and it is published in its original language.

This thesis argues that all drafts and versions of a screenplay can be examined in their own right, but since the focus of the thesis is not to compare different drafts of screenplay texts, one type of screenplay text was chosen for the selection: published screenplays. Narrowing the selection to published screenplays carries two benefits: they have all gone through the same process and reached the same stage, and they are more easily accessible. The consistent use of one specific type of screenplay text provides a platform for future comparisons between, for example, published screenplays and drafts written during a film's production process.

That only screenplays published after 2000 were selected for this study is mainly due to the fact that Sternberg in her extensive study of screenplay texts looked at screenplays from the 1930s to the 1990s, but it is also due to the fact that this thesis aims to give a clear view of how screenplays are written today, and what techniques current writers use to communicate the potential film to the reader.

Award-winning or award-nominated screenplays were chosen for one simple reason: to ensure that the screenplay texts chosen are representative of an acknowledged and successful style of writing. Screenplays nominated for an industry award have clearly been

'approved' by the industry. The different narrating voices identified as existing in the
screenplay texts are therefore not reliant on special cases of screenplay writing, but on an
approved industry standard. That the screenplay texts won or were nominated for an award
also indicates that the text's communication of the potential film was successful since the film
was produced. Selecting screenplays by predominantly well-established and successful
writers also provides an interesting point of comparison in relation to the rules and guidelines
put forward by the screenwriting manuals, which are primarily directed at novices.

Only screenplays published in their original language were selected, since a text can
change significantly during a translation. The original language criterion limits the selection
for this study to screenplays from the UK, the US, and Australia. These criteria may seem
restrictive, but they provide a clear frame of reference for this thesis, and they enable the
identification of a screenplay specific terminology, which going forward can be used when
examining different types of screenplay texts. This thesis is a first step towards text-based
examinations of narrating voices in screenplays. Using the terminology proposed in this
thesis, examinations of how the voices differ in different drafts of a screenplay, how the
voices have been used throughout history, and how the voices differ between countries can be
carried out.

Chapter 1: The screenplay and communication

1.1. The screenplay text as a means and an effect of communication

This chapter argues that the screenplay text can be analysed through the use of a communicational approach. Depending on if a researcher focuses on the screenplay as part of the potential film's development process or as a text-type, the screenplay can be regarded as either an effect of the communication between members of the potential film's production team and the writer, or as a means of communication between the writer and the reader.

Research that focuses on the screenwriting process argues that a film does not solely originate from the screenplay text but rather from the film's development process, during which the screenplay is being revised and rewritten. Osip Brik, for example, finds that the screenplay format and the literary language are insufficient means to convey the film. He therefore states that 'the process of work on the script is far more important than the finished script.'[1] Brik thus clearly positions the screenplay text in the background while highlighting the importance of the film's production process. Ian Macdonald, in line with Brik, emphasises that the screenplay text should not be regarded as the sole origin of a film. Macdonald argues that the film originates from the 'screen idea', which he defines as 'the essence of the future screenwork [the potential film] that is discussed and negotiated by those involved in reading and developing the screenplay and associated documents.'[2] The screenplay text is thereby defined as only a partial record of the screen idea, intended to 'convey (or at least record) the screen idea, but the idea itself is formed in the minds of all those involved in its production'.[3]

Both Brik and Macdonald highlight the importance of the input from the participants (e.g. director, producer, writers) who develop the screenplay (and the potential film), and they consequently regard the screenplay text as an effect of the discussions that take place between the participants; as a partial record of their conceptions of the screen idea. The participants' conceptions of the screen idea continuously change throughout the film's development stage, which leads to multiple drafts of the screenplay. For researchers who focus on the screenwriting process, the purpose of each consecutive draft of the screenplay can then be

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[1] Osip Brik, 'From the Theory and Practice of a Script Writer', *Screen*, 15.3 (1974), pp. 95-103 (p. 99).
[2] Ian Macdonald, 'Disentangling the Screen Idea', *Journal of Media Practice*, 5.2 (2004), pp. 89-99 (p. 89).
[3] Macdonald, 'Disentangling', p. 90.

identified as conveying the notion which the participants of the development process have of the screen idea at a specific time during the film's development stage. This makes it possible to regard every version of the screenplay text as a *result of the communication* between the participants in the film's development process.

Screenplay researcher Claus Tieber defines the screenplay in the following way: 'A screenplay is a documentation and a product of the communication that occurs during a film's production.'[4] Tieber thereby places himself firmly amongst the researchers who focus on the screenwriting process rather than on the screenplay text. Tieber's position is further emphasised by the following declaration:

> *The* screenplay does not exist. No other text-type is as work-in-progress as the screenplay. From the first to the last version, from the filming until the editing is complete, the screenplay is constantly revised. […] *The* screenplay of a film, therefore, does not exist. The different versions are documentations of the film's production process.[5]

Researchers who follow the other strand of research, which focuses on the screenplay as a text-type, do not regard the screenplay text as a *result of* a communication but rather argue that the screenplay text itself may *result in* the development of the film. It is thus the screenplay that, in this case, brings about the development of the film through conveying the screen idea instead of the developers of the potential film bringing about multiple screenplay texts during the film's development stage.

Claudia Sternberg clearly focuses on the text when she argues that despite the multiple versions of the screenplay that exist during a film's development stage 'the equality of all versions still enables the analyst […] to examine each individual text in its own right'.[6] Steven Price also focuses on the text instead of the development process of the film. Price regards the screenplay text as an 'enabling document' that is 'necessary for the production' of the potential film, and he highlights that the anticipated industrial production is the screenplay text's 'raison d'être'.[7]

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[4] Claus Tieber, *Schreiben für Hollywood: Das Drehbuch im Studiosystem* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2008), p. 19 (my translation).
[5] Tieber, p. 19 (emphasis in original, my translation).
[6] Claudia Sternberg, *Written for the Screen: The American Motion Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 40.
[7] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 113.

For researchers who focus on the screenplay text, the purpose of the text can then be identified as the communication of the potential film to the reader. The screenplay can thus be regarded as the writer's *means of communication*. Sternberg emphasises that '[a]ny deeper understanding of the text-type derives from an awareness of the communication process between the text and its readers.'[8]

One way of differentiating the strands of research outlined above can then be through how they relate to the concept of communication. Regarded as a partial record of the screen idea – as conveying the participant's conception of the screen idea – consecutive drafts of the screenplay become a *result of the communication* between the participants of the screenwriting process during the potential film's development stage. Regarded as a text in its own right, an enabling document, the screenplay becomes a *means of communication* for the writer in order to convey the screen idea to a reader situated within a production context.

This chapter, and this dissertation, will focus on the screenplay as a means of communication, thereby following the strand of research that analyses the screenplay as a text-type. This chapter first identifies the main characteristics of the screenplay as a text-type and how it correlates to a communicational approach. Secondly, the chapter introduces the communicational approach; how it is being used when analysing other text-types such as films and novels, and how it can be applied to the screenplay text. Finally, the chapter proposes a communication model specifically made to fit the analysis of screenplay texts. The model introduces and identifies the relevant textual and non-textual agents that participate in communicating the potential film to the reader through the screenplay text.

1.2. Identifying the screenplay as a text-type

The purpose of a screenplay text is to become a film. If a text does not want to become a film, it cannot be regarded as a screenplay. This unifying aim is what defines the text-type, and it encompasses any other purposes that screenplay texts may have, as for example conveying production team members' conceptions of the screen idea. To fulfil its purpose the screenplay text needs to successfully communicate the potential film to a reader who has the power to move the screenplay into production (be it a producer, actor, or film executive). Having a clear all-encompassing purpose sets the screenplay apart from other text-types, such as films and novels. A film's purpose can be to entertain, or, as David Bordwell states, to 'yield an

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[8] Sternberg, p. 57.

emotional experience' for the spectator.[9] A screenplay, even though it most definitely can entertain and move its reader, will always first and foremost exist in order to communicate the potential film so that it can fulfil its purpose of becoming a film.

Pier Paolo Pasolini clearly highlights the importance of the screenplay's desire to become a film in his influential article 'The Screenplay as a "Structure that wants to be another Structure"'.[10] Pasolini argues that the main characteristic of the screenplay is that it alludes to a potential cinematographic work, and that the reader needs to construct the potential film in his or her mind. Pasolini further finds that it is only if a screenplay successfully accomplishes this allusion to the potential film that it can be defined as an autonomous work.[11] In order for a screenplay, then, to fulfil its purpose of becoming a film it needs to successfully communicate the allusions to the potential film to the reader. If the writer fails to successfully communicate the allusions to the potential film, the reader will not be able to construct the film in his or her mind, which ultimately means that the screenplay has failed to fulfil its objective.

Marja-Riitta Koivumäki similarly emphasises the importance of a screenplay text's ability to communicate: 'Choreographers, composers, dramatists or screenwriters all have to have a vision of the future performance, and the plan they create has to be in a format that communicates the vision to the director and performers.'[12] It is important to highlight that both Pasolini and Koivumäki speak of a vision of the potential film, not the type of story that is being told. It is thus not what is being told that they emphasise but how it is being told; how the telling allows the reader to visualise the potential film. This clearly indicates that the screenplay not only needs to communicate the story of the potential film but also how that story should be visualised as a film. Sternberg makes a similar argument when she states that the screenplay must 'contain the complete film story' as well as 'instructions for the audiovisual realization in production'.[13]

Macdonald also highlights the importance of the reader being able to visualise the screen idea in his article 'Finding the Needle'.[14] Macdonald carries out a survey that examines

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[9] David Bordwell, *Poetics of Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 124.
[10] Pier Paolo Pasolini, 'The Screenplay as a "Structure that Wants to Be Another Structure"', *American Journal of Semiotics*, 4.1-2 (1986), pp. 53-72.
[11] Pasolini, p. 54.
[12] Marja-Riitta Koivumäki, 'The Aesthetic Independence of the Screenplay', *Journal of Screenwriting* 2.1 (2011), pp. 25-40 (p. 28).
[13] Sternberg, p. 57.
[14] Ian Macdonald, 'Finding the Needle: How Readers See Screen Ideas', *Journal of Media Practice*, 4.1 (2003), pp. 27-40.

how screenplay readers regard the text and what they find most important when reading. The result shows that '83% of the readers only occasionally or never see scripts that are reasonably easy or easy to see as a film.'[15] The result enables Macdonald to conclude that a great number of screen ideas are rejected due to the difficulty in visualising them as films. Macdonald notes, however, that this does not necessarily mean that the quality of the screen ideas are not good enough, but rather that it is how they are told that is lacking.[16] Ted Nannicelli finds that one 'charactersitic, if not essential' element of screenplays is that they 'invite their readers to visualize how the events contained therein might look on film'.[17] Nannicelli also argues that 'it is often the screenwriter's objective to have us [the reader] visualize how the fictional events she describes might be represented cinematically – put more prosaically, how she wants the finished film to look.'[18] Nannicelli thus emphasises the importance that visualisations play in screenplays, but he highlights that different readers visualise different potential films.[19]

Thus far it can be concluded that the screenplay text needs to communicate the story as well as instructions of how the reader can visualise the potential film in order for the text to fulfil its purpose of becoming a film. Using a communicational approach when analysing screenplays seems valid as it enables the analyst to examine how the writer communicates the story and the visualisation instructions to the reader. In order to determine how the communicational approach can be transferred to the screenplay text, this chapter first discusses how the approach is used within literary and film theory.

1.3. The communicational approach within literary theory

Communication studies as an academic field came into being during the 20th century. The field was first and foremost concerned with how information is sent from a speaker/sender to a receiver and how that receiver understands the message. In 1948 Harold Lasswell presented one of the first models that displayed the communication situation. Lasswell describes the 'process of communication' through asking the questions 'Who? Says what? In which channel? To whom? With what effect?'.[20] The questions can, for example, be answered in the following way: A manufacturer creates an advert that displays his product for radio and TV,

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[15] Macdonald, 'Finding the Needle', p. 32.
[16] Macdonald, 'Finding the Needle', p. 32.
[17] Ted Nannicelli, *A Philosophy of the Screenplay* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 205.
[18] Nannicelli, p. 214.
[19] Nannicelli, p. 212.
[20] Sky Marsen, *Communication Studies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 13-14.

which is directed at consumers with the intention of making them purchase the product. Put in relation to the screenplay text, the answers to the questions can be: The screenwriter proposes a screen idea in a screenplay text-format to a producer with the intention of it being made into a film.

As the field of communication studies progressed, the complexity of the proposed models increased, mainly through integrating possible feedback from the receiver as well as highlighting the importance of the context within which the message is sent and received.[21] Linguist Roman Jakobson, when regarding language as a tool for communication, saw convergences between linguistic analysis and communication theory. He proposes his own communication model, mostly using terms from communication theory, to be used when performing linguistic analyses. In any act of verbal communication, Jakobson finds that:

> The ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE. To be operative the message requires a CONTEXT referred to ("referent" in another, somewhat ambivalent nomenclature), seizable by the addressee, and either verbal or capable of being verbalized; a CODE fully, or at least partially, common to the addresser and addressee (or in other words, to the encoder and decoder of the message); and, finally, a CONTACT, a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication.[22]

If one relates Jakobson's theory to the screenplay situation where a writer is trying to get his screenplay produced, the addresser would be the screenwriter, the addressee a producer, the context the film industry, the message the potential film (the screen idea), the contact the screenplay text, and the code the language and format in which it is written.

Jakobson displays the interaction between addresser and addressee as follows:
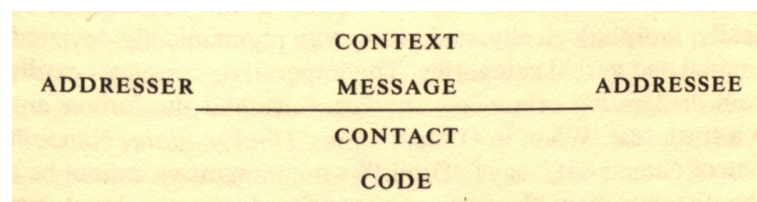
Figure 1. Jakobson's communication model.[23]

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[21] For examples of complex models see Shannon and Weaver (1949), Gerbner (1956), and Barnlund (1968).
[22] Roman Jakobson, 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics', in *Style in Language* ed. by T. A. Sebeok (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), pp. 350-77 (p. 353).
[23] Jakobson, p. 353.

Jakobson further argues that 'each of these factors determines a different function of language.'[24] He displays the functions in the following model:

REFERENTIAL

EMOTIVE   POETIC   CONATIVE

PHATIC

METALINGUAL
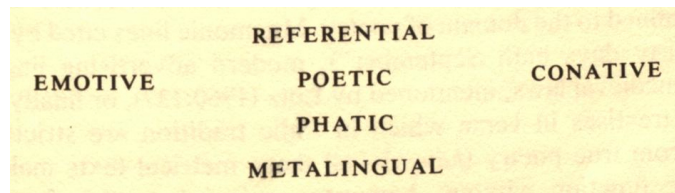
Figure 2. Jakobson's model of functions. [25]

The 'emotive or "expressive" function' of language relates to the addresser's attitude towards the message, the 'conative function' relates to the attitude towards the addressee, the 'referential function' relates to the message's relation to the context and the world in large, the 'poetic function' relates to the message's relation to itself, the phatic function relates to how the contact between the addresser and the addressee is sustained and prolonged, and the 'metalingual function' relates to that the code in which the message is expressed is clear and understandable.[26] Jakobson is most interested in the poetic function as he finds that this function distinguishes 'verbal art' from other verbal communications, which allows the analyst to 'focus on the message for its own sake'.[27]

Jakobson's functions can also be transferred to the screenplay situation. The emotive function concerns the screenwriter's attitude towards the screen idea s/he is communicating. The conative function concerns the attitude towards the addressee, that is, how the addressee is addressed throughout the text. This is especially important in the case of the screenplay, since the screenplay is dependent on a successful communication to the addressee to fulfil its purpose. The referential function concerns the screen idea's relation to its context, which in the case of the screenplay not only refers to the world in general but particularly to the film industry. The poetic function, transferred to the screenplay text, concerns the screen idea's relation to itself, that is, how the screenplay text relates to its own message. As was determined above, however, a screenplay's message is separated into two parts: the story and the visualisation of the potential film. When examining the screenplay's poetic function it is therefore necessary to discuss both of these aspects of the message. The phatic function concerns how the contact between the addresser and the addressee is expressed, sustained, and prolonged. In the screenplay this can, for example, take the form of direct addresses

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[24] Jakobson, p. 353.
[25] Jakobson, p. 357.
[26] Jakobson, pp. 353-54.
[27] Jakobson, p. 356.

through camera directions: 'HAND-HELD CAMERA, BERTIE'S POV'.[28] The metalingual function relates to the format in which the screenplay is written. Considering that the format for screenplay texts is comparatively strict, the reader needs to be aware of the format/code in order for the communication to be successful.

Through applying a communication model to the reading of poems, Jakobson was among the first to introduce the communication concept to literary texts. Regarding the literary text as being situated between a sender and a receiver, the author and the reader, is today a convention that the majority of literary theorists follow. Seymour Chatman, for instance, finds that '[a] narrative is communication, hence it presupposes two parties, a sender and a receiver'.[29] Similarly Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan argues that 'narrative fiction' is 'the narration of a succession of fictional events', which indicates a 'communication process in which the narrative as message is transmitted by addresser to addressee'.[30]

In addition to the communication between the author and the reader (expressed through the narrative text), literary theorists identify a second communication that takes place within the fiction itself: a fictional narrator's communication to a fictional narratee. Applying communication theories on narrative texts thus results in narrative communication models that display both the extratextual communication between an author and a reader, as well as the intratextual communication between a fictional narrator and a fictional narratee. A model proposed by Susan S. Lanser clearly displays this double communication situation:
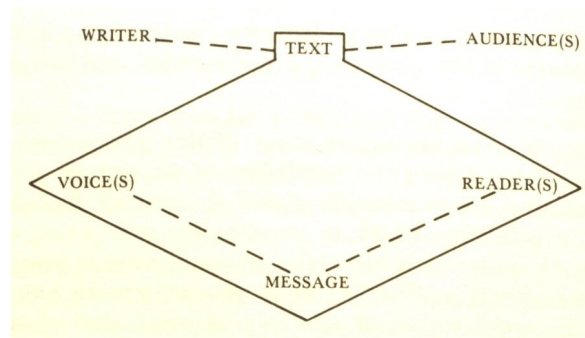
Figure 3. Susan Lanser's narrative communication model.[31]

Lanser finds that the 'written text can encode a sending role (or roles) that may be quite different from the image of the actual writer.'[32] She further finds that it is '[t]his reduplication

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[28] David Seidler, *The King's Speech* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2010), p. 3.
[29] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), p. 28.
[30] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2002 [1983], p. 2.
[31] Susan Lanser, *The Narrative Act: Point of View in Prose Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 118.

of the sender's role into the textual code itself, together with a similar doubling of the receiver's role' that 'yields a model for written communication that is more complex than that for spoken discourse.'[33] Rephrasing Jakobson's communication situation, Lanser states that:

> A WRITER sends a TEXT to an AUDIENCE. The text creates an authorial VOICE (or a set of VOICES) and an image of a READER or READERS. The textual voice(s) sends a MESSAGE to the created readership. Paradoxically, the structure of textual communicators is part of the message itself.[34]

Chatman, similarly to Lanser, presents a narrative communication model that displays a narrative's intratextual and extratextual communication situation:
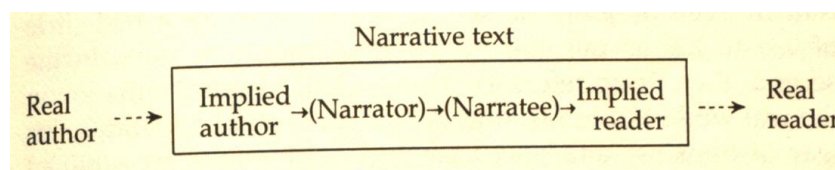
Figure 4. Seymour Chatman's narrative communication model.[35]

In addition to Lanser's voice(s) and reader(s), which refer to Chatman's narrator and narratee, Chatman also introduces the concept of the implied author and the implied reader. He thereby further complicates the written communication situation. Chatman argues that a real author communicates with the real reader through the means of a text. Within the text, the implied author, which is the real reader's reconstruction of the real author, is seen as the creator of the story that is then told by a narrator to a narratee, and addressed to the implied reader, which is the narrative's 'presupposed audience'.[36]

The main issue which surrounds the narrative communication model and literary theory is that, even though there exists an agreement that narrative texts can be considered acts of communication, theorists do not agree on who the participating agents are that exist inside the text, nor do they agree on the terms given to these agents. Both the concept of the narrator and the implied author are under debate, though more disagreement surrounds the implied author. This can be compared to film theory where the main issue lies with the concept of the narrator.

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[32] Lanser, *The Narrative Act*, p. 117.
[33] Lanser, *The Narrative Act*, p. 117.
[34] Lanser, *The Narrative Act*, pp. 117-18.
[35] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, p. 151.
[36] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, p. 150.

Marianne Wolff Lundholt argues that literary critics can be split into 'two separate camps; one where the narrator is *obligatory*, and one where the narrator is *optional*.'[37] Wolff Lundholt refers to the first camp as the 'communicative approach' and the second as the 'non-communicative approach'.[38] She states, however, that both these approaches exist within 'the literary convention that all narratives are pieces of communication where a speaker communicates a message to a recipient'.[39] Considering that both of Wolff Lundholt's 'camps' adhere to the convention that a narrative text can be regarded as a means of communication between author and reader, the terms 'communicative approach' and 'non-communicative approach' seem lacking in clarity. The first approach will therefore be referred to as the 'narrator-centred approach' and the second approach will be referred to as the 'non-narrator-centred approach' from here on.

Though Wolff Lundholt's terms have been substituted, her definitions of the two approaches is of use. The difference is whether or not the concept of a narrator as the teller of the fictional story is obligatory or optional. If regarded as obligatory, all narratives must have a narrator that tells the story even though the text gives no indication of who the narrator is, where the narrator is, or what the narrator's perspective is. One of the most frequently used texts that seems narrator-less but where the narrator-centred approach (Wolff Lundholt's communicative approach) inserts one, is Ernest Hemingway's 'The Killers'. If the narrator-concept is regarded as optional, 'The Killers' would be regarded as a text that does not posit a narrator since the text does not indicate that a narrator persona exists. Instead, the non-narrator-centred approach (Wolff Lundholt's non-communicative approach) would regard the text as a structural whole, and any evaluations are ascribed to the '"subjective worldview of the text" rather than a covert narrator'.[40] If an explicit narrator is present in the text, the narrator is regarded as a textual construct but not as the overall organiser of the story. Supporters of the non-narrator-centred approach are, for example, Monika Fludernik, Ann Banfield, and Wolff Lundhold. Supporters of the narrator-centred approach are, for example, Chatman, Lanser, Gérard Genette, Mieke Bal, and Rimmon-Kenan.

Concerning the concept of the implied author, the question is not whether or not the concept is valid in all or only certain cases, but whether or not the implied author actually communicates; whether or not the concept should be part of the communication model, or

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[37] Marianne Wolff Lundholt, *Telling Without Tellers: The Linguistic Manifestation of Literary Communication in Narrative Fiction* (Denmark: Medusa, 2008), p. 14 (emphasis in original).
[38] Wolff Lundholt, p. 14.
[39] Wolff Lundholt, p. 13.
[40] Wolff Lundholt, pp. 15-16.

only be seen as a concept that can be connected to the real author. Amongst theorists that believe that the concept should form a part of the communication model there is further disagreement on whether or not the implied author is positioned outside the text, together with the real author, or inside the text together with the narrator. Theorists that argue against the concept of the implied author as part of the communication model are, for example, Genette, Rimmon-Kenan, and Ansgar Nünning. Supporters of the implied author as a communicating agent are, for example, Chatman and James Phelan.

Chapter 2 and 4 discuss how the concepts of the narrator and the implied author can be related to the screenplay text, and whether or not the concepts are viable and useful.

1.3.1. Narrative levels

A narrative text can contain multiple intratextual voices (narrators). Genette was among the first literary theorists who discerned different kinds of fictional narrators as well as different narrational levels. Genette distinguishes a narrator that exists within the story world as a character, a 'homodiegetic narrator', from a narrator that does not exist within the story world, a 'heterodiegetic narrator' (the term diegetic refers to the story world, thus homodiegetic refers to being same as story world, and heterodiegetic as being different from story world). [41] It is important to emphasise that a heterodiegetic narrator, though not participating in the story, still is part of the narrative's fictional world. Genette further states that any event told by the narrator (heterodiegetic or homodiegetic) is at a different level than the level at which the narrating act takes place, the teller and the told thus never exists on the same narrational level. Genette refers to the first level as the 'extradiegetic level' (extradiegetic referring to the narration being outside of the story world).[42] An event told by an extradiegetic narrator takes place at the intradiegetic level (intradiegetic referring to being inside the diegesis, the story world). A narrator that exists on the extradiegetic level must be heterodiegetic since a narrator on the extradiegetic level is outside the story.

An example that clearly illustrates Genette's terms is Hanan Al-Shaykh's novel *One Thousand and One Nights* where an extradiegetic narrator tells the frame story of a jealous King who murders his wives because he cannot trust them, and how Shaharazad, to keep her sister alive, tells the King stories for 1000 nights. Since Shaharazad is part of the story told by the extradiegetic narrator while being the teller of her own stories, she can be identified as an intradiegetic narrator, but since neither Shaharazad nor the extradiegetic narrator are part of

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[41] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 243-45.
[42] Genette, *Narrative* Discourse, p. 228-30.

the stories they tell they can both be identified as heterodiegetic narrators. If a character in the story told by an intradiegetic narrator starts telling a story, Genette identifies that story to take place on a 'metadiegetic level'.[43]

To summarise: Genette's first level of narration belongs to the extradiegetic narrator who is placed outside the story world. The story told by the extradiegetic narrator takes place on the intradiegetic level. If a character, who is part of the story on the intradiegetic level, starts telling a story (a story in a story) then that character's story takes place on the metadiegetic level.

Transferring Genette's concepts and terms to the screenplay text, a screenplay that clearly shows the extradiegetic and the intradiegetic level of narration is *Little Children* (written by Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, directed by Todd Field 2008). In *Little Children,* a voice-over narrator tells the story of how a married woman starts having an affair with another married man. The voice-over narrator can be identified as intradiegetic since it is encompassed by the narration of the extradiegetic narrator responsible for the scene text.

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As we PUSH IN on her – A NEW VOICE EMERGES. IT IS MALE,
CALM, AND NON-JUDGMENTAL, IN SHORT, GROWN-UP.

                        VOICE
              Smiling politely to mask a familiar
              feeling of desperation, Sarah
              reminded herself to think like an
              anthropologist. She was a
              researcher studying the behavior of
              typical suburban women. She was not
              a typical suburban woman herself.[44]
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Similar to *One Thousand and One Nights*, both the extradiegetic narrator and the intradiegetic narrator in *Little Children* are heterodiegetic since they do not take part in the story they tell.

A screenplay which contains narrational levels that are related to each other in a more complex way, is *Stranger Than Fiction* (written by Zach Helm, directed by Marc Forster, 2006). In *Stranger Than Fiction,* similar to *Little Children,* an intradiegetic voice-over, which is encompassed by the extradiegetic narrator responsible for the scene text, tells the story.

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We hear a female Narrator speak:

                    NARRATOR (V.O.)
              This is a story about a man named
              Harold Crick…
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[43] Genette, *Narrative* Discourse, p. 228-33.
[44] Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, *Little Children* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006), p. 2.

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  He [Harold Crick] places the watch back on the nightstand.
                            NARRATOR (V.O.)
                  …and his wristwatch.

  Harold's arm retracts back under the covers.
                            NARRATOR (V.O.)
                  Harold Crick was a man of infinite
                  numbers, endless calculations and
                  remarkably few words.
                        (pause)
                  And his wristwatch said even less.⁴⁵
```

As opposed to *Little Children*, however, Harold starts hearing the voice-over:

```
  Harold is once again brushing his teeth meticulously.
                            NARRATOR (V.O.)
                  If one had asked Harold, he would
                  have said that Wednesday was
                  exactly like all the Wednesdays
                  prior. And he began it the same way
                  he--

  Harold suddenly stops as does the narration. He begins
  looking around, obviously hearing something. He pauses and
  listens. There's nothing there. He resumes brushing. The
  narration resumes as well.

  […]

  Harold stops again and the narration stops abruptly with
  him. He definitely hears something. He looks at his
  toothbrush.
                            HAROLD
                  Hello?⁴⁶
```

Harold eventually finds out that the voice-over belongs to the famous author Kay and he confronts her. Since Harold is able to interact and talk to Kay, the voice-over narrator of the story, they must exist on the same narrational level. Therefore, in the case of *Stranger Than Fiction*, the voice-over narrator is not the teller of a new story, of a story that takes place on a different level of narration, but the narrator can be identified as existing on the same level, the intradiegetic level, as the character Harold, and they are both part of the story told by the extradiegetic narrator.

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[45] Zach Helm, *Stranger Than Fiction* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006), p. 1.
[46] Helm, p. 4.

1.3.1.1. Narrational levels in a communicative context

Lanser, expanding on Genette's theories, displays her identified narrational levels in a model that not only shows the levels' relation to each other but also how the levels relate to the narrator and the narratee. On each narrational level an addresser (a narrator) and an addressee (a narratee) are identified and put in relation to what the addresser narrates. Lanser thus places the narrational levels in a communicative context. Though changing the terms (Lanser refers to Genette's extradiegetic narrator as a public narrator, his intra-diegetic narrator as a private narrator, and adding the level of the extrafictional voice), Lanser's model builds on Genette's theories.
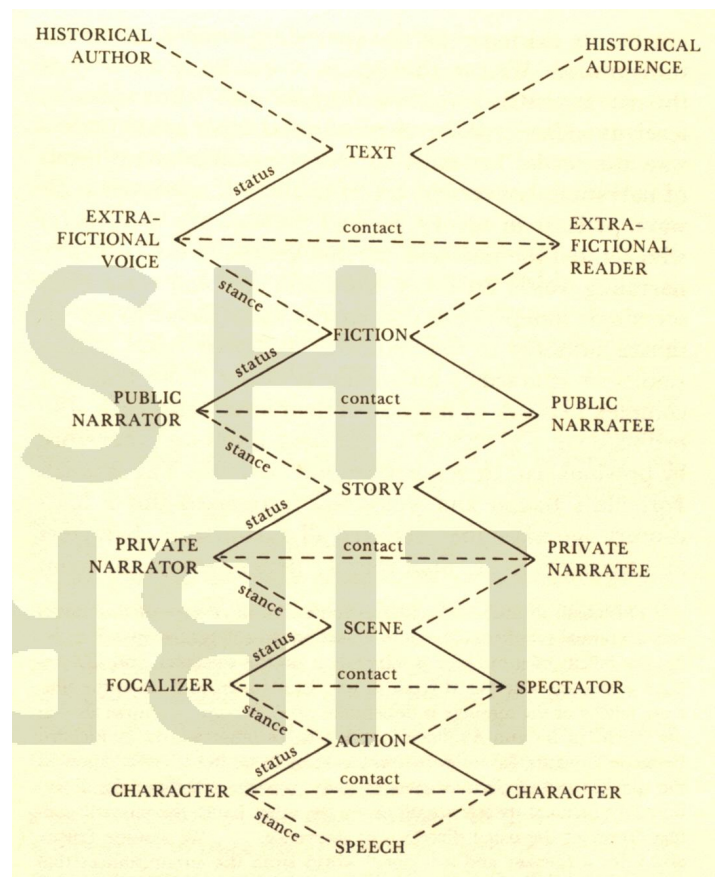
Figure 5. Susan Lanser's narrative levels.[47]

This model is a more complex and detailed version of Lanser's model that displays the communication between the author and an audience through the means of a text, which was shown on p. 42 in this chapter. In addition to identifying possible narrating voices, this model also shows where the narrating voices are in relation to the text, the fiction, the story, the scene, the action, and speech, as well as indicating that the different agents are connected

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[47] Lanser, *The Narrative Act*, p. 145.

through status, stance and contact.[48] Lanser also displays the relation between the different narrative levels and their narrating voices through a box model that clearly shows how the different narrative levels encompass one another:
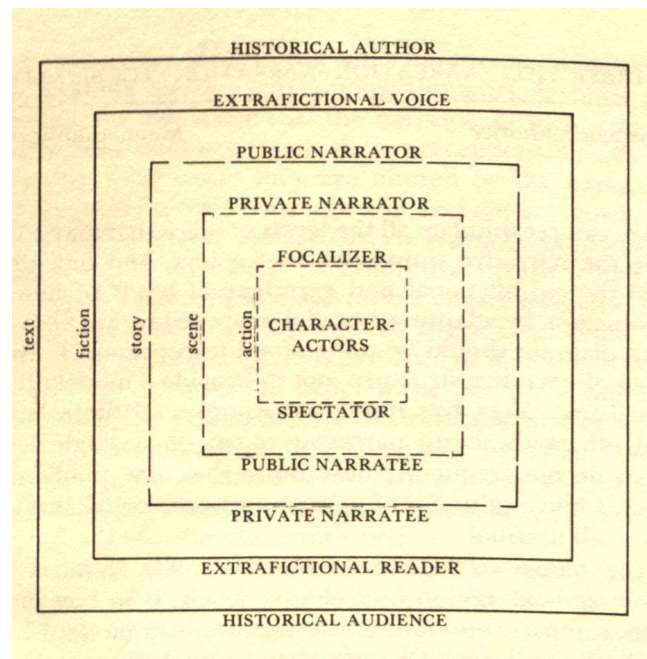
Figure 6. Susan Lanser's box model.[49]

Lanser's models clearly display how the narrating levels exist within the text and how they relate to each other. Through using her models the analyst is able to burrow down into the text, not only examining the communication between the writer and the reader but also the communication between all the different voices that exist in the text, and how these voices relate to each other and the text.

Considering that different levels of narration have already been seen to exist in screenplay texts, it is evident that examining screenplay texts through the use of narrative communication models is possible.

1.4. Film theory and communication

Film theorists also discuss the different narrational levels, narrating voices, and the concept of communication. Not all film theorists, however, regard the film-text as a communication between a sender and a receiver. Literary theorists, though not agreeing on the participant

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[48] Lanser argues that every narrating voice is connected to what it narrates and to whom it narrates through status (the relationship of the speaker to the speech act), contact (the speaker's established contact (relationship) with the audience, and stance (the speaker's relationship to the message s/he is uttering). For her discussion see Lanser (1981) pp. 86-94.

[49] Lanser, *The Narrative Act*, p. 144.

agents in the narrative communication situation, generally follow the convention that literary texts can be regarded as a means of communication. Within film theory there is an argument for regarding the film itself as the 'enunciating subject', the giver of the story, in which case not only the concept of the fictional narrator but also the real creators of the film are taken out of the communication situation.[50] This allows theoreticians to speak of the narration as stemming from the film itself instead of originating in the creators of the film. The approach thereby puts more focus on the spectator of the film, the perceiver and decoder of the film's narration, than on the film's creators.

Bordwell, for example, argues that the spectator's experience is a film's main objective:

> The communication model would say that something passed from the creators' mind to the movie and then to the viewer. I would say that the creators designed an experience such that viewers are coaxed to construe the film in ways that yield a certain experience more or less accurately foreseen by the filmmakers.[51]

Bordwell does, however, acknowledge that a film can 'mimic the communication situation more or less fully' depending on whether or not an explicit fictional voice-over narrator is present, or if the film uses self-reflecting camera-movements that indicate that someone behind the camera tells the spectator something particular.[52]

A film theorist who firmly supports the communication model and argues for the use of a communicational approach is Eva Laass. In opposition to Bordwell she argues that 'communication is indeed the fundamental process of all narration and that the message – the story which is to be told – does require some sort of sender.'[53] Laass finds her fictional sender in her 'implied narrator' whom she regards as being the 'presumed sender of the textual data actually present for the viewer's ears and eyes.'[54] Even though Laass clearly argues for the use of a communicative approach when analysing films, she also, in line with Bordwell, highlights the importance of the spectator. She finds that it is the viewer who constructs the narrator: '[U]nless it is an explicit narrator, the sender of the film within the frame of narrative discourse is ultimately a projection of the historical viewer onto the film.'[55] Laass

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[50] See for instance Bordwell (1985) pp. 21-26, and Metz (1982) p. 96.

[51] Bordwell, *Poetics*, p. 124.

[52] David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (London: Methuen Press, 1985), p. 62.

[53] Eva Laass, *Broken Taboos, Subjective Truths: Forms and Functions of Unreliable Narration in Contemporary American Cinema* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2008), p. 20.

[54] Laass, p. 23.

[55] Laass, p. 22.

also proposes a model that displays a film's narrative communication situation, highlighting
that an explicit narrator is optional by dotting that level:
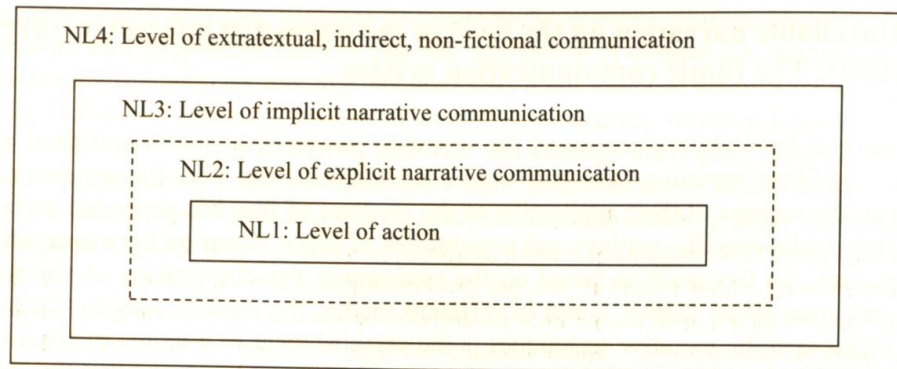
Figure 7. Eva Laass's narrative communication model.[56]

NL stands for 'narrative level'. NL1 thus refers to the first narrative level, which Laass
identifies as the level of action where the senders and receivers of the communication are the
characters. Her second narrative level is identified as the level of 'explicit narrative
communication' where the sender of the communication is an explicit narrator (usually in
form of a voice-over) who addresses an explicit narratee.[57] Laass further highlights that the
second narrative level is optional; a film does not need to contain an explicit narrator. The
third narrative level is that of an implicit narrative communication, given by the (obligatory)
implied narrator to the implied narratee. Laass defines the implied narratee as an 'anticipation
of the historical viewer in the future reception of the film.'[58] The fourth, and last, narrative
level is the level of the extratextual, indirect, non-fictional communication. On this level the
sender is the film's production team and the receiver is the film's audience.[59]

Another film theorist who argues for the use of a communicational approach is
Markus Kühn. His proposed communication model adds the level of the implied filmmaker as
well as separating between visual narration (by a narrator) and audio-narration (by a
character). Kühn further highlights that there can be an infinite number of intratextual
narrating voices since a character in a story always can start to tell a story that in turn contains
a character that tells a story, and so on.[60]

Film theorist Edward Branigan also presents a model that displays a film's narrational
levels. Despite presenting a model that displays possible narrating agents, Branigan does not

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[56] Laass, p. 44.
[57] Laass, p. 44.
[58] Laass, pp. 23-24.
[59] Laass presents her narrative levels on pp. 44-55.
[60] For Kühn's model and discussion of the different narrating voices, see Kühn 2011, pp. 83-87.

want to fully accept the communication model. He argues that adapting a communicative

approach does not benefit the analyst since a communicative approach deprives the film of

having other meanings, such as entertaining the spectator.[61] Branigan, similarly to Bordwell,

focuses on how the spectator realises the film while watching, which indicates that Branigan

also favours a cognitive rather than a communicational approach to films.

His model of the possible narrational levels, however, clearly indicates a

communication, since each level displays a sender and a receiver of the narration:
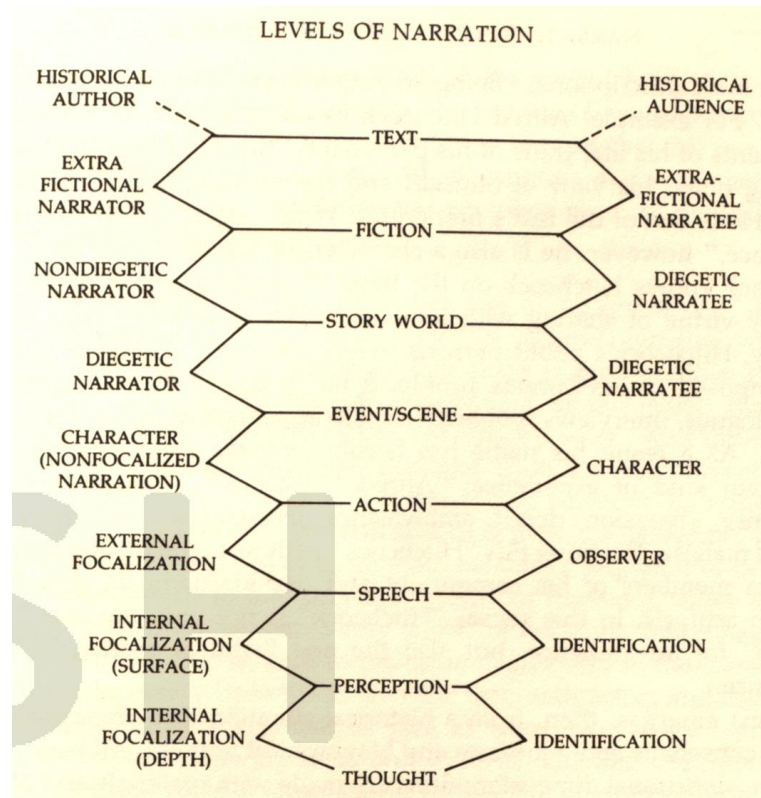
Figure 8. Edward Branigan's levels of narration.[62]

Branigan's model mainly distinguishes itself from Lanser's model through adding the two

levels of 'perception' and 'thought', which indicate a character's point of view shots, and

shots of a character's memories, dreams, and fantasies. Branigan further identifies the four

highest levels of narration as being objective and displaying a greater distance between the

narration and the narrative than the four lower, subjective levels; a character who lives inside

the story and experiences the events first-hand will automatically be closer to the narrative

than the 'historical author' who does not experience the narrative but only creates it.[63]

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[61] Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 107.
[62] Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension*, p. 87.
[63] Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension*, pp. 86-107

What is clear after reviewing Laass's, Kühn's, and Branigan's models is that there is an on-going debate within film theory, just as within literary theory, concerned with identifying and naming the participating agents in a film's communication situation. There are thus no set terms or methods to follow when transferring the communication models from literature and film theory to the screenplay text. Considering the multitude of terminology available, it is essential to identify and define the terms that are suitable to the screenplay text. Each subsequent chapter will therefore focus on one of the communicating agents, discuss the different terminology used within literary and film theory, identify and define the most suitable term for screenplay analysis, and examine how the agents' communications appear and function in the text.

1.5. Communication model suited to the screenplay text

The screenplay text, compared to films and novels, is unique in it cannot fulfil its purpose if the communication fails between the writer and the reader. Displaying a screenplay text's communication situation with all the participating agents is therefore of greater importance within screenplay text research than within film and literature theory. Through applying a communicational model that takes into account both the extratextual communication between the author and the reader as well as the intratextual communication of the different voices to a screenplay text, the screenplay analyst can examine how the different voices communicate the screen idea to the reader.

Before proposing a communication model that suits the screenplay text, it should be highlighted that communication models can never fully show the degree of complexity that a communication entails. A model will always, as McQuail and Windahl argue, be 'incomplete, oversimplified and involve some concealed assumptions.'[64] This does not mean, however, that the models are of no use, but only that one should be aware of their oversimplifications and assumptions. Robert Craig argues, for instance, that using a 'transmission model' (a model that shows the flow of information from a source to a receiver) can be useful in order to 'distinguish pragmatically between communication sources and receivers, to map the flow of information through systems, or to think of messages as containers of meaning or of communication as an intentional act performed in order to achieve some anticipated

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[64] Denis McQuail and Sven Windahl, *Communication Models: For the Study of Mass Communication*, 2nd edn (London: Longman Publishing, 1993 [1982]), p. 3.

outcome.'[65] Tieber similarly finds that a model 'is useful as long as it helps achieve productive results.'[66]

In the case of the screenplay text, using a communication model enables the analyst to examine how the screen idea is communicated from the screenwriter to the reader through the use of the textual format, which involves intratextual narrating voices. Identifying all narrating voices that exist in a screenplay text allows the analyst to see what kind of information the voices communicate and where the communication is situated in the text, that is, whether it is situated in the scene text or in the dialogue.

A communication model that displays a screenplay text's external and internal communication situation looks as follows:

WRITER

EXTRAFICTIONAL VOICE

IMPERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

PERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

TEXT

FICTION
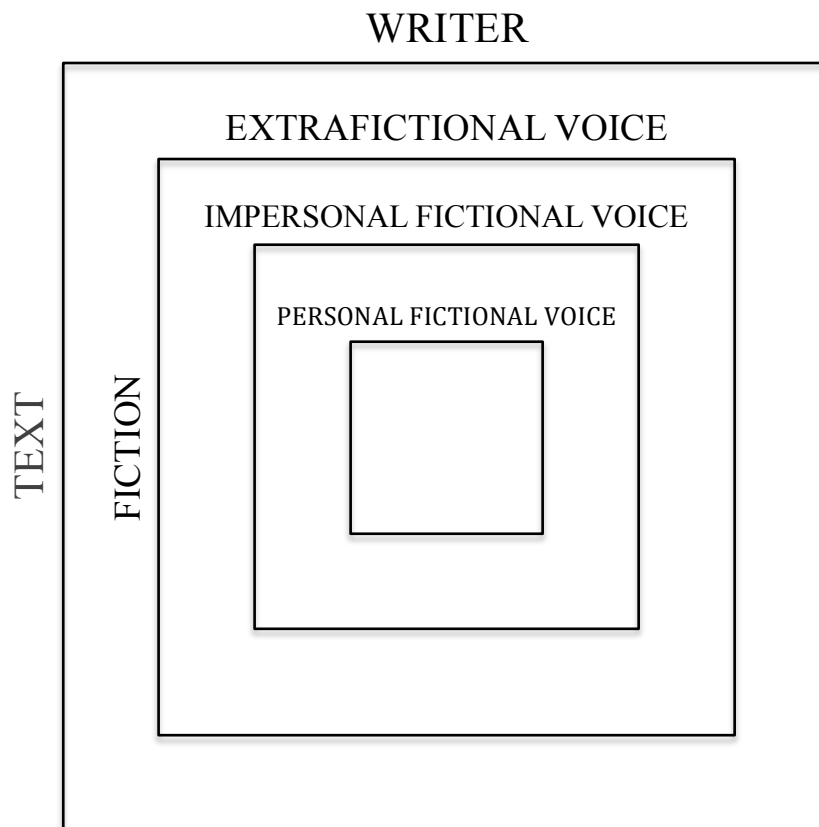
Figure 9. Communication model suited to the screenplay text.

The model is mainly based on Susan Lanser's boxmodel that was displayed on p. 49 in this chapter, but the terminology is changed to better suit the screenplay. The proposed model clearly shows the hierarchical relationship between the narrating voices, and whether or not they are external or internal to the text and the fiction.

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[65] Robert T. Craig, 'Communication Theory as a Field', *Communication Theory*, 9.2 (1999), pp. 119-61, (p. 127).
[66] Tieber, p. 14 (my translation).

The proposed model identifies the writer, the extrafictional voice, the impersonal fictional voice, and the personal fictional voice as participating agents in a screenplay text's communication situation. Each of these agents is examined in the subsequent chapters, but this chapter introduces and identifies the agents in relation to the information that they provide the reader with.

1.7. The narrating voices and the information they provide

Screenplay texts provide the reader with two types of information: information concerned with how the potential film can be visualised, and information concerned with the story. The following example from *(500) Days of Summer* (written by Scott Neustadter and Michael Weber, directed by Marc Webb 2009) shows how the two types of information appears in a screenplay text:

```
A single number in parenthesis, exactly like so:

(488)

EXT. ANGELUS PLAZA - DOWNTOWN LOS ANGLES, CA - DAY

And we're looking at a MAN (20s) and a WOMAN (20s) on a
bench, high above the city of Los Angeles. Their names are
TOM and SUMMER and right now neither one says a word.

CLOSE ON their HANDS, intertwined. Notice the wedding ring
on her finger. CLOSE ON Tom, looking at Summer the way
every woman wants to be looked at.

And then a DISTINGUISHED VOICE begins to speak to us.
                        NARRATOR
          This is a story of boy meets girl.[67]
```

The example provides the reader with visualisation cues on three occasions: it indicates how the number 488 should appear on the screen, and that close-up shots of Tom and Summer's intertwined hands as well as Tom's loving face are required. That this type of information refers to, and is directed at, the real world identifies it as *extrafictional information* (the prefix extra referring to being outside of the fiction). The example also provides the reader with information about the story: the characters' names and ages, their location, their relationship, and the kind of story this will be; a story of boy meets girl. This type of information refers to the fictional story world, which identifies it as *fictional information*.

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[67] Scott Neustadther and Michael H. Weber, *(500) Days of Summer* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2009), p. 1.

Returning to the communication model and the proposed narrating voices, the type of information that is given (extrafictional or fictional) enables the distinction between the extrafictional level of narration and the fictional level of narration. It is thus the type of information that a narrating voice provides the reader with, which identifies the voice as being either extrafictional or fictional. As the box model shows, one level of narration is given to the extrafictional narrating voice and two levels are given to the fictional narrating voice.

The extrafictional narrating voice provides information that concerns the extrafictional real world and it thereby addresses the intended reader directly. The most common extrafictional information that the extrafictional narrating voice provides the reader with are camera directions, which could be seen in the example from *(500) Days of Summer*. *The Savages* (written and directed by Tamara Jenkins, 2007) provides another example: 'AGITATED HAND-HELD as Wendy and Jon march down the path, their ballon in tow.'[68] The information given about what camera should be used and from whose perspective the scene is to be visualised clearly originates from outside of the fiction and is directed to the real world's production team. Another example of the extrafictional voice in *The King's Speech* highlights a different way the extrafictional narrating voice can appear, since it in this example directs itself to the reader, not the potential film's production team: '[For ease of reading, Bertie's stammer will not be indicated from this point in the script.]'[69] Here the extrafictional voice provides the reader with information about the look of the screenplay text, but, similar to the previous example, the extrafictional voice is clearly not concerned with the fictional story world but directly addresses the reader in the real world.

The fictional narrating voices provide the reader with fictional information. As the box model displays, there are two types of fictional narrating voices: the impersonal fictional voice and the personal fictional voice. What separates the two fictional narrating voices is that the personal fictional voice is named and situated in the dialogue section, while the impersonal fictional voice remains unnamed and is situated in the scene text. In the example from *(500) Days of Summer* both an impersonal and a personal fictional narrating voice provide the reader with fictional information. The impersonal fictional voice, situated in the scene text, provides information about the characters, their location, and their relationship. The personal fictional voice is named 'Narrator' and provides information about what kind of story it is. When speaking about the personal fictional voice it is important to highlight that a

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[68] Tamara Jenkins, *The Savages* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 23.
[69] Seidler, p. 4.

film can appear to be told by a personal fictional voice while a screenplay cannot. A spectator of the film *(500) Days of Summer*, for example, can regard the Narrator as being responsible for the fictional story that s/he is being shown, but a reader of the screenplay will not regard the story as being told by the Narrator. This is due to the fact that the Narrator's narration is continuously interrupted by scene texts and scene headings, which remind the reader that the Narrator is a fictional construct created by the real writer(s) and encompassed by the narrations of both the extrafictional voice and the impersonal fictional voice. In the film, however, there is nothing that distracts the spectator from the Narrator's telling of the story.

1.8. Conclusion

The screenplay text-type is unique in that it has a single unifying purpose: to become a film. In order for the screenplay to fulfil its purpose it is dependent on two successful communications: between the members of a production team during a film's development stage, and between the screenplay text and the reader. In the first case the communication results in multiple drafts of the screenplay ending with the shooting draft. In the second case the communication results in the screenplay being picked up by a production company and entering the development stage, during which the production of the film takes place and the screenplay text is used to evaluate the strength of the screen idea – both its story and its visual potential as a film.

Using a communicational approach thus enables screenplay researchers who follow the strand of research that focuses on the screenwriting process to examine how the screen idea is communicated between the members of a film's production team, and how that communication leads to changes to the script. Using a communicational approach enables researchers who follow the strand of research that focuses on the screenplay as a text to examine how the text communicates the screen idea, both the potential film's story and how it should be visualised, to the reader. Researchers that focus on the screenplay text are also able to identify and investigate the extratextual and intratextual narrating voices that communicate the screen idea to the reader. This leads to a better understanding of the different narrating voices, their functions, as well as how the screenplay text-type highlights certain aspects of the narrating voices.

This thesis focuses on the different narrating voices that communicate in screenplay texts. Two chapters are devoted to the real writer and the extrafictional voice. The chapters define the narrating agents, puts them in relation to terms from literary and film theory, and discuss how they function in the screenplay text. Two chapters are devoted to the fictional narrators.

Chapter 4 defines the concept and puts it in relation to literary and film theory, and chapter 5 focuses on how the fictional narrators function and how they can be characterised in screenplay texts. Chapter 6 discusses how characters narrate in the screenplay text, and chapter 7, the focalisation chapter, examines how the space of the potential film is indicated in the screenplay text. The final chapter, chapter 8, identifies and examines the narrating voices addressees, that is, the receivers of the extraficional and the fictional information.

Chapter 2: The writer, the implied writer, and the extrafictional voice

2.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on defining the narrating voices that occupy the two highest levels in the communication model: the writer and the extrafictional voice (the implied writer). In order to define these communicating voices, how they are discussed within screenplay, literary, and film theory is considered. First, however, the chapter examines the screenwriter's position in relation to the screenplay text.

2.2. The screenwriter

Starting with the highest level of narration, the extratextual level that belongs to the writer of the text, the first question that needs to be answered is: who is the writer? The question seems simple enough but the reality is more complicated. The obvious answer is that the writer whose name is on the published screenplay, the writer who received the credit for the screenplay, is 'the writer'. In reality, however, there are usually more people involved in the creation of a screenplay. Screenwriter Alex Garland finds that 'there is something […] misleading about the writer's credit', and referring to his screenplay *28 Days Later* (written by Alex Garland, directed by Danny Boyle, 2002), he states that 'I know what it is to write something alone – and I didn't write this screenplay alone.'[1] Garland highlights how much both the producer, Andrew Macdonald, and the director, Danny Boyle were involved in developing the screenplay. This leads back to the conclusion in the previous chapter that a screenplay can not only be seen as a means of communication but also as an effect of the communication between the writer and members of a film's production team. Garland comes to the conclusion that he regards the term 'writer's credit' as 'a term of convenience, or a rough allocation of responsibility, rather than something to be taken literally.'[2]

In addition to input from directors and producers, actors can also be involved in the script development. Actress Annette Bening's work on *The Kids are All Right* (written by Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg, directed by Lisa Cholodenko, 2010) is a good example of this. Director and screenwriter Lisa Cholodenko states that 'Annette was great

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[1] Alex Garland, 'Introduction', in *28 Days Later* by Alex Garland (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), pp. vii-viii, (p. vii).
[2] Garland, 'Introduction', p. viii.

[…], we had several script meetings and did some important revisions together. Script work is important to her, and she's good at it.'[3] Christopher Nolan, writer and director of *Inception* (2010) similarly states that 'I had to do an enormous amount of re-writing based on my conversations with Leo [the actor] about Cobb [the character]. All of which I think was very productive for the movie, very essential to the movie.'[4]

How much members of a film's production team influence the screenplay is highlighted by Lindsay Doran, the producer of *Stranger Than Fiction* (written by Zach Helm, directed by Marc Forster, 2006). Doran and screenwriter Zach Helm sent out the screenplay to different directors. 'Nearly forty of them [directors] came forward and said they wanted to direct the movie. So we had forty meetings and conference calls, and heard forty different visions of the movie. And each time it felt as though we were hearing about a completely different film.'[5] Doran and Helm ended up choosing Marc Forster to direct the film because his vision of the film closely corresponded to their own visions.

That members of a film's production team greatly influence the look of the film and the published screenplay is evident. It is also fairly common that other uncredited writers are brought in to do certain rewrites on the script. These so called 'ghostwriters' or 'scriptdoctors' are often brought in during the final stages of preproduction or during shooting to rewrite specific scenes or dialogue turns. Writers Tom Stoppard and Aaron Sorkin both have experience of being scriptdoctors and they were both hired do to script doctoring on Steven Zaillian's screenplay *Schindler's List* (written by Steven Zaillian, directed by Steven Spielbierg, 1993). Stoppard acknowledges that he does 'uncredited script doctoring on Hollywood movies "about once a year"', and he finds there are two reasons for doing it: 'The second reason for doing it is that you get to work with people you admire. The first reason, of course, is that it's overpaid.'[6] The interview further states that:

He [Stoppard] remains bemused by this American habit of invisible script revision. "I actually got quite angry with Spielberg, who was and is a good friend, and told him just

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[3] Lisa Cholodenko, 'A Conversation With the Screenwriters', in *The Kids are All Right*, by Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg (New York: Newmarket Press, 2011), pp. vii-xii, (p. xi).

[4] Christopher Nolan, 'Preface', in *Inception*, by Christopher Nolan (San Rafael, CA: Insight Editions, 2010), pp. 7-19 (p. 13).

[5] Lindsay Doran, 'Introduction', in *Stranger than Fiction*, by Zach Helm (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006) pp. ix-xi (p. xi).

[6] Mark Lawson, 'Tom Stoppard: "I'm the crank in the bus queue"', *The Guardian*, 14 April 2010, < http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2010/apr/14/tom-stoppard-the-real-thing> [accessed 9 July 2013], (para. 6 of 20).

to film Zillian's script. But Steven, like a lot of other people in movies, tends to think one more opinion can't hurt."[7]

In an interview Sorkin describes his script doctoring work the following way:

I did what is called "the production polish", where you are brought into the last two weeks on something that you are not emotionally invested in, where it is not your job to break the story, to come up with the moving parts and plot points. Basically, they just wanted some snappy dialogue for Sean Connery and Nicolas Cage [referencing *The Rock* (written by David Weisberg, Douglas Cook, and Mark Rosner, directed by Michael Bay, 1996)].[8]

In light of the above discussion, the name on the cover of a published screenplay, the credited writer, can give an untrue, or at least unspecified, view of the screenplay's writing situation. When a reader reads the published screenplay text, the image the reader constructs of the writer is therefore often not a correct image of the actual writer(s) of the text. To account for this discrepancy the term 'implied writer' can be useful.

Despite the difficulty with correctly identifying the writer(s) of a screenplay, the highest level of narration is still allocated to the 'writer'. This is due to the fact that however the writing situation may look, in the end there is a writer who, figuratively speaking, puts pen to paper and writes the words that appear in the screenplay text. The words might be partly decided by production team members, and multiple writers can write them, but there is always a writer involved in writing the words.

2.3. The implied author in literary theory: A search for a definition

The implied author is the term that is most elusive when it comes to finding a definition that is generally accepted. Wayne C. Booth coined the term in the 1960s and defines the implied author as an author's 'second self', the 'implied image of the artist' who we 'infer […] as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man [author]'.[9] Booth argues that the 'picture the

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[7] Lawson, (para. 6 of 20).

[8] Will Lawrence, 'Facebook movie The Social Network tells a Shakespearean tale of money, power and betrayal', *The Herald Scotland*, 11 October 2010, <http://www.heraldscotland.com/arts-ents/film-tv-features/facebook-movie-the-social-network-tells-a-shakespearean-tale-of-money-power-and-betrayal-1.1060841> [accessed 9 July 2013], (para. 14 of 20).

[9] Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987 [1983, 1961]), pp. 70-74.

reader gets of this [the implied author's] presence is one of the author's most important effects', and he emphasises that the concept of the implied author entails an ethical value which is expressed through the narrative's total form.[10] Booth's aim when coining the term was threefold. Firstly he wanted to object to the pursuit of objectivity in fiction that took place at the time, arguing that no text is objective; the implied author always posits an ethical standpoint which is discernible from the whole text. Secondly he wanted students to clearly differentiate between the narrator, the real author, and the implied author. Thirdly, Booth wanted critics to stop ignoring the ethical effects of texts.[11] It is especially Booth's second aim that is relevant when trying to identify the implied author in screenplay texts. That is, how the real writer can be differentiated from the implied author; the image of the author that the reader infers when reading.

In the afterword to the second edition of *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Booth makes the observation that his writing on the implied author has attracted more comment than the rest of the book put together. The commentators either accepted the term but with modification, or they argued against it.

2.3.1. The implied author and its communication

The main debate that surrounds the concept of the implied author concerns the question whether or not the implied author communicates, or if the implied author only should refer to the image of the author that the reader constructs. Booth, as stated above, regards the concept of the implied author to be the real author's second self and thereby he finds that the implied author communicates, emphasising that the implied author especially communicates an ethical standpoint that the reader is able to discern.

Mieke Bal identifies three main problems with Booth's definition of the implied author. The first problem is that the concept is ill defined, and Bal argues that since Booth uses the term implied author to denote 'meanings that can be inferred from a text' the implied author is not the '*source* of that meaning' but the '*result* of the investigation of the meaning of a text'.[12] Since that leaves the reader in a position of greater power through investigating the meaning of a text, one reader's input and interpretation, for example a teacher's or a critic's, risks becoming the correct one. Bal strongly objects to any kind of interpretative authority,

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[10] Booth, *Rhetoric*, p. 71.
[11] Wayne C. Booth, 'Resurrection of the Implied Author: Why Bother?' in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, ed by James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), pp. 75-88.
[12] Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 3rd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009 [1985]), p. 17.

and she states that her aim is to 'emancipate both author and reader from the stronghold of a misconceived interpretative authority'.[13] Her third objection is that the concept of the implied author is not limited to narrative texts, which leads Bal to conclude that the concept is less relevant within the field of narratology.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, in line with Bal, does not regard the implied author as a communicating agent and she therefore finds the term irrelevant within the field of narratology. Rimmon-Kenan reaches the conclusion that the implied author is not the source of a text's meaning but a 'construct inferred and assembled by the reader from all the components of the text'.[14] She argues that if the implied author 'is to be consistently distinguished from the real author and the narrator, the notion of the implied author must be de-personified, and is best considered a set of implicit norms rather than as a speaker or a voice (i.e. a subject).'[15] Rimmon-Kenan concludes that if the implied author is not a speaker or a voice the concept does not belong in the communication model.

A narratologist who firmly believes that the implied author communicates is Seymour Chatman. Chatman argues that the implied author is 'the agency within the narrative fiction itself which guides any reading of it', and he emphasises that 'every fiction entails such an agency'.[16] Ansgar Nünning launches the most severe and detailed critique of Chatman's writings on the implied author, which highlights the inconsistency with which Chatman defines the term. Chatman states that the implied author is the 'source of a narrative text's whole structure of meaning', as well as being the 'text itself'.[17] Nünning questions how the implied author can be said to be both the inventor and the invented text itself.[18] Chatman also argues that the implied author has no voice, which leads Nünning to question how the implied author can be part in a communication.[19]

Nünning argues that the concept of the implied author is unnecessary, and he finds that the textual features and functions assigned to the implied author instead can be assigned to the 'complete work', an abstract level of structure that 'can be understood theoretically as

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[13] Bal, p. 16.

[14] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, 2nd edn (New York; London: Routledge, 2002 [1983]), p. 88.

[15] Rimmon-Kenan, p. 89.

[16] Seymour Chatman, *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), p.

[17] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 75, p. 119, and p. 85.

[18] Ansgar Nünning, 'Deconstructing and Reconceptualizing the Implied Author: The Implied Author – Still a Subject of Debate', *Anglistik: Mitteilungen des Verbandes Deutscher Anglisten*, 8.2 (September 1997), pp. 95-116 (p. 97).

[19] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 87; Nünning, p. 99.

the totality of all formal and structural relationships in a text'.[20] By replacing the implied author with the overall text structure, Nünning finds that it is possible to avoid text interpretations based on authorial intention.

Even though there are valid arguments against the implied author as a communicating voice, the benefits of positing the term in relation to the screenplay outweigh the disadvantages. The screenplay as text-type is actually better suited to the concept of the implied author than other text-types. This will become clear when considering and relating literary theorists Gérard Genette's and James Phelan's arguments to the screenplay text.

Genette argues against including the implied author in a communication model, and, alongside Bal and Rimmon-Kenan, he does not view the concept of the implied author to be relevant in the case of narratology. Genette states that there is no need to 'go beyond the narrative situation, and the two agents "implied author" and "implied reader" are clearly situated in that "beyond"'.[21] Genette's main argument is that the implied author is an imaginary agent 'constituted by two distinctions that remain blind to each other'.[22] The two distinctions are that the implied author is not the narrator, and that the implied author is not the real author. Genette finds that where the implied author needs to be distinguished from the narrator, the implied author cannot be distinguished from the real author. Where the real author needs to be distinguished from the implied author, the implied author is indistinguishable from the narrator. Therefore Genette concludes that it is only the real author and the narrator that are relevant participants in the communication situation.

Genette does, however, accept the concept of the implied author when defined as 'an *image* of the (real) author in the text constructed by the text and perceived as such by the reader', thus moving closer to Booth's original definition.[23] Genette argues that even though the concept of the implied author, defined in this way, is necessary, the concept is only worth examining if the implied author is unfaithful and gives an incorrect image of the author. Genette only finds examples of this in the 'realm of […] hypertextuality' where a work is signed by a single author but in reality is written by multiple, and even then most works give the reader sufficient information in order to correctly identify the author situation.[24] Genette therefore comes to the conclusion that the implied author is only worth discussing in cases

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[20] Nünning, p. 110, 115.
[21] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca; New York: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 137.
[22] Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, p. 145.
[23] Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, p. 140 (emphasis in original).
[24] Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, p. 145.

where the reader is not meant to correctly identify the authorial situation, and he mentions three examples of this: apocryphal works, ghost-written works, and collaborations where the reader only infers one author. Genette thus does not accept the implied author as a narrative agent, but he acknowledges, and even insists on, that the concept of the implied author, if correctly defined, has a place in the broader field of narrative theory if not in narratology.

Genette's conclusion that the concept is only valid in cases where the reader is not meant to correctly identify the real author situation closely links the concept to screenplay texts, for which ghost-writers and unidentifiable collaborators are common. The concept of the implied author therefore seems more relevant and more useful in the case of screenplay texts than in the case of other literary texts. Even in cases where there is only one writer involved, members of the production team greatly influence the text, which results in the screenplay text lending itself to research focused on the implied author.

In *Living To Tell About It*, James Phelan summarises the discussions that have been carried out on the concept of the implied author in order to present a clearer definition of the concept as well as validating its existence. Phelan finds that Booth weakened the implied author through defining it as a constructive agent of the text as well as the overall form of the work. Phelan redefines the implied author as '*a streamlined version of the real author, an actual or purported subset of the real author's capacities, traits, attitudes, beliefs, values, and other properties that play an active role in the construction of a the particular text.*'[25] Thus Phelan's account of the implied author positions him closer to Booth and Genette while moving him away from Chatman, Rimmon-Kenan, Bal, and Nünning who all view the implied author as a product of the text instead of the producer. Phelan's new definition leads him to a communication model where the implied author stands outside of the text with the real author.

Phelan goes on to list four arguments why the implied author is a viable concept and why it belongs in the communication model. Firstly, he argues that the concept of the implied author sheds light on the writing process where the real authors create a version of themselves; a version that readers can come to know while understanding it is not the real author. Secondly, Phelan argues that the concept, in cases where the implied author displays values different from the real author, enables the theoretician to explore both the real author's and the implied author's ethical dimensions. Thirdly, he argues that the concept helps explain ghost-written works, hoaxes, and collaboration. Phelan adds that in the case of collaborations

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[25] James Phelan, *Living to Tell About It: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 46 (emphasis in original).

the multiple authors either get synthesized into a coherent implied author or they remain unsynthesized which leads to an incoherent implied author. Fourthly, the concept allows for biography to play a part in a rhetorical analysis of the implied author and real author.[26]

Phelan's arguments for the implied author's viability as a concept, similar to Genette's conclusion, seem more relevant to screenplay texts than other text-types. Considering that members of the potential film's production team influence the creation of the implied author, Phelan's argument that the concept can shed light on the writing process where the writer creates the implied author is stronger in case of screenplay texts. Phelan's second argument, which is focused on differences between the author and the implied author, also seems more relevant in the case of the screenplay text considering that multiple writers can be involved in the writing, and, which will be discussed further on, in case of adaptations the writer also has to relate to the source text's implied author. The third argument, as was stated when discussing Genette's conclusion, is clearly relevant to screenplay texts where ghost-writers and collaborations are common. It is only Phelan's fourth argument that does not indicate that the concept of the implied author is more applicable in the case of screenplay texts.

2.3.1.1. The implied author's direct communication

Having identified the implied author to be a valid concept in relation to screenplay texts, the next step is to examine what it communicates. A literary theorist that firmly places the implied author inside the text as a communicating agent is Susan Lanser, and her terms and theories provide a way to examine the implied author's direct communication. Lanser argues, in line with Booth and Phelan, that all narratives display a certain point of view – both ideological (ethical) and psychological. She defines the implied author as an 'extrafictional entity whose presence accounts for the organizing, titling, and introducing the fictional work'.[27] She thus finds that the implied author (the extrafictional voice) communicates directly with the reader through prefaces, forewords, and afterwords. Together with biographical information about the author provided by the editor or publisher of the book, this enables the reader to 'begin to construct an image of the author's identity, beliefs and attitudes, intentions and goals, and implied audience.'[28] Lanser further regards the extrafictional voice as being the 'most direct textual counterpart for the historical author', and that it is the 'degree of "masking" which the historical author has consciously or

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[26] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, pp. 46-47.
[27] Susan Lanser, *The Narrative Act: Point of View in Prose Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 122.
[28] Lanser, *The Narrative* Act, p. 124.

unconsciously achieved' that determines how similar the extrafictional voice is to the historical author.[29]

Through using the term extrafictional voice to account for the implied author's communication, Lanser situates the extrafictional voice outside of the narrative fiction but inside the published text where it is able to communicate directly to the reader through forewords, prefaces, and afterwords. Lanser thus expands the concept of the implied author through accepting Booth's argument and stating that the extrafictional voice 'may not be a narrating presence within the fictional tale itself, but it is the voice responsible for the very existence of the fictional world, the characters, their names and personalities, the organization of the plot.'[30]

The importance of Lanser allocating the extrafictional voice the ability to communicate extrafictional information directly to the reader is crucial in case of the screenplay text, considering that extrafictional information is not only given in forewords, prefaces, and afterwords, but continuously throughout the text through camera indications and production notes. Lanser's term, the extrafictional voice, therefore seems suitable when speaking of the implied author's direct communication in the screenplay text: the implied author's textual voice.

2.3.2. Concluding note on the implied author in literary theory

Lanser, while examining the debate that surrounds the concept of the implied author, finds that the concept is a matter of belief. Lanser argues that the implied author can only exist in the text as inferred and imagined by the reader, and that it therefore can be identified as a 'reading effect'.[31] As a reading effect the implied author becomes a matter of belief; if the reader believes in the concept s/he will infer an implied author, but if the reader does not believe in the concept, an implied author will simply not be inferred.

Whether or not a theorist is a believer in the concept or not, when it comes to the screenplay text it seems that the concept of the implied author carries with it more benefits than disadvantages, especially considering that the real writing situation is often difficult to identify correctly and that the implied author can communicate directly to the reader throughout the text.

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[29] Lanser, *The Narrative* Act, p. 122.
[30] Lanser, *The Narrative* Act, p. 123.
[31] Susan Lanser, '(Im)plying the Author', *Narrative*, 9.2 (May 2001), pp. 153-60 (p. 154).

2.4. The implied author in film theory

When examining the concept of the implied author in relation to screenplay texts, it is important to not only look at literary theorists but also discuss how film theorists regard the concept, since the screenplay text-type is closely aligned to both. In film theory the implied author is not discussed in as much detail as in literary theory, but the concept is usually mentioned and either dismissed or acknowledged.

As was stated in the first chapter, David Bordwell argues against the communication model and does therefore not see the need to posit senders of a communication (or narration). Bordwell regards the concept of the implied author (as well as the narrator) as indulgences in an 'anthropomorphic fiction'.[32] Bordwell argues that, since spectators rarely attribute what they are told to a personified source, the traits that literary theorists attribute to the narrator or the implied author more simply can be attributed to the narration itself. Bordwell therefore argues that a film narrative is not a communication, and instead he views the narration as the 'organization of a set of cues for the construction of the story', which 'presupposes a perceiver, but not a sender, of a message'.[33] Bordwell concludes that '[o]n the principle that we ought not to proliferate theoretical entities without need, there is no point in positing communication as the fundamental process of all narration, only to grant that most films "efface" or "conceal" this process.'[34]

Film theorist Eva Laass, though arguing against Bordwell's view on communication as well as arguing that the concept of the narrator is valid, agrees with Bordwell in regard of the implied author. She finds that the implied author 'has no conceivable channel of communication at its disposal and is therefore a very vague and abstract theoretical entity, which does not add any valuable insights into the process of filmic narration. Hence, for the descriptive textual analysis of filmic discourse it is clearly dispensable.'[35]

Bordwell and Laass's main objection against the concept of the implied author is that it does not communicate. In the case of the screenplay, however, a channel of communication is available to the implied author: providing the reader with extrafictional information through the textual extrafictional voice. Since their arguments against the concept of the implied

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[32] David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (London: Methuen Press, 1985), p. 62.
[33] Bordwell, *Narration*, p. 62.
[34] Bordwell, *Narration*, p. 62.
[35] Eva Laass, *Broken Taboos, Subjective Truths: Forms and Functions of Unreliable Narraiton in Contemporary American Cinema* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2008), p. 23.

writer in case of the screenplay text do not hold, the entity of the implied writer is valid in regard to screenplays.

Edward Branigan, as was stated in the previous chapter, does not want to fully accept a communicational approach to films even though he presents a model of a film's narrational levels that clearly indicates a communication between a sender and a receiver. Branigan assigns one of his narrational levels to the implied author, thereby clearly accepting the concept in relation to films. To show how the voice of the implied author can work, Branigan uses the opening scene of the film *The Wrong Man* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1956) where visual effects make it look as if the main character is taken by the police when, in truth, the policemen are just walking past him. The achieved effect anticipates later events in the film, and it is such effects that Branigan attributes to the voice of an implicit extra-fictional narration: the implied author. Branigan further states that the implied author is only framed by the 'historical author', which, in the case of *The Wrong Man,* Branigan identifies as Alfred Hitchcock. He concludes that with the concept of 'implied authorial narration one is at the very boundary of the text, at the very limit of what might still be justified as being in the text as opposed to being in a world, or in an intertext, which frames the text.'[36] Branigan regards the implied author as the producer of the narration of one his narration levels, but he also states that the implied author exists in the text, that it is a production of the text. Therefore, Branigan can be seen as positioning himself on both sides of the literary discussion that argues whether or not the implied author produces the text or exists as a production of the text.

Looking at only the second half of the term 'historical author', Branigan does not clarify what the term 'author' denotes in relation to films. That Branigan identifies Alfred Hitchcock as the historical author of *The Wrong Man* indicates, however, that he regards the director as the 'author' of the film. Branigan thereby appears to regard Hitchcock as an 'auteur', a concept that has greatly affected film theory and indirectly affects the concept of the implied author.

2.4.1. The auteur theory and the implied author

The film critic Andew Sarris coined the term 'Auteur theory' in 1962, but the theory itself has its origin in articles written by Alexandre Asruc, André Bazin, François Truffaut, Eric

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[36] Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 95.

Rohmer, Jean-Luc Godard, and Claude Chabrol, which were all published in *Cahiers du Cinéma* during the 1950s.

André Bazin argues that auteurism consists of 'choosing the personal factor in artistic creation as a standard of reference, and then of assuming that it continues and even progresses from one film to the next'.[37] John Caughie's later definition of auteurism more clearly positions the director as the auteur. Caughie finds that the core of auteurism consists of the three assumptions 'that a film, though produced collectively, is most likely to be valuable when it is essentially the product of its director [...]; that in the presence of a director who is genuinely an artist (an *auteur*) a film is more than likely to be the expression of his individual personality; and that this personality can be traced in a thematic and/or stylistic consistency over all (or almost all) the director's films.'[38]

Peter Wollen, in line with Caughie, argues that even though a film is produced collectively it still displays a 'coherent version', and that it is possible to decipher 'a structure which underlies the film and shapes it'.[39] Wollen attributes this structure to the director, arguing that 'it is through the force of his [the director's] preoccupations that an unconscious, unintended meaning can be decoded in the film'.[40] Wollen stresses, however, that 'Fuller or Hawks or Hitchcock, the directors, are quite separate from "Fuller" or "Hawks" or "Hitchcock", the structures named after them'.[41] Wollen's separation of the real director from the structures that are discernable from the films makes it possible to link his arguments to the implied author debate, concluding that Wollen should be placed on the side that argues that the implied author is a textual effect, not the source of the text. This conclusion is confirmed by Wollen's statement that 'a film is not a communication, but an artefact', which clearly shows that Wollen does not regard the implied author (or the auteur for that matter) as a speaker or producer of the text.[42] Even though Wollen defends auteurism, he acknowledges that the auteur theory 'does no more than provide one way of decoding a film'.[43]

Viewed as only one of many ways to analyse a film, the auteur theory does not require much comment. The implications and repercussions of the auteur theory are, however, too

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[37] André Bazin, 'Extract from André Bazin, "La politique des auteurs"', in *Theories of Authorship: A Reader*, ed. by John Caughie (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 44-46 (p. 45).

[38] John Caughie (ed.), *Theories of Authorship: A Reader*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 9.

[39] Peter Wollen, *Signs and Meanings in the Cinema*, rev. 4th edn (London: British Film Institute, 1998), p. 114.

[40] Wollen, p. 115.

[41] Wollen, p. 115.

[42] Wollen, p. 115.

[43] Wollen, p. 115.

substantial to let it pass by without comment. It is as Thomas R. Shatz, quoted by Steven Price, states: 'Auteurism itself would not be worth bothering with if it hadn't been so influential, effectively stalling film history and criticism in a prolonged stage of adolescent romanticism'.[44] David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson regard the 'belief that a director is most centrally responsible for a film's form, style, and meanings' as 'one of the most influential ideas in cinema history', and they also state that the 'idea of authorship has become a commonplace in film criticism'.[45] It is thus rather the weight and the influence that the auteur theory has been given that is a concern, not the theory in itself.

There are two identifiable problems with the auteur theory. The first problem is that it names the director as an author-figure, and the second problem is that it attributes the film to the director. The naming of the director as an author-figure essentially serves only one function: to enable critics to distinguish which directors are good enough to achieve the right to be called auteurs. Looking at the term auteur as only a distinguishing label, it would seem that critics today should be able to find a better term than auteur to elevate a director above his or her peers. This ideally would be a term without any connections to the literary medium, and which would not attribute work to the director that s/he has not carried out. Since the term auteur brings with it several complications, it does not seem to be the most effective term for distinguishing a director's work. In conclusion, a new term to distinguish great directors is long overdue.

The second part of the problem, attributing the film to the director, is more serious. Referring to a film as a 'Hitchcock', 'Spielberg', or 'James Cameron film' might make sense for marketing reasons as it can increase the number of viewers, but it also results in participants of the film crew not getting the credit they deserve. Since films are, as most auteur critics acknowledge, produced collectively, the problem of attribution is never easy to address. This can be highlighted through a closer look at Branigan's previously discussed example from *The Wrong Man,* which also brings the auteur discussion back to where it began: connecting the implied author with an implied director. Branigan identifies the anticipatory effect as the voice of an implied author, which he attributes to the director Alfred Hitchcock. Attributing the effect to Alfred Hitchcock, however, can be questioned. The anticipatory effect may very well have been deliberately designed and achieved by Hitchcock, but it also could have been implemented in the screenplay, in which case the implied author

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[44] Thomas R. Shatz , as quoted in Price, p. 7.
[45] David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film History: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), p. 492, 494.

should be connected to the screenwriters Maxwell Anderson and Angus MacPhail. Alternatively the cinematographer, who on the day of shooting discovered the possibility of eliciting the effect through the use of a different camera angle, may have accomplished the effect. In that case the implied author should be connected to the cinematographer Robert Burks. Other possibilities are that the editor discovered the possibility or that the producer was responsible. The attribution of a specific film effect is always difficult to allocate correctly. Therefore, in the case of films, it would be sensible to not use the term 'author' at all, and instead speak of implied filmmakers, or, if one wanted to be more specific, the implied director, the implied screenwriter, the implied cinematographer, the implied producer, and so on.

Even though it can be of value to distinguish between the different implied filmmakers (the implied director, implied cinematographer, implied producer, etc.), considering the close working relationship between the different members of the production team the term 'implied filmmaker' is in most cases the most correct term to use. The term implied filmmaker also clearly indicates the collaborative nature of filmmaking, which makes it even more applicable.

2.5. The screenplay and the implied author

When putting the concept of the implied author in relation to the screenplay text, four questions need to be answered: How the implied author should be defined, in what way it is a viable concept for textual screenplay analysis, how the implied author communicates in the text, and what it communicates. This chapter answers the first two questions, and the next chapter, which focuses on how the implied writer functions and on what it communicates, discusses the last two questions.

2.5.1. Defining the implied author

The lack of a clear definition of the implied author in film theory, and the contradictory definitions in literary theory, highlight the importance of clearly defining the concept in relation to the screenplay. Starting with a closer look at the second half of the concept, the use of the term 'author' in relation to the screenplay leads to just as many unwanted complications as it did in relation to films. When using the term 'author' to refer to the screenwriter, the screenplay as a text is inevitably linked and compared to more traditional literary texts, such as novels and stage play. This leads to discussions of whether or not the screenplay should be regarded as literature. Claudia Sternberg finds that the question of

authorship puts not only the literary status of the screenplay into question, but also the existence of the text itself. She argues that theorists have 'by constantly questioning authorship […] indirectly negated the existence of a text'. [46] Even when analysing published screenplays, where a text obviously exists, the use of the term 'author' will move the focus from the text itself to questions concerned with the screenplay as text-type and questions of authorship. The term 'author' therefore seems to be an unnecessary label to put on the screenwriter. Just as the term director should be sufficient in the case of films, the term writer should be sufficient in the case of screenplays.

Steven Price refers to Michel Foucault's answer to the question 'what is an author' to find what distinguishes the screenplay 'writer' from an 'author'.[47] Foucault connects the concept of an author to legal ownership, certain types of texts, stylistic unity and coherence, and the representation of an author consisting of several selves. Price argues that, even though the screenwriter is made up by a 'multiplicity of selves', the screenplay as text-type does not need an author.[48] Since the screenwriter rarely possesses legal ownership, and screenwriters often share credit for a screenplay with other writers, a screenplay's stylistic coherence cannot solely be attributed to the screenwriter.[49] Price thus concludes that the term writer is better suited than the term author when referring to screenwriters. It is important to emphasise that the use of the term writer by no means indicates that the writer of a screenplay is less worthy than an author of a novel. In light of the above discussions, from here on the screenwriter is referred to as writer instead of as author. In relation to screenplays the term implied writer replaces the term implied author.

In order to clearly define the concept of the implied writer in relation to the screenplay, the specific purpose of the screenplay as text-type needs to be incorporated. In the previous chapter, the screenplay text's purpose was identified to be the becoming of a film. The screenplay text, thus, has to accomplish two tasks: to communicate its story, and to communicate how that story should be visualised as a film. Both these tasks should be clear in the definition of the implied writer. A definition of the implied writer can be as follows: The implied writer is the image that the real screenwriter(s) create, intentionally or

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[46] Claudia Sternberg, *Written For the Screen: The American Motion-Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 22.
[47] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 18-23
[48] Price, p. 19.
[49] Price, p. 19.

unintentionally, of themselves that gives an indication of their attitudes and beliefs, and whose main task it is to communicate how the film should be visualised.

Since the implied writer is given an expressive voice (the extrafictional voice) that exists within the text but outside the fiction, the implied writer is situated inside the text (as opposed to Phelan and Genette who situate their implied authors outside the text). Returning to the proposed model that displays the screenplay text's communication situation, the highest level is occupied by the real writer(s) of the screenplay, and the second level of narration is occupied by the implied writer's textual representation: the extrafictional voice.

WRITER

EXTRAFICTIONAL VOICE

IMPERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

PERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

TEXT

FICTION
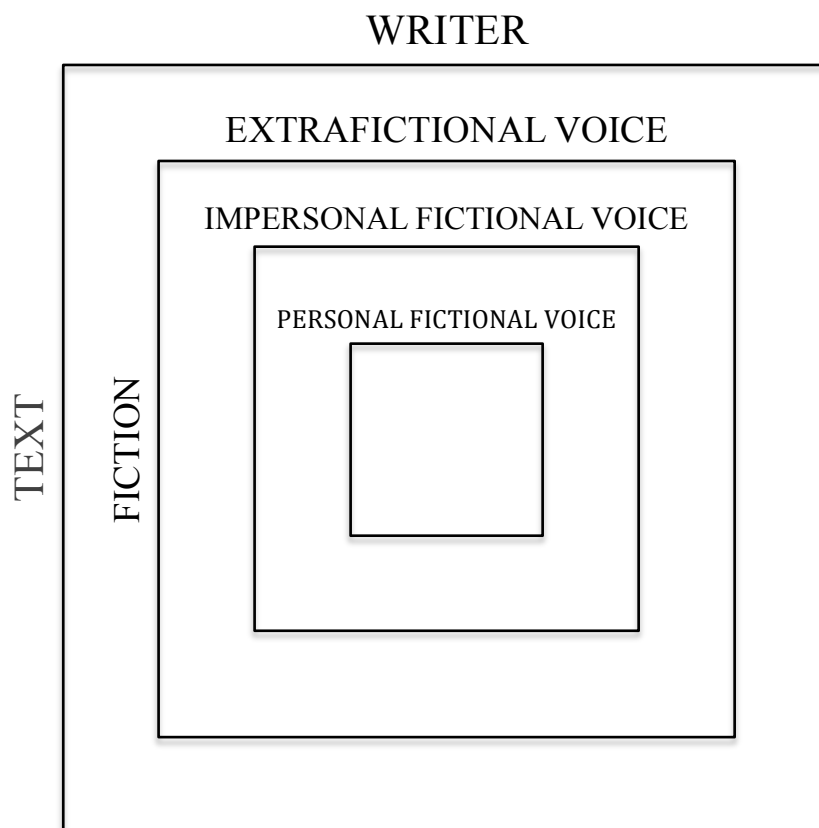
Figure 10. Communication model suited to the screenplay text.

2.5.2. The viability of the implied writer

The fact that the majority of screenplays are written by multiple writers has been mentioned on several occasions. It is therefore important to emphasise that the existence of more than one screenwriter does not negate the existence of an implied writer. Both James Phelan and Gérard Genette, as already stated, use collaborative works as an example of when the concept of implied authorship is at its most viable.

Considering that a screenplay during the film's development stage continuously is being rewritten based on the communication between production team members, it should also be emphasised that the implied writer, in the case of screenplays, is not solely created by the screenwriter. Only the writer's first version of the screenplay text truly presents the screenwriter's created implied writer. In later versions (for example the published screenplay) the producer, the director, the actors, the editor, and maybe other screenwriters, have affected the created image of the writer to a degree that makes it possible to say that the creation of the screenplay's implied writer cannot solely be ascribed to the original screenwriter. This, however, makes the concept of the implied writer even more necessary. An examination of the differences between the real writer and a published screenplay's implied writer can, for example, show how the film's production process puts its stamp on the screenplay and the image of the writer.

Since the writer of a published screenplay is not the only contributor to the creation of the implied writer, the difference between the real writer and the implied writer in screenplay texts is probably greater than in novels or stage plays. This indicates that studies focused on the concept of the implied writer are more applicable within screenplay research.

Phelan's reasons for why the concept of the implied author is viable in literary theory, which were mentioned on pp. 65-66 in this chapter, are transferable to the case of the screenplay text. Phelan argues that the concept allows the theoretician to get to know a version of the author, that it gives the theoretician an opportunity to examine possible differences between the real author and the implied author, and that it enables the theoretician to examine whether the authors of works written in collaboration get synthesised into a coherent implied author or if they remain unsynthesised, which leads to an incoherent implied author.[50]

Through speaking of an implied writer the reader of the screenplay is able to get to know a version of the screenwriter (the image of himself or herself that the screenwriter has created with or without input from other members of the production team), and the reader can compare that image with the real screenwriter as he or she appears in other texts, biographies, and interviews. In cases where the created image bears little or no resemblance to the real writer, the analysis is even more important and rewarding. Even more relevant when analysing screenplays, however, is the possibility to distinguish between collaborations that create a coherent implied writer and collaborations that create an incoherent implied writer.

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[50] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, pp. 46-47.

That distinction enables the analyst to come to conclusions whether or not screenplays that have gone through numerous rewrites by subsequent writers create more incoherent implied writers than screenplays written in an agreed close collaboration.

When looking at the implied writer's textual representation, the extrafictional voice, the main reason for the viability of the implied writer becomes apparent. In chapter 1 the extrafictional voice was defined as being responsible for the communication of extrafictional information, which in screenplays mainly consists of directions to the production team. The screenplay text-type is thus unique in that it allows the implied writer's textual representation, the extrafictional voice, to communicate directly with the reader throughout the text, not just in forewords, prefaces, and afterwords as is the case in novels. The next chapter focuses on how the implied writer's communication appears in the screenplay text.

Chapter 3: The implied writer's communication

This chapter focuses on the communication of the implied writer that is expressed through the extrafictional voice situated on the second level of narration. The aim is to answer the questions what the extrafictional voice communicates and how it communicates. This chapter also examines the relation between the implied writer and the real writer, and how the reader's knowledge about the real writer affects the reader's construction of the implied writer.

3.1. The communication of the implied writer

It has already been found that the implied writer communicates directly to the reader through the use of the extrafictional voice, which is responsible for any extrafictional information. The most common extrafictional information that the extrafictional voice communicates is specific camera directions.

In addition to the extrafictional information that the implied writer communicates directly to the reader, the implied writer also carries out an indirect communication. It is through the indirect communication that the reader is able to discern the implied writer's attitudes and beliefs. When analysing the indirect communication the entirety of the text needs to be considered. How war and violence are depicted is a good example of how different writers indirectly communicate their implied writers' attitudes and beliefs. How the American Civil War is told in *Cold Mountain* (written and directed by Anthony Minghella, 2003), for example, makes it possible to construct an image of the implied writer as arguing against war. The violence is very harshly described:

> CONFEDERATE REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE and jump into the pit to engage the Federals in hand-to-hand fighting, swarming into the crater. Inman goes in with them. Too close for rifles, just bayonets and guns swung like clubs, and now Inman is sliding down into that hell, Bowie knife flashing. Primitive. Unutterable carnage. Men killing each other in embraces, soldier crushed against soldier, desperate to survive, to kill, to live. An oozing layer cake of bodies, dead and frantically alive, drowning in slick.[1]

---

[1] Anthony Minghella, *Cold Mountain* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), p. 14.

How the main character is changed by the war, describing him as a 'ghost of a man', also adds to the sense that the implied writer is arguing against the war.[2] *The Hurt Locker* (written by Mark Boal, directed by Kathryn Bigolow, 2009) depicts the Iraq War, but unlike *Cold Mountain* the war is shown from a more objective angle. Both sides have good and bad in them, both reasons for staying in the war and ending the war are given, and, although many soldiers want to go home, the main character loves his job as a member of the Baghdad bomb squad and cannot give it up. In the last example, *Burn After Reading* (written and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen, 2008), violence is shown in a more comedic way. Due to a series of misunderstandings and bad decisions the main characters either end up dead or on the run. The screenplay finishes with the following dialogue:

```
                GARDNER CHUBB
Jesus. Jesus fucking Christ. What
did we learn, Palmer?


                PALMER
I don't know, sir.


                GARDNER CHUBB
I don't fucking know either. I
guess we learned not to do it
again.


                PALMER
Yes sir.


                GARDNER CHUBB
Although I'm fucked if I know what
we did.


                PALMER
Yes sir. Hard to say.

  We pull back from Gardner Chubb, shaking his head.

                GARDNER CHUBB
Jesus. Jesus fucking Christ.[3]
```

The implied writer of *Burn After Reading* makes no clear ethical standpoint when it comes to violence other than that it, in this case, was completely unnecessary and used as a comedic effect.

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[2] Minghella, p. 155.
[3] Joel and Ethan Coen, *Burn After Reading* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008), pp. 118-19.

As the above examples show, the implied writer can indirectly communicate through the scene text and the dialogue text, and the implied writer can communicate directly through the extrafictional voice in scene headings and scene texts. There is, however, one more way that the implied writer can communicate directly: through paratexts, such as forewords, prefaces, and afterwords. How paratexts affects the image of the implied writer will be discussed further on in the chapter when examining the relation between the real writer and the implied writer.

When speaking of the implied writer's communication, it is important to highlight that the communication is extrafictional in the sense that it does not refer to the fictional story world but to the real world where the reader is situated. This is opposed to the fictional communication that belongs to a fictional entity, a narrator, who is part of the fictional world. Phelan argues that the 'narrator tells her story to her narratee for her purposes, while the author communicates [through the created implied author] to her audience for her own purposes.'[4] He further finds that the two communications are most easily separated in the case of an unreliable narrator, since the reader in that case is dependent on the implied author's communication in order to locate the truth.

The appearance of an unreliable narrator is extremely rare in screenplay texts but one example can be found in *The Usual Suspects* (written by Christopher McQuarrie; directed by Bryan Singer, 1995). At a first glance the situation seems straightforward. The story is told by an external narrator who lets the main character, Verbal Klint, tell his story. It is a case of a story in a story: The narrator tells the story of Verbal Klint who tells the story of Keyser Söze. It starts to get complicated when the reader, through indications by the narrator, begins to suspect that Verbal's story might not be completely true. The reader can still, however, rely on the external narrator that communicates in the scene text, and does therefore not find it necessary to infer a correcting communication from the implied writer. This changes, however, when it becomes impossible for the reader to determine if the screenplay depicts the external narrator's narration or Verbal Klint's narration. Since the external narrator fails to clarify who is responsible for the story at these moments, the reader starts to question the external narrator's reliability. When this happens the reader has to infer the implied writer's communication, which indicates that the narrator is not to be trusted completely.[5]

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[4] James Phelan, *Living to Tell About It: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 18.
[5] For a more detailed discussion on the ambiguities in *The Usual Suspects* see Price (2010) pp. 159-66.

Phelan argues that the implied author (and the narrator) carries out 'telling functions', which involve reporting, interpreting, and evaluating the story events.[6] These telling functions take place along three 'axes of communication' where each axis corresponds to one function.[7] The axis of facts, characters and events corresponds to the reporting function. The axis of perception or understanding corresponds to the interpreting function. The axis of ethics and evaluation corresponds to the evaluating function. Through relating Phelan's functions to the screenplay, the communication of the implied writer can be identified in greater detail. In the case of the screenplay, however, the implied writer carries out its telling along an additional axis: the axis of indication and visualisation, which corresponds to the implied writer's function of alluding to the potential film.

3.1.1. The implied writer's reporting function

The implied writer's communication along the axis of facts, characters, and events is the most difficult to discern since that communication usually is performed by a trustworthy, reliable fictional narrator responsible for providing the reader with fictional information. Only when the reader identifies the narrator as unreliable will s/he need to infer a reliable communication from the implied writer that supplies the reader with a more accurate account of the presented facts, characters, and events. One example has already been found in *The Usual Suspects*, but there are not many unreliable narrations in screenplays. *Traffic* (written by Stephen Gaghan, directed by Steven Sodergerh, 2001) contains a brief example where the narration states: 'Helena goes into a stall. She extracts the cocaine from her handbag. She looks at it, trying to figure out where it goes. She hikes up her skirt.'[8] A couple of scenes later, however, Helena says that: 'I'm desperate, but I'm not stupid. I flushed it in the bathroom of their godawful nightclub.'[9] Her line suggests that she never intended to try and hide the drugs up her skirt as the fictional narrator indicated. *Hugo* (written by John Logan, directed by Martin Scorsese, 2011) contains another example of a narrator's brief unreliability:

```
He [Hugo] heads up the stairs -- not realizing that the
Station Inspector is heading down the stairs!
```

---

[6] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, p. 12.
[7] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, p. 214.
[8] Stephen Gaghan, *Traffic* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), p. 119.
[9] Gaghan, p. 123.

```
Cut to—

The Station Inspector stops on the stairs. Looks around.
We realize that Hugo is hiding behind a column right by
the Inspector.10
```

These smaller occurrences of unreliability are used in order to heighten the suspense. If the reader had known that Helena flushed the drugs, the scene a few pages after the bathroom scene when she is searched by the Mexican border patrol would not have been filled with suspense, and if the reader had known that Hugo saw the Station Inspector in time to hide that scene's level of suspense would also decrease. In these instances the reader is more aware of the implied writer since the fictional narrator's brief unreliability indicates the presence of a higher level of narration with the objective to increase the suspense.

3.1.2. The implied writer's interpreting and evaluating function

The implied writer's communication along the axis of perception and understanding, as well as along the axis of ethics and evaluation, are more easily identified than its communication along the axis of facts, characters, and events. This is due to the fact that, when the reader infers the implied writer's interpretations and evaluations, the entire text, or larger parts of the text, can be used as a reference. It is also due to the fact that the narrator in screenplays often is restricted to the reporting function, which means that the interpreting and evaluating functions are left to the implied writer. The reader will therefore attribute any evaluations and interpretations that are indicated in, for instance, the dialogue to the implied writer. Phelan terms the limiting of the narrator to only one axis of communication as a case of 'restricted telling', which is marked by 'an implied author's limiting a narrator to only one axis of communication while requiring the authorial audience [the reader] to make inferences about communication along at least one of the other axes as well'.[11]

The most common cases where the reader is forced to make inferences from the dialogue are concerned with evaluations and understanding of characters. Since the fictional narrator is limited to mainly reporting there is not as much room for the fictional narrator to describe and evaluate characters.[12] Therefore the reader will evaluate and interpret characters through their dialogues. The opening dialogue in *Fantastic Mr Fox* (written by Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach, directed by Wes Anderson, 2010) contains an example of this:

---

[10] John Logan, *Hugo* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2011), pp. 23-24.
[11] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, p. 80.
[12] As will be shown in chapter 5, however, the fictional narrator very rarely limits itself to the reporting function and it often offers its own evaluations and interpretations of characters.

```
                    FOX
         Should we take the short cut or the
         scenic route?

                  MRS FOX
         Let's take the short cut.

                    FOX
         But the scenic route is so much
         prettier.

                  MRS FOX
                  [shrugs]
         Ok, let's take the scenic route.

                    FOX
         Great. It's actually slightly
         quicker anyway.¹³
```

This example clearly sets the character of Fox as someone who gets his way and has a need to justify his actions. Fox's need to justify his actions is a character trait that follows Fox throughout the screenplay. He, for example, justifies returning to his criminal ways through stating that it will be his 'last big job on the sly'.¹⁴

Another example where the dialogue provides the reader with characters' crucial traits is *The Squid and the Whale* (written and directed by Noah Baumbach, 2005). In the first scene of the screenplay the Berkman family plays tennis:

```
BERNARD BERKMAN, late 40's, and WALT BERKMAN, 16, play
against JOAN BERKMAN, late 30's, and FRANK BERKMAN, 12.
Frank, who's skilled for his age, serves a bullet.

                  BERNARD
         Long!

                  FRANK
         That looked pretty good.

                  BERNARD
         It was out.

                  JOAN
              (for Frank's benefit)
         It did look good.
```

---

¹³ Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach, *Roald Dahl's Fantastic Mr Fox: The Official Screenplay* (London: Penguing Group, 2009), p. 8.
¹⁴ Anderson and Baumbach, p. 36.

```
                            WALT
              Frank, it was out!


                            BERNARD
              It's my call. Out!


   Frank looks back in disbelief.


                            BERNARD
                     (aside to Walt)
              If you can, try and hit at your
              mother's backhand, it's pretty
              weak.


                            WALT

              Got it.  15
```

In this example both Bernard's trait to put himself before his children as well as Walt's inclination to follow Bernard's lead are clearly indicated.

A dialogue where the implied writer's views become noticeable but where it is not about character evaluation or interpretation is this example from *Hugo*:

```
                            HUGO
              I used to imagine I was the Phantom
              of the Opera. Like in the movie.


                            ISABELLE
              It was a book too. You know
              sometimes things are books before
              they're movies!16
```

Since *Hugo* is an adaptation of a book, this dialogue indicates a comment from the implied writer on the screenplay's (and the potential film's) relation to its source text.

3.1.3. The implied writer's alluding function

The implied writer's communication along the axis of indication and visualisation is the most easily identified communication since it often addresses the reader directly. When communicating along the axis of indication and visualisation, the implied writer assumes a function of alluding to the potential film through a direct communication of extrafictional information.

---

[15] Noah Baumbach, *The Squid and the Whale* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2005), p. 1.
[16] Logan, p. 48.

The direct allusions are easily identified as they consist of clear directions to the production team. The most easily identified direct allusions exist in parenthesised production notes such as this example from *(500) Days of Summer* (written by Scott Neustadter and Michael H. Weber; directed by Marc Webb, 2009): '(`PRODUCTION NOTE: Put Autumn somewhere subtle in the background.`)'.[17] Another example appears in *Fantastic Mr Fox*: '(`NOTE: an alternate version of Mrs Fox will be used for this shot which can be literally lit from within.`)'[18] A less technical example is the following from *Hugo*: '[`Or similar moment of comic frustration.`]'[19] The notes' placement within parentheses highlights that it is not a case of the fictional narrator's communication, but a case of the implied writer's direct communication to the production team; a communication external to the fiction.

The King's Speech (written by David Seidler; directed by Tom Hooper, 2010) contains an example of a bracketed note that displays an implied writer's direct communication which is addressed to a more general reader and not to a specific reader in the production team: '[`Although Bertie's stammer in the consultation room will fade, it is a gradual process.`]'.[20]

Most direct allusions, however, appear in the screenplay text without a parenthesis or bracket, they mainly address the production team, and they mainly consist of camera directions. *The King's Speech* provides the following examples: '`HAND-HELD CAMERA, BERTIE'S POV` [point of view]', and '`CU` [close up] `huge metal speakers.`'[21] *The Kids Are All Right* (written by Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg, directed by Lisa Cholodenko, 2010) contains similar examples: '`Angle on Paul`', '`NIC'S POV`', and '`REVERSE ONTO NIC`'.[22] A third example that displays a camera movement rather than a camera position appears in *The Savages* (written and directed by Tamara Jenkins, 2007): '`Still on the move, the CAMERA locates --`', and '`AGITATED HAND-HELD as Wendy and Jon march down the path, their balloon in tow.`'[23]

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[17] Scott Neustadter and Michael H. Weber, *(500) Days of Summer* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2009), p. 46, 11, 54.
[18] Anderson and Baumbach, p. 10.
[19] Logan, p. 9.
[20] David Seidler, *The King's Speech*, (London: Nick Hern Books, 2010), p. 20.
[21] Seidler, p. 3, 4.
[22] Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg, *The Kids Are All Right* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2010), p. 8, 80.
[23] Tamara Jenkins, *The Savages* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 1, 23.

Allusions to how the potential film should be visualised do not necessarily need to be made directly through mentioning camera positions. Indirect allusions that indicate how a certain scene or moment should be visualised and filmed by the production team, without the insertion of technical abbreviations or comments, are even more common than direct allusions. The following two examples, taken from *Little Miss Sunshine* (written by Michael Arndt, directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris, 2006) and *Brokeback Mountain* (written by Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, directed by Ang Lee, 2005), clearly indicate how the scenes should be visualised and filmed by the production team without stating it directly: '`Dwayne gets up, goes across the waiting room and stares out the window. OUT THE WINDOW It's a banal suburban landscape.`'[24] And: '`[Joe Aguirre] Raises binoculars, looks in the direction of the meadow, towards ENNIS. WE SEE: ENNIS […]. Aguirre lowers the binoculars.`'[25] Readers can, in these examples, infer an indirect communication from the implied writer that indicates the reader to visualise the view out the window from Dwayne's point of view, and the view of Ennis from Aguirre's points of view.

With an exception of parenthesised and bracketed notes, the direct and indirect communication from the implied writer to the reader along the four axes of communication exist simultaneously with the fictional narrator's communication to the narratee. The implied writer and the fictional narrator, as already stated, communicate to their audiences for their own purposes. This double communication situation can clearly be seen in the following example from *(500) Days of Summer*: '`The sound slows down on the word "friend" (which is an awful, awful word). THE IMAGE FREEZES AND WE ZOOM IN ON TOM'S STUNNED FACE.`'[26] The implied writer's communication along the axis of indication and visualisation indicates to the production team that the sound should be slowed down, that the frame should be frozen, and that the camera should zoom in on Tom's face. The fictional narrator's communication, however, takes place along both the axis of characters, facts, and events, and along the axis of understanding and perception; the fictional narrator tells the narratee what happens while also interpreting the event (identifying the word friend as an awful word). The fictional narrator further, through

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[24] Michael Arndt, *Little Miss Sunshine* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006), p. 59.

[25] Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, 'Brokeback Mountain', in *Brokeback Mountain: Story to Screenplay* by Annie Proulx, Diana Ossana, and Larry McMurtry (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), pp. 29-97 (p. 22).

[26] Neustadter and Weber, p. 8.

telling the narratee that the sound slows down and that the image freezes, highlights Tom's reaction to the word friend, making it stronger.

It is important to remember that the two communications exist simultaneously throughout screenplay texts. Since the screenplay format never lets the reader forget that the screenplay's purpose is to become a film, the reader continuously visualises the story as a film, inferring signs of how this should be accomplished while reading. How the two communications overlap will be further discussed in chapter 5, which examines the functions of the fictional narrating voice.

When speaking of the implied writer's indications to the production team, especially the indications of camera positions and movements, it should be mentioned that members of the production team not always follow the directions that exist in the screenplay. Michael Arndt notes in the afterword to the screenplay *Little Miss Sunshine* that the production team followed none of the point of view shots that he had indicated in the text.[27] This highlights the important fact that the indications that allude to how the film should be visualised are not necessarily placed in the screenplay to ensure that the production team follows them to a letter, but rather to bring the text to life; to show how the writers visualise the film themselves. The extrafictional voice can thus be seen as the voice of a 'hidden director' who directs the film for the reader. Claudia Sternberg referred to the screenwriter as a 'hidden director' since the screenwriter can anticipate the 'directorial input' through describing how the events should be presented in the film. [28] As was found in the introduction to the present study, however, screenwriting manuals discourage writers from specifying camera directions when writing. It is clear, from the abundance of available examples, that many successful writers do not follow the advice given by the manuals.[29]

Summarised, the implied writer's communication along the axis of indication and visualisation is a case of direct or indirect allusions to the potential film. Even though the implied writer's allusions to the potential film are often technical and appear in an abbreviated form, they take place alongside, or rather on top of, the fictional narrator's communication to the narratee. It is therefore important to keep in mind that even technical indications directed to the production team can serve the fictional narrator's purpose.

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[27] Michael Arndt, 'Scene Notes', in *Little Miss Sunshine*, by Michael Arndt (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006), p. 114.
[28] Sternberg, p. 231.
[29] In the case of published screenplays it should be noted that the camera directions can have been added during the production stage by other members of the production team than the writer.

3.1.4. Conclusion on the implied writer's communication

As a conclusion on how and what the implied writer communicates, the implied writer communicates extrafictional information as well as its interpretations and evaluations. It also reports on the action and the characters. This is communicated along four axis of communication: the axis of indication and visualisation; the axis of perception and understanding; the axis of ethics and evaluation; and the axis of facts, characters, and events. The most easily identified communication takes place along the axis of indication and visualisation, since the allusions are stated directly throughout the screenplay text.

It is also the implied writer's allusions to the potential film that makes the screenplay text unique, as they appear directly throughout the text. Even if a screenplay does not contain any camera indications the implied writer still communicates along the axis of indication through the scene headings. All scene headings can be regarded as extrafictional since they contain technical abbreviations (EXT, INT) that are directed toward the production process of the potential film in the real world. It is therefore impossible for the reader of the screenplay to forget that the screenplay is an artificial product created by screenwriters.

Phelan finds that readers particularly respond to three components of the narrative: the 'mimetic' component, the 'thematic' component, and the 'synthetic component'.[30] Responses to the mimetic component indicate that the readers respond to the characters and the story world as real and comparable to our own. Responses to the thematic component indicate that the readers respond to characters, events, and the story world as representatives of cultural, ideological, philosophical, or ethical standpoints. Responses to the synthetic component indicate that the readers respond to the characters and the story as an artificial product written by an author. Phelan concludes that the different components can be more or less foregrounded, and that realistic fiction tries to be as mimetic as possible while works of a metafictional nature foreground the synthetic component.

The saying that a screenplay should only contain what can be seen in the potential film is repeated in most screenwriting manuals, which was seen in the introduction to the present study.[31] This indicates that screenplays should foreground the mimetic component, which, in turn, is backed up by the fact that a narrator in a screenplay mainly reports the events instead of interpreting and evaluating them. The screenplay is, however, always forced to foreground the synthetic component to a certain degree. This is due to the format of the screenplay text,

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[30] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, p. 20.
[31] See for example McKee (1998) p. 396, and Field (2005) p. 221.

which for example prescribes that a screenplay has to have scene headings and should indicate a new character in capital letters. Being forced to follow these formatting rules the screenplay cannot maintain a mimetic illusion. In addition to the formatting rules, the screenplay also contains multiple allusions to the potential film. These allusions are often of a technical nature, and they often appear in an abbreviated form (e.g. CU, POV, etc.). There are, however, some ways in which screenwriters try to lessen the synthetic effect.

One way is to use the term 'cut to', instead of a scene heading when indicating a cut within a scene to allow for time passing. Screenwriter William Goldman uses the 'cut to' indication not only when time passes within a scene but also between different scenes, and he actually refrains from using scene headings most of the time. Goldman finds the form of the screenplay unreadable, and he states that '[e]verything brings your eye up short. All those numbers on both sides of the page and those Christ-awful abbreviations and the INT.'s and the EXT.'s.'[32] Here is an example of how Goldman uses 'cut to':

```
CUT TO
HARPER, out of bed now. He goes to the blank tv set, turns
it off. Now he moves to the window, lets the shade fly up.
WE CAN SEE his office more clearly now --- it doesn't look
a bit better.

CUT TO
HARPER, still in his underwear, running water in the sink,
splashing it on his face, coming to life.

CUT TO
THE TINY KITCHEN AREA.[33]
```

Goldman is successful in lessening the synthetic component's foregrounding by the use of 'cut to' indications, and he accomplishes a greater sense of mimetic illusion for the reader through letting the reader experience the story as it unfolds. However, even though the synthetic component might be lessened it is not gone completely. The 'cut to' indications are still of a technical nature, reminding the reader of the text's artificiality.

When intercutting between two locations in *The Hurt Locker* the scene headings are avoided through only giving the character's name in the heading instead of the complete location:

---

[32] William Goldman, *Adventures in the Screen Trade: A Personal View of Hollywood*, 2nd edn (London: Abacus, 1996 [1983]), p. 169-170.
[33] Goldman, *Adventures*, p. 182.

```
JAMES
James sprays the extinguisher into the roaring fire.
Flames lick his suit.

SANBORN
Sanborn pounds up a long flight of stairs.

JAMES
Gaining control of the fire.

SANBORN
Charges through the rooftop door and runs to the edge of
the roof.

JAMES
The fire is nearly out, the car a smoking ruin, dusted
with white fire retardant powder.

SANBORN
At the edge of the roof, looking down over James and
Eldridge.[34]
```

Similar to Goldman, Mark Boal is able to lessen the synthetic component but not take it away completely.

These examples lead to the conclusion that the screenplay text is unique in simultaneously being forced to foreground both the mimetic and the synthetic component. Another conclusion is that an implied writer is most apparent in narratives that foreground the synthetic component since the synthetic component reminds the reader of the fact that the narrative is an artificial product created by a writer.

3.2. The screenwriter and the implied writer

It is now time to focus on the relation between the real screenwriter(s) and the image he, she, or they have created of themselves: the implied writer. Firstly it will be stated how readers' knowledge of the real screenwriter influence their construction of the implied writer. Secondly, the question of how different readers engage with different aspects of the implied writer will be answered. Thirdly, possible differences between the implied writer and the real writer will be examined, especially focusing on the case of adaptations.

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[34] Mark Boal, *The Hurt Locker* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2009), p. 34.

3.2.1. The effects of knowledge

It was previously mentioned that the implied writer is able to directly communicate through paratexts such as forewords, prefaces, and afterwords. What is being communicated in the paratexts greatly affects the image of the implied writer since the reader is often given knowledge about the writing process and the writer's opinions about the screenplay. Some readers, a producer for instance, might also know the writer personally from having worked together on previous productions. The writers can thus never fully control and predict how the reader will construct the image of the implied writer since that greatly depends on the reader's existing knowledge about the writer.

The main aspect of the implied writer's image that is affected by the readers' knowledge is its credibility. Certain facts that the reader knows about the writer can increase the writer's credibility. *The Hurt Locker* provides a good example of this. If the reader of the screenplay knows that the writer Mark Boal spent time in Baghdad with an U.S. bomb squad, actually living in the environment depicted in the screenplay, his credibility increases. Another example where the readers' knowledge about the writer raises the implied writer's credibility is *Sweet Sixteen* (written by Paul Laverty, directed by Ken Loach, 2002). The harsh, grim reality of the main character, Liam, and his surroundings become more effective and real if the reader knows that the screenwriter Paul Laverty carried out extensive research and spent time getting to know kids like Liam.

The credibility of the allusions to the potential film is also affected by the readers' knowledge. Looking at direct indications from the implied writer to the production team, the production team's responses to those indications is affected by their knowledge of the writer and the writer's situation in the production process. When the producer reads a screenplay that contains many camera angles, his or her knowledge of the writer decides whether or not those camera indications are interruptive to the reading or helpful to the visualisations. A producer who knows nothing about the writer, for example, might see the camera indications as a hindrance since s/he does not know whether or not the writer actually knows anything about how camera settings work in reality. If the producer, on the other hand, has worked with the writer before and the writer is the intended director of the film, the same camera indications can give the producer a good idea of how the film will be shot.

The knowledge that the reader possesses about the real writer can further be separated into two categories: intratextual and extratextual knowledge. Intratextual knowledge is knowledge that the reader gains from the screenplay text, for example, through reading the

foreword or afterword. Returning to *The Hurt Locker* and the writer Mark Boal's personal experience of the war in Iraq, those experiences are told in a foreword written by the director Kathryn Bigelow. Only if the reader did not read the foreword would the reader not have this knowledge. A foreword that provides the reader with information about the writer encourages the reader to start constructing an image of the writer. This perception of the writer will then influence the reader throughout his or her reading of the screenplay text.

Novels and stage plays sometimes contain a foreword or afterword but not to the degree that they appear in published screenplays. Almost all screenplays contain some kind of introduction, foreword, or note either by the screenwriter, the director, or the producer. The majority of screenplays also contain a collection of still photographs from the film and the production of the film. The knowledge that readers are given through these forewords, introductions, notes, and pictures affects their construction of the implied writer.

It is important to highlight that many introductions strengthen the image of the implied writer, as was the case in *The Hurt Locker*. Another case where this happens is *Michael Clayton* (written and directed by Tony Gilroy, 2007). The introduction to the screenplay is not written by the screenwriter/director Tony Gilroy but by another screenwriter: William Goldman. In the introduction Goldman states that Tony Gilroy is the 'leading thriller writer in the movie world'.[35] Goldman praises the screenplay and the film as well as George Clooney's acting performance. The readers' expectations of the screenplay are likely to increase, and they will not only picture Michael Clayton as George Clooney, but they will also regard Gilroy as a writer who knows the thriller genre. The foreword thereby increases Gilroy's implied writer's credibility.

3.2.2. Different readers' engagement with the screenplay text

Susan Lanser emphasises that a reader's knowledge of the real author affects the reader's construction of the implied author, which leads different readers to create different implied authors.[36] When examining how different readers construct slightly different implied writers, Sternberg's distinction between three different types of readers is useful. Sternberg makes a distinction between the 'property stage' reader, the 'blueprint stage' reader, and the 'reading

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[35] William Goldman, 'Introduction', in *Michael Clayton*, by Tony Gilroy (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), pp. vii-ix (p. viii).
[36] Susan Lanser, '(Im)plying the Author', *Narrative*, 9.2 (May 2001), pp. 153- 60 (p. 155) Both James Phelan and Wayne C. Booth have objected to that argument, stating that even though different readers may create different implied authors there exist more similarities between the created implied authors than dissimilarities. See Phelan (2005) p. 18, and Booth (1987), pp. 420-23.

material stage' reader.[37] The property stage reader is, for example, a producer who decides to buy the screenplay and produce it. The blueprint stage reader is a production team member during the production of the film, for example the director, the set-director, or the photographer. The reading stage reader is a reader who bought the published screenplay or a scholar who analyses the screenplay.

Allusions to camera positions and movements clearly show how different readers respond to the implied writer's communication. The producer, depending on whether s/he trusts the writer's visualisation or not, either dismisses the camera directions or uses them as indications of how the film will look. It is important to remember that the majority of producers regard screenplays as investments that can lead to successful films, which would further their careers and strengthen their positions in the industry. Therefore, producers search for signs of the writer's capability of telling a story that is transferable to the filmic media.

When the screenplay text is in the hands of a blueprint stage reader the production of the film has already started, and it is up to the readers to actually transfer the story from the page to the screen. They must not only carry out the camera movements that are indicated in the screenplay but all the camera movements that are not communicated by the implied writer. The property stage reader can either dismiss the implied writer's direct camera indications, which was the case in *Little Miss Sunshine*, or they can follow the indications. The implied writer gives the blueprint stage reader an alternative to how the potential film can be visualised. The blueprint stage reader will, however, have the final say and ultimately be the one who decides the look of the film. Since the blueprint stage readers' decisions to either follow or dismiss the implied writer's indications have great implications, they will most likely spend a substantial amount of time questioning and looking at each individual scene and decide the best way for it to be visualised.

The reading stage reader, on the other hand, will probably not spend much time questioning the implied writer's camera indications. They are more likely to visualise the scenes the way the implied writer communicates them. The reading stage reader, however, is more likely to engage more with other aspects of the implied writer's communication. For the reading stage reader the story itself and its implication is more important than the technical details of how it should be filmed. An example that clearly shows the different readers' different engagement with the implied writer's communication appears in *The Hurt Locker*:

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INT/EXT HUMVEE DAY
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[37] Sternberg, p. 50.

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Find the Humvee driving across the desert void.

Driving and driving.

Outside, horizon of sand and sun.

Inside, shell-shocked men.[38]
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The blueprint stage reader engages with the implied writer when deciding how to film it. The first sentence '[f]ind the Humvee driving across the desert void' indirectly indicates that the Humvee is seen from a great distance, which demands a long shot and maybe even the use of a helicopter during filming. The second sentence, '[i]nside, shell-shocked men', indicates close up shots of the three men so that their reactions can be seen and understood by the audience. The blueprint stage reader thus engages with the technical aspect of how to transfer the text to the screen. The reading stage reader, while visualising the scene first from a long shot and then from close ups, is likely to engage more with the implied writer's communication along the axis of interpretation and perception, and the axis of evaluation. The depicted scene takes place just after two of the men in the Humvee considered killing their team leader, the third man in the Humvee. The first half of the scene, when the Humvee appears in the vast desert, reminds the reader of the soldiers' isolation in a foreign country, which highlights their vulnerability. The close up of their shell-shocked faces then reminds the reader of how the war has changed the soldiers, making them capable of considering killing one of their own.

It can thus be concluded that even though the reading stage reader is inclined to visualise the scenes as the implied writer indicates, it is the reading stage reader that engages the most strongly with the implied writer's communication along the other two axes of communication. The reading stage readers are thereby more likely to question the implied writer's evaluation and interpretation of the story, while the blueprint stage readers are more likely to question the implied writer's allusions to the film to be. The property stage readers, on the other hand, probably end up somewhere in between the reading stage readers and the blueprint stage readers, since they engage with the implied writer's communication along all the axes of communication. They engage on the axis of indication to make sure that the writer's visualisations are transferable to the actual filming process, and they engage on the axis of facts, characters and events, the axis of perception and understanding, and the axis of

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[38] Boal, p. 52.

ethics and evaluation in order to make sure that the story is believable and engaging for a cinematic audience.

3.2.3. Differences between the real writer and the implied writer

When screenwriters create the image of themselves – the image of the implied writer – they can choose to create an implied writer that is more or less faithful to their own opinions and beliefs. The implied writer in *The Hurt Locker*, for example, neither argues for or against the Iraq war but shows it objectively. It is not necessary, however, for Mark Boal to share this opinion. Boal may very well disapprove of American soldiers in Iraq. For the benefit of the story, however, he might have chosen to create an implied writer with a different opinion. The implied writer in *Cold Mountain* strongly argues against war and violence. Since *Cold Mountain* is based on a novel, the implied writer's standpoint is more likely to be a reflection of the opinion held by the novel's author than a reflection of the screenwriter's opinion. Minghella thus intentionally created an implied writer that shares the beliefs of the source text's implied author.

It is very common that screenwriters choose to align their implied writers more closely to the source text's implied author than to their own opinions and beliefs. Readers thus often create an image of the screenwriter more similar to the source text's author than to the screenwriter. Adaptations are therefore of great interest when examining differences between the real writer and the implied writer.

3.2.3.1. The implied writer in adaptations

Adaptations have formed a part of the film industry since filmmaking began, and theoreticians have been studying them these last eighty years. Considering the amount of years that adaptation studies have existed, it is inexplicable why most theoreticians have disregarded the screenplay's position in the adaptation process. Even today many analysts choose to only focus on the source material and the film without mentioning the screenplay text's part in the process. Jack Boozer tries to rectify this oversight by focusing on the screenplay in the collection of essays, *Authorship in Film Adaptation*, which he edited and wrote an introduction to. As his title suggests, Boozer finds that '[f]ocusing on the screenplay in adaptation necessarily foregrounds issues of authorship'.[39] Even though adaptation studies

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[39] Jack Boozer, 'Introduction', in *Authorship in Film Adaptation*, ed. by Jack Boozer (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), pp. 1-30, (p. 1).

can highlight issues of authorship, they can also investigate the story, structure, and text of the screenplay without relating them to the writer.

Adaptation studies have over the years evolved from focusing on issues of fidelity to questions of intertextuality.[40] Using an intertextual approach enables the theoretician to not only compare the source text to the film, but to compare the ideological, sociological, and cultural influences that affected the two texts. Robert Stam writes that 'the literary text is not a closed, but an open structure […] to be reworded by a boundless context'.[41] Through referring to work by Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, and Gérard Genette, Stam further finds that adaptations need to be inserted into a 'broader intertextual dialogism', with intertexual dialogism referring to 'the infinite and open-ended possibilities generated by all the discursive practises of a culture'.[42] Brian McFarlane puts it more simply: 'To say that a film is based on a novel is to draw attention to one […] element of its intertextuality, but it can never be the only one. Conditions within the film industry and the prevailing cultural and social climate at the time of the film's making […] are two major determinants in shaping any film, adaptation or not.'[43]

Considering that most theoreticians focus on an adaptation's intertextuality, it seems even more surprising that so few highlight, or even mention, the screenplays' integral part of the film's intertextual context. Boozer, although still focusing on the question of authorship, finds that '[i]ntertextual study can reveal both the screenwriter's struggle for a creative take on preexisting literary materials and the collaborative process tied to the director who seeks to put his or her particular reading on the screen.'[44] He further concludes that '[a] revised contemporary sensitivity to adaptive film authorship would […] include the environments of all three texts – literary, script intertext, and film. All three can be sites of personal and cultural struggle and perhaps revelation.'[45] It is evident that more examinations of the screenplay text's place in the adaptation process are necessary, and that the screenplay needs to be regarded as an integral element of the film's intertextual context.

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[40] For good overviews of adaptation studies see McFarlane (1996), Naremore (2000), Aragay 2005), Stam and Raengo (2004), and Cartmell and Whelehan (2007).

[41] Robert Stam, 'Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation', in *Film Adaptation*, ed. by James Naremore (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000), pp. 54-76 (p. 57).

[42] Stam, 'Beyond Fidelity', p. 64.

[43] Brian McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 21.

[44] Boozer, p. 21.

[45] Boozer, p. 24.

Even though adaptation studies has moved on from questions of fidelity, it is apparent when looking at published screenplay adaptations that are based on well-known novels and short stories, that fidelity to the source text is still given great weight. Most covers of published adaptations emphasise the source text and the source text's author. On the cover of the published screenplay *Fantastic Mr. Fox* it says: 'Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Mr Fox*', with the subheading (half the size of the title): 'The Official Screenplay by Wes Anderson & Noah Baumbach.'[46] Roald Dahl's name is three times larger than the screenwriters' names. To emphasise the importance of the source text even more, the foreword is written by Roald Dahl's wife Felicity Dahl. The reader is thus inclined to not only construct the implied writers of the screenplay, Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach, but also the implied author Roald Dahl of the source text.

Writers of screenplays based on previous published material are forced to meet and deal with the implied author of the source text. It is then up to the screenwriters to either create an image of themselves that corresponds to the implied author of the source text, or one that is clearly separated from it. The emphases on Roald Dahl as the creator of *Fantastic Mr Fox* leads to the belief that Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach have chosen to align their implied writer with Roald Dahl's implied author. This is, however, not the case. Throughout the screenplay still photographs from the film are inserted together with extracts from Roald Dahl's original text. The interesting part is that none of the inserted quotes from the source text actually appear in the screenplay text. Every extract is slightly altered and revised in the screenplay. This highlights the difference between the implied author Roald Dahl and the implied screenwriters Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach. On a first impression the reader is inclined to construct an implied writer of the screenplay that closely corresponds to the implied author, but on a closer reading the reader discovers that the screenplay text is significantly altered from the source text, which indicates that the implied writer of the screenplay are different from the source text's implied author. If the reader knows other works by the screenwriters (both their screenplays and their films) they would also be aware of the distanced comedy that appears in most of their work, which would lead readers to see more similarities between the implied writer of *Fantastic Mr. Fox* and the implied writer of, for instance, *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (written by Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach, directed by Wes Anderson, 2004) than between the implied writer of *Fantastic Mr. Fox* and the implied author of its source text.

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[46] Anderson and Baumbach, cover page.

Fantastic Mr Fox shows that even though the author of the source text is emphasised on the cover and in a foreword, the screenwriter can still create an implied writer that is clearly separate from the implied author of the source text. *Brokeback Mountain*, on the other hand, is an example of when the implied writer of the screenplay is almost inseparable from the implied author of the source text. This leads to a greater difference between the real writers and the implied writer than between the implied writer and the implied author of the source text. *Brokeback Mountain* was originally published as a short story written by Annie Proulx. It was then adapted into a screenplay by Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana. There are three factors that lead the screenplay reader to infer the implied author of the short story as the implied writer of the screenplay text. Firstly, the screenplay was written in collaboration while a single author wrote the short story. Secondly, the short story's author is clearly stated to be the inventor of the story on the screenplay's title page. Thirdly, and this is the main factor, the screenplay is published together with the short story with the short story ahead of the screenplay, which leads to the reader already having read the short story and inferred an implied author from it before starting to read the screenplay (unless, of course, the reader skips the short story and reads the screenplay first). The conclusion is that readers of *Brokeback Mountain* are inclined to infer an implied writer that corresponds very closely to the implied author of the short story. The writers, McMurtry and Ossana have intentionally created an image of themselves that is aligned with the implied author created by Annie Proulx. Diana Ossana states in the afterword to the screenplay that they saw their screenplay as a 'long, honest and credible extension of Annie's writing, her dialogue, sense of time, place and landscape', and she concludes her afterword (and the book) by stating that '*Brokeback Mountain* the film stands faithfully beside "Brokeback Mountain" the short story'.[47]

Another example of where the screenwriter created an implied writer that closely corresponds to the implied author of the source material is *Sense and Sensibility* (written by Emma Thompson; directed by Ang Lee, 1995). In the case of *Sense and Sensibility*, however, the creation of the implied writer is more closely linked to the film production. Ossana and McMurtry wrote their adaptation independently from producers and directors. They commissioned the rights directly from Annie Proulx, and they did not turn to production companies until after they had finished the screenplay (and discussed it with Proulx). The production of *Sense and Sensibility*, on the other hand, was initiated by the producer Lindsay

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[47] Diana Ossana, 'Climbing Brokeback Mountain', in *Brokeback Mountain: Story to Screenplay*, by Annie Proulx, Diana Ossana, and Larry Mcmurtry (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), pp. 143-51 (pp. 148-49, 151).

Doran who spent ten years looking for a screenwriter she felt could properly adapt it. In the foreword to the screenplay Doran writes that she 'knew exactly what [she] was looking for: a writer who was equally strong in the areas of satire and romance […]; and a writer who was not only familiar with Jane Austen's language but who could think in the language almost as naturally as he or she could think in the language of the twentieth century.'[48] Doran, thus, searched for a writer who could create an implied writer faithful to the image of the novel's implied author, which she had constructed when reading it.

It is worth highlighting that other readers of the novel might construct different images of the novel's implied author than Doran, and they might not regard Jane Austen's capability of writing romance mixed with satire as the core element. That this is the case is apparent when looking at some of the critiques of the film and the screenplay. Kristin Flieger Samuelian, for example, finds faults both with Thompson's feminism and her inability to communicate the truth of Austen's novel.[49]

Doran found her screenwriter in Emma Thompson, stating that Thompson 'not only knew how to think in Jane Austen's language, but she understood the rhythms of good scene writing and how to convey a sense of setting', and that Thompson '[l]ike all good screenwriters […] didn't object to rewriting a scene again and again when it was required.'[50] Doran concludes the introduction with the following: 'Our fondest hope is that people who love Jane Austen will find the film to be faithful to the humour and wisdom of the original novel.'[51] Doran's specific requirements of Thompson to write in a way similar to Jane Austen makes it possible to conclude that Doran co-created the image of the screenplay's implied writer.

That a difference exists between the real writer Emma Thompson and the screenplay's implied writer becomes apparent when reading Thompson's diary of the film production, which is published together with the screenplay. Thompson's sense of humour and her ability to get it across the page is evident in both the screenplay and the diary, but in the diary Thompson shares her opinions on the characters and their lives, and she openly writes about all the ups and downs of the shoot. It is difficult, for example, to see the writer of the classical

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[48] Lindsay Doran, 'Introduction', in *Jane Austen's Sense & Sensibility: The Screenplay & Diaries,* by Emma Thompson (London: Bloomsbury, 1995), pp. 7-16 (p. 11).
[49] Kristin Flieger Samuelian, 'Piracy is Our Only Option: Postfeminist Intervention in *Sense and Sensibility*', in *Jane Austen on Screen*, ed. by Gina Macdonald and Andrew F. Macdonald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 148-58 (p. 155).
[50] Doran, in *Jane Austen's Sense & Sensibility*, p. 14.
[51] Doran, in *Jane Austen's Sense & Sensibility*, p. 16.

and Austen-like screenplay in this statement: 'Omigod. Stare at wine-sodden eyes in mirror and hate myself.'[52]

In the diary Thompson also writes of script meetings and how she changed and revised the screenplay throughout the production process, incorporating not only Doran's opinions but that of other production team members as well, especially the opinions by director Ang Lee and co-producer James Schamus. What becomes most apparent, however, when reading Thompson's diary is her love for the story and Jane Austen, and her determination to produce a screenplay worthy of Jane Austen's novel. Thompson thus intentionally created an implied writer who is closely aligned with Jane Austen's implied author.

Another adaptation that needs mentioning is Charlie Kaufman's adaptation of Susan Orlean's book *The Orchid Thief*, which Kaufman entitled *Adaptation* (written by Charlie Kaufman, directed by Spike Jonze, 2002). What makes *Adaptation* such an interesting case is that the story of *Adaptation* focuses on how the fictional character Charlie Kaufman struggles to adapt Susan Orlean's book *The Orchid Thief*. In his struggle to adapt the book, the character Charlie Kaufman gets help from his brother Donald Kaufman who also tries to make it as a screenwriter. The screenplay *Adaptation* is credited to both Charlie Kaufman and Donald Kaufman but the reality is that Donald Kaufman does not exist – he is purely a fictional character that Charlie Kaufman invented when writing the screenplay. The reader of the screenplay, however, will construct an image of the writer, that is, the implied writer, as being made up by both Charlie and Donald Kaufman. Charlie Kaufman can thus be seen to purposefully have created an implied writer that is different from him.

3.2.3.2. Concluding note on adaptations and the implied writer

Even though writers when adapting a novel or a short story often create an implied writer that is more aligned to the source text's author than themselves, the allusions to the potential film always clearly separates the implied writer's extrafictional voice from the source text's implied author. The implied author of the source text cannot be regarded as being in any kind of way involved in the extrafictional voice of the screenplay that continuously communicates directly to the reader through indicating how the potential film should be visualised. It can therefore be concluded that the constructed implied writer that is closer aligned to the implied author of the source text only corresponds to the implied writer's functions of reporting, interpreting, and evaluating, but not to the implied writer's function of alluding to the

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[52] Emma Thompson, 'The Diaries', in *Jane Austen's Sense & Sensibility: The Screenplay & Diaries,* by Emma Thompson (London: Bloomsbury, 1995), pp. 205-80 (p. 236).

visualisation of the potential film – that function belongs solely to the implied writer of the screenplay.

It needs to be highlighted that any forewords or afterwords that give the reader information about the source text and its author are only available to the reader of the published screenplay, that is, the reading stage reader. The property and the blueprint stage reader do not receive this information but solely rely on their own extratextual knowledge and the screenplay text. The images of the writer created by the different readers can therefore be very dissimilar.

Chapter 4: The fictional narrators

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on defining the fictional narrators that exist in screenplay texts. In the first chapter the impersonal fictional voice and the personal fictional voice were identified as a screenplay's fictional narrators responsible for communicating fictional information. This chapter examines and defines the two fictional voices in relation to how screenplay, literature, and film researchers discuss the fictional narrator. The impersonal fictional voice and the personal fictional voice are situated on the third and fourth level of narration in the communication model suited to screenplay texts:
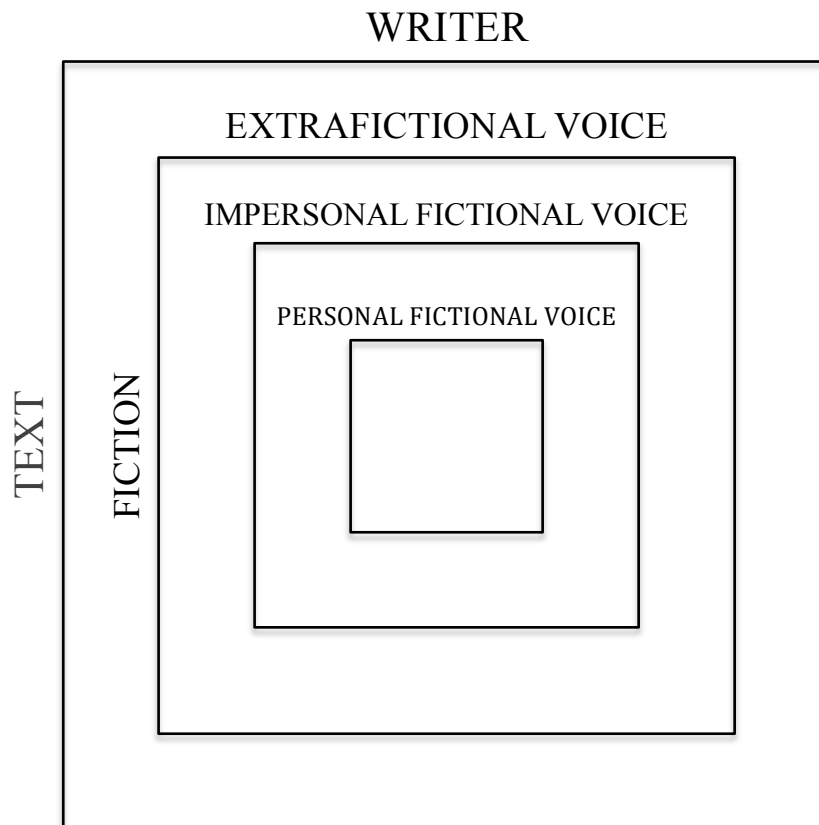
Figure 11. Communication model suited to the screenplay text.

The clearest way to distinguish the fictional voice from the implied writer's extrafictional voice is through the information that it provides the reader with. The fictional voice is firmly placed in the fictional world and provides the reader with fictional information, that is, information about the story, the characters, and their actions.

4.2. Screenplay research

Screenplay researchers have not discussed the concept of a fictional narrator in much detail, but there are some exceptions. Jeff Rush and Cynthia Baughman argue that it is possible to separate a 'dramatic voice' from a 'narrative voice' in screenplay texts.[1] The dramatic voice refers to events as they would appear even if no one would be there to account for them; it simply reports what happens in the story world. The narrative voice, on the other hand, is responsible for the shaping of the events, the overall structure of the story, and any comments on the story. Rush and Baughman acknowledge, however, that it is a 'deeply flawed theoretical distinction' but that it allows them to 'examine the differing functions of language in screenplay' as well as 'shifting the location of meaning from stories whose apparent center is in the working out of the events themselves to stories whose focus is on the tension between events and their telling.'[2] They refer to the opening of David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* as an example of where the two voices are clearly displayed. In *Blue Velvet,* the dramatic voice reports what will be seen (on the screen) while the narrative voice gives an ironic commentary on the over the top idyllic suburb, instructing the reader to question what is being shown. Rush and Baughman find that the benefits of identifying two fictional narrating voices outweigh the flaws of the distinction.

Claudia Sternberg argues that a narrating agent does not exist in screenplays but that screenplays can anticipate the presentation of a narrative agent in the potential film. Even though Sternberg does not acknowledge the existence of a narrative agent she makes a distinction between a 'personal narrative voice' and an 'impersonal narrative voice'.[3] This clearly shows that Sternberg, similarly to Rush and Baughman, might question the validity of the terms, but the benefit of positing the terms outweigh the setbacks. Sternberg defines the impersonal narrative voice as 'the narrative agent that guides the choices of images (e.g. editing, *mise-en-scène*) and governs the narration in the sense of "Who shows?".'[4] Sternberg further distinguishes between a covert and an overt impersonal narrative voice. The covert impersonal voice gives no indication from what perspective a scene is shown while the overt impersonal voice does. Indications could for example be camera movements, what camera that should be used, or sound directions. The personal narrative voice 'provides narration in

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[1] Jeff Rush and Cynthia Baughman, 'Language as Narrative Voice: The Poetics of the highly inflected Screenplay', *Journal of Film and Video*, 49.3 (1997), pp. 28-37 (p. 30).
[2] Rush and Baughman, p. 30.
[3] Claudia Sternberg, *Written for the Screen: The American Motion-Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 133.
[4] Sternberg, p. 133.

the sense of "Who speaks?"' and it has a defined origin, either off-screen (as a voice-over) or on-screen (as a character).[5] Sternberg uses Genette's terms heterodiegetic and homodiegetic to further distinguish between a personal narrative voice that participates in the narrated world as a character from one that does not. The heterodiegetic personal narrative voice exists only as a voice-over and cannot appear on screen, while the homodiegetic personal narrative voice can exist both off-screen, as a character's voice-over, and on-screen as a character. Sternberg stresses that it is only in the dialogue sections of the screenplay that a personal narrative voice can be expressed; it is the sound of the voice (in the film to be) that distinguishes the personal voice from the impersonal.

Considering that Sternberg argues that screenplays do not contain narrative *agents* while defining her impersonal narrative voice as the 'narrative *agent'* that 'governs the narration', her argument is inconsistent.[6] Sternberg is thus unsuccessful in separating the screenplay from a narrating agent. Even though Sternberg's argument is inconsistent her terminology and definitions are well suited to the screenplay text and will be used as a basis when defining the impersonal and the personal fictional voice later on in this chapter.

Steven Price, similar to Rush and Baughman and Sternberg, finds that the screenplay needs to contain a narration.[7] Price emphasises, however, that the screenplay is the textual medium that comes closest to 'showing' an event without narrating it, but it would be impossible for the screenplay to truly 'show' an event instead of narrating it, since that would render the screenplay a 'medi[um] that evade[s] mediation'.[8] Price concludes that narration in screenplays is supplied through a 'process of selection' and a 'corollary process'. A 'process of selection' refers to the fact that the events of a screenplay are specifically chosen, and a 'corollary process' refers to the selected events' arrangement into predetermined sequences, but Price does not find it necessary to connect these 'processes' to an agency or a voice.[9]

4.2.1. Concluding note on screenplay research

Screenplay researchers in general accept the existence of a personal narrative voice expressed in the dialogue section as a voice-over. The impersonal narrative voice, however, is not as readily accepted even though a narration responsible for the selection and the shaping of the

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[5] Sternberg, p. 136.
[6] Sternberg, p. 133 (my emphases).
[7] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 120.
[8] Price, p. 120.
[9] Price, p. 123.

events usually is identified: Rush and Baughman's narrative voice, Sternberg's impersonal narrative voice, and Price's processes. The concept of the impersonal narrative/dramatic voice therefore needs to be further examined and put in relation to how the concept is defined and discussed within literary and film theory.

4.3. The fictional narrator in literary theory

Sternberg's impersonal narrative voice relates to the concept that is usually referred to as a heterodiegetic extradiegetic narrator within literary theory. Gérard Genette coined the terms heterodiegetic and extradiegetic, identifying the extradiegetic narration as the first level of narration, the extradiegetic narrator to be the 'fictive author' of the story, and the heterodiegetic narrator as a narrator that is 'absent from the story' it tells.[10] Genette further emphasises that the extradiegetic narrator, though situated outside of the story, is still inside the fictional world.

Narratologists who follow Genette's distinction are, for example, Mieke Bal, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, and Seymour Chatman. Bal refers to the heterodiegetic extradiegetic narrator as a non-character-bound external narrator, which is either perceptible or non-perceptible.[11] Rimmon-Kenan, similarly to Bal, argues that the extradiegetic heterodiegetic narrator's perceptibility varies, but she finds that it is rarely a case of being either perceptible or not but that the degree of perceptibility ranges form covert to overt.[12] Both the distinction between non-characterbound and characterbound narrators, and perceptible and non-perceptible narrators is useful when identifying the fictional voices of screenplay texts.

Chatman identifies the narrator as the 'discoursive agent charged with presenting the words, images, or other signs conveying' the narrative, and he further finds that the narrator can accomplish this either by 'telling, showing, or some combination of the two'.[13] Identifying the narrator as being able to both show and tell enables Chatman to conclude that a narrative (such as Hemingway's *The Killers*) where the extradiegetic heterodiegetic narrator is more covert involves a narrator that is mainly showing instead of telling.[14] The use of the

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[10] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 228-29, 244.

[11] Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 3rd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009 [1985]), pp. 17-21.

[12] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, 2nd edn (NewYork;: Routledge, 2002 [1983], pp. 96-100.

[13] Seymour Chatman, *Coming to Terms: The Rhetorics of Narrative in Fiction and Film* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 119.

[14] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, pp. 119-23.

term 'presenter' also enables Chatman to transfer the narrator-concept to film narratives.[15] Even though Chatman's terms are suited to both films and novels, they will not be used in regards of the screenplay text. As Price states, the screenplay may come close to showing without telling but it cannot actually show the reader the story; it can only tell it.

4.3.1. Arguments against the external narrator

Within literary theory there are many theorists who argue against the existence of the extradiegetic heterodiegetic narrator, which was already seen in chapter 1 where Marianne Wolff Lundholt's argument was mentioned. Wolff Lundholt's main argument is that when a narrator is not textually retrievable it is absent. She explains further: 'This means that when the covert heterodiegetic narrator expresses a certain ideology which cannot be traced to a character, the evaluations are ascribed to the "subjective worldview of the text" rather than a narrator.'[16] She emphasises that there 'is no explicit subject to which we can ascribe these enunciations.'[17] Wolff Lundholt further highlights Ann Banfield's work, especially stressing Banfield's arguments against the narrator and regarding narratives as a communication. Banfield, quoted by Wolff Lundholt, finds that the text 'must be held together by some other hypothesis than that of the narrator's voice'.[18]

Another argument against the fictional narrator is to ascribe the narration to the author. Both Richard Walsh and Dan Shen follow this argument and thus find that the extradiegetic heterodiegetic narrator does not exist: Walsh argues that when the narrator is not a character the narrator is the author, stating that '[e]xtradiegetic heterodiegetic narrators (that is, "impersonal" and "authorial" narrators), who cannot be represented without thereby being rendered homodiegetic or intradiegetic, are in no way distinguishable from authors.'[19] Shen similarly argues:

> If the extra-heterodiegetic narrator is free from personalizing, readers will only read the
> narrated words while feeling the presence of a "disembodied" voice. If readers try to

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[15] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 133.
[16] Marianne Wolff Lundholt, *Telling Without Tellers: The Linguistic Manifestation of Literary Communication in Narrative Fiction* (Copenhagen: Medusa, 2008), pp. 15-16.
[17] Wolff Lundholt, p. 44.
[18] Banfield, as quoted in Wolff Lundholt, p. 46.
[19] Richard Walsh, 'Who is the Narrator?', *Poetics Today*, 18.4 (1997), pp. 495-513 (pp. 510-11).

look behind the words for the narrating process, they will only find the writer's writing

hand, and the fact that the disembodied voice is merely a fictional illusion.[20]

Another theorist opposing the concept is Monika Fludernik, who, in line with Wolff

Lundholt, finds that there, in some cases, is no textual evidence that somebody is telling the

story. Fludernik therefore refuses 'to locate narrativity in the existence of a narrator.'[21]

Fludernik regards drama texts as being narrated without a narrating agent, but through

separating the definition of narrativity from a narrator she is able to include drama texts in her

analyses. It is Fludernik's discussion of drama text that is especially useful to text based

screenplay research, since it focuses on how the narrations differ between the media.

Fludernik highlights that a drama text's story is similar to those of films and fictions, but what

separates the media is how the story is mediated on the discourse level. She therefore

identifies analyses that focus on the discourse level to be of greater importance than

examinations that focus on the story. Fludernik finds that the discourse level of a playscript

can be defined by 'distinguishing those elements that constitute what would traditionally be

called "plot" and those elements of dramatic narration that belongs to the performance level

of staging.'[22] She identifies features that indicate 'visual and aural orchestration' as elements

that belong to the performance level.[23] Fludernik's separation between plot and the level of

staging is easily transferred to the screenplay text and the separation between extrafictional

and fictional information: the separation of information concerned with the visualisation of

the potential film and the information concerned with the fictional story world.

Fludernik concludes that in 'reading a play, we imaginatively "stage" it in our minds',

and that the 'reading process is different from that of reading fiction because - owing to the

explicit staging information in the stage directions - it involves more visualisation than does

novel reading.'[24] Fludernik further states that 'stage directions are originally instructions for

the actors and director, but for the reader of playscripts, their function is an eminently

narrative one.'[25] That the text is first and foremost a narrative text is equally important to keep

in mind when it comes to the screenplay text, and, as will be seen further on in the thesis,

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[20] Dan Shen, 'Narrative, Reality, and Narrator as Construct: Reflections on Genette's "Narrating"', *Narrative*, 9.12 (2001), pp. 123-29 (p. 126).
[21] Monika Fludernik, 'Towards a "Natural" Narratology', *Journal of Literary Semantics*, 15.2 (1996), pp. 97-141 (p. 114).
[22] Monika Fludernik, 'Narrative and Drama', in *Theorizing Narrativity*, ed. by John Pier and José Ángel Carcia Landa (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), pp. 355-83 (pp. 361-62).
[23] Fludernik, 'Narrative and Drama', p. 362.
[24] Fludernik, 'Narrative and Drama', p. 363.
[25] Fludernik, 'Narrative and Drama', p. 375.

directions to the production team also serve narrative ends that enable the readers to better imagine the potential film in his or her mind.

Manfred Jahn, in line with Monika Fludernik, examines drama texts and he finds that a reader's 'imaginative reading' comes before a director's or actor's reading because the imaginative reading is a 'necessary precondition for understanding' the text.[26] Jahn also emphasises that it is a drama text's discourse level that is of greater interest since it is unclear whether or not a narrating voice exists in drama texts. Jahn concludes that in some playscripts a narrating voice can be found in the stage directions, which would have to be placed on a higher level of narration than the character-narrator that speaks through dialogue.[27] Jahn does not, however, go into any detail about possible narrating voices in drama texts. Jahn's 'imaginative reading' can be related to the reading that the property stage reader does, that is, the producer or investor, and Jahn's director's or actor's reading can be related to the readings carried out by the blueprint stage readers (i.e. the director, photographer, actors, etc.). Considering that it is the 'imaginative reading' carried out by the property stage reader that determines whether or not the screenplay will be put into production, Jahn's argument that it is necessary for the text first to be understood through the 'imaginative reading' is also a valid argument for the screenplay text. If the property stage reader does not understand the screenplay text, the screenplay will not be produced.

4.3.2. Concluding note

Even though some literary theorists oppose the narrator's existence, most are in favour of the concept and use it to examine how the story is told and how the narration functions. What needs to be highlighted is that the debate has been taken up by narratologists of drama, and that they especially argue that it is the narration that is the most relevant to examine, since it functions differently in drama than in novels. By relating the narrator concept and narration to the screenplay one more step is being taken to expand the field of narrative research, and just as it is argued within drama, the screenplay as a text-type also distinguishes itself through its unique narration: the simultaneous narration of the story and how it should be visualised as a film. What is also clear after reviewing literary theories is that positing a narrating agent as existing in all screenplay texts needs to be carefully considered, and the reasons for arguing

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[26] Manfred Jahn, 'Narrative Voice and Agency in Drama: Aspects of a Narratology of Drama', *New Literary History: Voice and Human Experience*, 32.3 (2001), pp. 659-79 (p. 666).
[27] Jahn, 'Narrative Voice', pp. 670-72.

for such an agent needs to be made clear considering that a narrator is not regarded as obligatory by drama text researchers or all literary researchers.

4.4. The fictional narrator in film theory

Within film theory the question of the extradiegetic heterodiegetic narrator is much debated and disagreed upon. The existence of the concept is therefore discussed in greater detail than the concept of the implied author. As was seen in both the first and the second chapter, David Bordwell argues against regarding the film text as a communication and he finds that a narrator is 'an unnecessary and misleading personification of the narrative dynamics of film.'[28] Bordwell, similar to Wolff Lundholt, argues that the narration should be assigned the traits given to the narrator, and that the 'narration can infer a narrator, but the narrator does not create the narration.'[29]

Assigning characteristic traits to the narration instead of a narrating agent is one of the main arguments against Bordwell. Seymour Chatman, for instance, finds that:

> [I]f something can know, present, recognize, communicate, acknowledge, be trustworthy, be aware of things, then surely it is too active a concept to be a mere happening of process. […] If "narration" indeed "does" these things, it is by definition an agent.[30]

Chatman defines his 'cinematic narrator' as the agent responsible for the overall showing of the film that uses specific communicating devices to do so.[31] Chatman separates these devices into an auditory channel (music, voices, etc.) and a visual channel (locations, camera movements, editing, etc.). Chatman concludes that 'if we deny the existence of the implied author and the cinematic narrator, we imply that film narratives are intrinsically different, with respect to a fundamental component, from those actualized in other media', which Chatman finds contradicts the principle that narration is independent of medium.[32]

Katherine Thomson-Jones argues against Chatman's conclusion that a narration is independent of medium. She finds that even though there are 'important theoretical links between film and literature, the assumption that films must be like novels in always having

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[28] David Bordwell, *Poetics of Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 122.
[29] David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (London: Methuen Press, 1985), p. 62.
[30] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 128.
[31] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 134.
[32] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 133.

narrators is unsound.'[33] Thomson-Jones finds that the most important question that needs to be answered is whether or not it is the implied filmmaker that guides the spectator through the film or whether it is an agent who is part of the story. Thomson-Jones argues that some films are told by an implied filmmaker and not by a fictional narrator, and she defines the implied filmmaker as 'the agent to whom we attribute the whole work which tells the fictional story'.[34] Thomson-Jones does, however, acknowledge that films where the narration implies a 'mediation of an implicit visual guide' contain a cinematic narrator, and she therefore concludes that 'whether a particular film has a narrator depends on how that film uses a range of narrative strategies.'[35]

Sarah Kozloff is a film theorist who argues for the existence of a cinematic narrator, and she uses Christian Metz's term 'image-maker' to refer to it. She finds that the image-maker is responsible for the telling of the story both through visual and auditory channels.[36] The image-maker is thus responsible for any voice-over narrations. She emphasises, however, that viewers in general are 'eager to overlook the less definable, less familiar image-maker, and […] embrace the [voice-over] character as the principal storyteller.'[37] In the case of a voice-over narrator that is not a character in the story it tells, Kozloff finds that the voice-over narrator can merge with the image-maker. She therefore concludes that:

> [T]he distance between the [voice-over] narrator and the image-maker can […] be larger or virtually nonexistent. At the [voice-over] narrator's closest approach, the voice becomes the image-maker's mouthpiece.[38]

June Perry Levine strongly objects to Kozloff chosen term 'image-maker' as it puts emphasis on the visual. Levine finds that the term voice is preferable:

> The narration [in films] is achieved through all the means of cinema. Although it is often possible to reify the literary narrator as "the one who speaks in this voice," this narrator is, of course, a construction of language; the narrator of film is almost impossible to thus reify because it is a construction of images, sounds, and their layered arrangement. But even if nonnarrative arts "speak" metaphorically to their receivers -

[33] Katherine Thomson-Jones, 'The Literary Origins of the Cinematic Narrator', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 47.1 (2007), pp. 76-94 (p. 76).
[34] Thomson-Jones, p. 81.
[35] Thomson-Jones, p. 85; pp. 93-94.
[36] Sarah Kozloff, *Invisible Storytellers: Voice-Over Narration in American Fiction Film* (Los Angeles: University of Califronia Press, 1988), pp. 44-45.
[37] Kozloff, *Invisible Storytellers*, p. 49.
[38] Kozloff, *Invisible Storytellers*, p. 74.

the notes of the quartet, the stones of the cathedral - in the narrative art of film, "voice"

is an appropriate term for that which expresses the discrete parts and the whole of its

complex presentation.[39]

Eva Laass also objects against the term 'image-maker', and instead proposes the term

'implied narrator' that she defines as the 'presumed sender of the textual data actually present

for the viewer's ears and eyes.'[40] Laass highlights that the term 'implied' is added to the

concept because it is the viewer that 'projects an agency […] onto the level of the film's

narrative discourse', which is implied by the data given to the viewer.[41] Laass thereby aligns

herself with Bordwell in that she highlights the importance of the spectator.

Edward Branigan regards the concept of the narrator merely as a 'convenient label'

created by the spectator to account for the narration.[42] Since, however, there are no better

alternatives he uses the term to refer to two of his objective narrative levels: one belonging to

the 'non-diegetic narrator' and the other to the 'diegetic narrator.'[43] Branigan's non-diegetic

narrator gives information about the diegesis (the story world) from outside of the story (for

example through intertitles) thus corresponding to Genette's extradiegetic narrator.

Branigan's diegetic narrator gives information limited to the story world, that is, only

information that can stem from the story world, for example information about the characters

and the locations. Branigan emphasises that the non-diegetic and the diegetic narrator's

reference point is the fiction as opposed to the extra-fictional narrator whose reference point is

the entire non-fictional text.[44]

What is clear after reviewing the different positions that film researchers take on the

existence of the narrator is that there exists no agreement on either the narrator's existence or

on how it should be named. The arguments by film theorists can, however, be organised more

clearly with the help of categories introduced by film philosophers.

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[39] June Perry Levine, 'The Functions of the Narrator's Voice in Literature and Film: Forster and Ivory's "Maruice"', *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 24.3 (1996), pp. 309-21 (p. 313).
[40] Eva Laass, *Broken Taboos, Subjective Truths: Forms and Functions of Unreliable Narration in Contemporary American Cinema - A Contribution to Film Narratology* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2008), p. 23.
[41] Laass, p. 22.
[42] Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 111.
[43] Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension,* p. 87.
[44] Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension*, pp. 87-100.

4.4.1. Philosophy and the cinematic narrator

In addition to film narratologists, film philosophers have also entered the debate concerned with the extradiegetic heterodiegetic cinematic narrator, referring to it as a film's implicit narrator. Their discussion of the concept mainly focuses around two theses: the symmetry/asymmetry thesis, and the ubiquity thesis.

The symmetry thesis states that 'narration in literature and film is identical in respect of the structural features of narration' (e.g. narrators, implied authors, the relation between plot and story, etc.).[45] Seymour Chatman, for instance, follows the symmetry thesis. Film philosophers who follow the symmetry thesis are, for example, Jerrol Levinson, George Wilson, and Nicolas Diehl.

The asymmetry thesis, on the other hand, states that 'cinematic narration differs from literary narration in respect of at least one of its basic structure features', which for example could be that the implicit narrator is not found in films.[46] Bordwell's, Thomson-Jones's, Lanser's, and Jahn's arguments belong to the asymmetry thesis, as well as the arguments by film philosophers Berys Gaut, Andrew Kania and Gregory Currie.

One main argument for the existence of the implicit cinematic narrator, thus in favour of the symmetry thesis, is based on the 'a priori argument' that every narration demands a narrator.[47] Seymour Chatman and Eva Laass use this argument to state their cases, which was seen above and in chapter 1. The argument against the a priori argument, for instance argued by Gaut, Noëll Carroll, and Kania, is that the a priori argument only demands the author but not the fictional implicit narrator. Kania, for example, argues that '[a]ll it [the a priori argument] says is that there is an agent who is responsible for the narrative', and he finds that 'authors seem to be prima facie candidates for the agents responsible for their narratives.'[48] Carroll similarly asks '[w]hy not say that the actual author is the narrator or that the implied author is? After all, the narrator in nonfiction narratives is the actual author. Why not say the same of fiction?'[49] Gaut concludes that '[i]f there is a story, there must be a teller of it; but the teller who figures in this necessity claim is the actual author. […] So the a priori argument if

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[45] Berys Gaut, 'The Philosophy of the Movies: Cinematic Narration', in *The Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics*, ed. by Peter Kivy (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), pp. 230-53 (p. 234).
[46] Gaut, p. 234.
[47] Gaut, p. 235.
[48] Andrew Kania, 'Against the Ubiquity of Fictional Narrators', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 63.1 (2005), pp. 47-54 (p. 48).
[49] Noëll Carroll, 'Introduction', in *Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures: An Anthology*, ed. by Noëll Carroll and Jinhee Choi (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 175-84 (p. 176).

successful proves the necessity of an actual author, not of a narrator.'[50]

It is also worth mentioning that agreement with the symmetry thesis does not necessarily mean that the theorist is in favour of the implicit narrator. This is argued by Nicolas Diehl, who finds that in both literature and film the implicit narrator only exists 'if we are prescribed to imagine' one.[51] Diehl thereby follows the argument of the symmetry thesis but he argues against the obligatory existence of the implicit narrator in both literature and film.

As an answer to the objections against the a priori argument, the ubiquity thesis is evoked. The ubiquity thesis was named by Kania (though he argues against it), and it emphasises that 'there is necessarily a fictional narrator in every narrative' and that without a fictional narrator of a fictional narrative an 'ontological gap' is created.'[52] The need for a fictional narrator to tell the fictional story is due to that the author (or the implied author) cannot tell the story as if it were true. Carroll finds that '[t]he actual author of a fictional narrative can tell the tale as fictional, but cannot tell the tale as true, which is what we are mandated to imagine.'[53] The identified problem is thus that it is only a fictional narrator that can *assert* that the events in the story are true.

The answer to the ubiquity thesis and the ontological gap argument is two-fold. The first is by simply asking why there is a need for an asserting fictional agent:

> If signalling that such-and-such is fictional instructs the audience to imagine it as true, why isn't the fictive intention of the author (that we imagine such-and-such) adequate to warrant supposing that such-and-such is true in the fictional world?[54]

Carroll further finds that 'if the contents of the fictional world are inaccessible directly to actual authors and audiences, why would that not apply to our access to the alleged fictional presenters as well?'[55] Carroll thus concludes that '[i]f there is a problem with making contact with the fictional world, that problem would persist with respect to making contact with an implicit fictional narrator and/or presenter.'[56]

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[50] Gaut, p. 236.

[51] Nicholas Diehl, 'Imagining De Re and the Symmetry Thesis of Narration', *The Poetics, Aesthetics, and Philosophy of Narrative*, ed. by Noëll Carroll (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 15-24 (p. 15).

[52] Kania, pp. 47-48.

[53] Carroll, p. 176.

[54] Carroll, p. 176.

[55] Carroll, p. 178.

[56] Carroll, p. 178.

Kania carries a similar argument when he states that '[i]f we cannot understand how the artist can reach down and show us the fictional world, how is it that the fictional narrator can reach up and show it to us? In fact, if we must choose between these alternatives, surely it makes more sense to accept the former.'[57] Kania concludes that the ontological gap does not hold as an argument for the implicit cinematic narrator.

Even though film philosophers do not agree on the existence of the cinematic implicit narrator, their discussions organise the arguments by both film theorists and film philosophers into two clear categories; researchers either follow the symmetry or the asymmetry thesis.

4.4.2. Concluding note on the cinematic narrator.

The existence of the cinematic implicit narrator is more debated than the existence of the literary narrator. Berys Gaut finds that '[l]anguage is an extremely subtle instrument for expressing nuances and character, so it is natural to think of some personality reflected in the words.'[58] Gaut thus regards literature to be better suited for the implicit narrator than film, since 'while a sense of personality may be conveyed by lighting, camera movement, and so on, these devices are crude compared to the subtleties of language.'[59] If one agrees with Gaut's conclusion, the screenplay is more suited to the concept of the implicit narrator than films.

There is also the question of what to call the concept in regard to films and how to define it. Branigan's conclusion that it is a convenient label that will do until a better one can be found still seems to hold twenty years later.

4.5. Conclusion on the existence of the extradiegetic heterodiegetic narrator

After reviewing the different arguments for and against the concept of the fictional narrator, the main question that needs to be answered is why it should be used in relation to the screenplay text, especially considering that there are good arguments against it. As the proposed communication model suited to the screenplay text on p. 54 in chapter 1 shows, this thesis incorporates the extradiegetic/implicit narrator in the communication model, and thus argues for the concept of a fictional narrating agent.

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[57] Kania, p. 51.
[58] Gaut, p. 246.
[59] Gaut, p. 246.

What is clear in the above discussions of the narrator is that the narrating agent is not easy to get rid of. Sternberg is unsuccessful in her attempt, Bordwell succeeds but still feels the need to attribute the characteristics that normally are related to the narrator to the narration, and Thompson-Jones argues against the concept but admits that it does exist in some cases. The problem seems to be to find an alternative. Bordwell's choice of the narration as a substitute has been argued against, and regarding the implied author or the author as the narrator also leads to new issues; especially in the case of the implied author since the concept itself is under debate. The researchers who regard the entire text as responsible for narrational comments, end up characterising the narration instead of attributing those traits to an agent. That they find it necessary to attribute the traits to something shows the difficulty of avoiding positing a narrating agent. The film philosophers might have the most convincing arguments against the narrator, but they are not debating the concept with the view of carrying out narrative analyses.

Relating this to the screenplay, a comment such as the following from *Inglourious Basterds* (written and directed by Quentin Tarantino, 2009) seems to have a clear origin in a narrating agent and not the text itself:

```
              PVT. BUTZ (VO)
     The Basterds took their lives,
     their hair, their valuables, their
     identity, and finally their dignity
     in death.

  True that. The sight of the dead soldiers with bare feet
  does rob the tableau of a certain dignity that is normally
  felt in battlefield shots.[60]
```

In this extract it is the 'true that' comment that especially has a personal ring to it since it uses an informal tone. Even though examples as the one above are rare, they do exist, and therefore the question of attribution needs to be discussed.

Fludernik seeks to disregard the reader's attributing the narration to a narrator through arguing the following:

Nothing demonstrates as clearly the weakness of the communicational thesis as this constraint to find a narrator's voice behind the linguistic surface structure, to impute existence to a fact of diction. This weakness of the communicational model, however, relates to the *theoretical level* of analysis exclusively. In terms of readers' reactions to

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[60] Quentin Tarantino, *Inglourious Basterds* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), p. 24.

individual texts, the tendency to attribute stylistic features to a hypothetical narrator persona and/or character is a simple fact.[61]

Fludernik concludes that 'this fact does not necessitate the stipulation of a narrator personal on the theoretical level at all', since narratologists then would be 'repeating reader's interpretive moves on a theoretical level.'[62]

Fludernik's argument can be put in contrast to Branigan and Laass, who highlight the importance of the spectator, and especially the spectator's constructions of the narrator. If Fludernik is right in stating that it is 'a simple fact' that *all* readers attribute the narration to a 'hypothetical narrator', then it would seem unnecessary to disregard them on the basis that the readers' attributions do not take place on a theoretical level.[63] If the majority of readers create a narrating agent when reading, the constant effort to disregard it and argue against it without finding a clearer substitute appears to be unnecessary. Therefore, instead of arguing against the concept, it seems more productive to ask how the concept can be used for narratological analyses.

In regard to the analysis of screenplay texts, positing the fictional narrator serves a very clear function: to separate the fictional information the reader is provided with from the extrafictional information that especially refers to the potential film. Since the screenplay's narration simultaneously gives information about the fiction and the making of the potential film, it is even more important to examine the relationship between the two narrations. This can be accomplished in greater detail through positing a fictional narrator as well as an extrafictional narrator. After all, it is how these two narrations co-exist, interact, and relate to each other, which makes the screenplay text-type unique. Considering the benefits, the concept of the narrator seems valid in the case of the screenplay text.

4.6. Defining the fictional narrator

Having stated that there is use for the fictional narrator in regard to the screenplay text, the concept needs to be clearly defined and put in relation to the extrafictional voice. Chapter 5 then examines how the concept functions in greater detail.

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[61] Monika Fludernik, 'New Wine in Old Bottles? Voice, Focalization, and New Writing', *New Literary History: Voice and Human Experience*, 32.3 (2001), pp. 619-38 (p. 622).
[62] Fludernik, 'New Wine', p. 623.
[63] Fludernik, 'New Wine', p. 623 (my emphasis).

4.6.1. The impersonal fictional voice

The term impersonal fictional voice has been chosen to refer to the heterodiegetic extradiegetic or implicit narrator in screenplay texts. The term is mainly taken from Sternberg's impersonal narrative voice, but the definition is slightly altered. First, the term fiction replaces Sternberg's narrative. This is to clearly position the impersonal fictional voice inside the fiction, and to separate it from the extrafictional voice. The term impersonal refers to the fact that the reader does not know who it is that narrates or where (in the fiction) the narrator is situated. The impersonal fictional voice can be defined as the narrating voice that provides the reader with information about the fictional story world, for example information about actions, characters, and settings. *28 Days Later* (written by Alex Garland, directed by Danny Boyle, 2002) contains a good example of a clear impersonal fictional voice:

> Jim whirls again, and sees, further down the road …
>
> … Selena, a black girl, also in her twenties. She wears a small backpack, a machete is stuck into her belt – and she holds a lit Molotov cocktail in her hand.
>
> … and Mark, a tall, good-looking man – throwing another bottle.[64]

In this example, the impersonal fictional voice provides information about the look and the actions of the characters Jim, Selena, and Mark.

An example that describes the setting rather than the characters is the following from *Hugo* (written by John Logan, directed by Martin Scorsese, 2011):

> From far above it looks like a great clockwork.
> We are looking down on the Grand Hall of the Paris Train Station.
> It is crowded.
> People bustle back and forth.
> Like the gears and wheels of a clock.
> A precise beautiful machine.[65]

The example consists of a description of a train station in Paris, but not so much how it looks but rather how it works; like clockwork. The fictional narrator becomes more apparent in this example since it not only reports what can be seen but also interprets what is seen. In this example the fictional voice also refers to itself as being part of a 'we'. How 'we-formulations'

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[64] Alex Garland, *28 Days Later* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), p. 14.
[65] John Logan, *Hugo* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2011), p. 1.

exist, function, and relate to the fictional voice in screenplay texts will be discussed further on in this chapter.

An example of where the impersonal fictional voice not only gives information about the action but also explains it, is this example from *The Squid and the Whale* (written and directed by Noah Baumbach, 2005):

```
Sophie shakes Lili's hand as well. Lili raises an eyebrow
to Walt regarding Sophie. Walt takes a step away,
distancing himself from Sophie for Lili's benefit.⁶⁶
```

Here the reader not only receives information about the action but also why the characters act the way they do. The fictional voice thus knows why the characters' act the way they do, and shares its knowledge with the reader.

The impersonal fictional voices from the above examples provide information that clearly refers to the fictional world. There are, however, many cases where it is not as straightforward. It is often difficult to tell whether it is the extrafictional voice or the impersonal fictional voice that provides the reader with information, especially in cases where a specific point of view of the scene is given.

4.6.1.1. The impersonal fictional voice and the extrafictional voice

In the following examples it is not easy to identify whether it is the fictional or the extrafictional voice that provides the information, since all examples indicate camera positions. The first example is from *Burn After Reading* (written and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen, 2008):

```
Evening. Long-lens, hand-held, point-of-view seeming:
Harry Pfarrer jogs in his Treasury sweats.
Closer on him. His brow furrows. He spins, jogs backwards,
looking.
His point of view: nothing unusual; traffic on the bridge,
no pedestrians particularly close.
Harry, mildly puzzled, slows and stops.⁶⁷
```

The narration indicates a long-lens, hand-held camera as well as a close-up shot of Harry's face, and a point of view shot from Harry's location. The specific camera positions and camera type clearly refer to the extrafiction and thus to the extrafictional voice. However, the point of view indication is followed by what Harry Pfarrer sees and an assertion that it is

---

⁶⁶ Noah Baumbach, *The Squid and the Whale* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2005), p. 98.
⁶⁷ Joel and Ethan Coen, *Burn After Reading* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008), p. 18.

'nothing unusual', which is a statement that can only stem from the fictional narrator, since it very clearly refers to the fictional world.

The next example is from *Inglourious Basterds* where the Jewish girl Shosanna is running from the German Colonel Landa:

```
COL. LANDA
as he crosses the floor, sees the young girl RUNNING
towards the cover of the woods. He unlatches the window
and opens it. Shosanna is perfectly FRAMED in the
windowsill.

SHOSANNA
RUNNING towards the woods. Farmhouse and Colonel in the
window in the B.G.

FILTHY BARE FEET
SLAPPING against wet grass.

CU Shosanna's Face
same as animal being chased by a predator: FLIGHT-PANIC-
FEAR.

SHOSANNA's POV
the safety of trees, getting closer.

COL. LANDA
framed by the window, takes his WALTER, and straight-arm
aims at the fleeing Jew, cocking back the hammer with his
thumb.

COL. LANDA POV
of the fleeing Shosanna.

CU COL. LANDA
SLOW ZOOM into his eyes as he aims.

PROFILE CU SHOSANNA
mad dash for life.

COL. LANDA
changes his mind. Heyhells to the rat fleeing the trap,
heading for the safety of the woodpile, in FRENCH
SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH:

                        COL. LANDA
              Au revoir, Shosanna!
```

```
The S.S. colonel closes the window.⁶⁸
```

The example contains clear camera directions, technical abbreviations (CU, POV, etc.), clear point of view positions, a zoom-in on Landa's eyes, and even a direction that the dialogue line should be subtitled in the potential film. All of these are clearly narrated by the extrafictional voice. Similarly to the previous example, however, the scene also contains action descriptions as well as a thought-description (Landa's change of mind), which all indicate the telling by a fictional voice.

Another way to merge the two narrating voices is through using 'we- formulations'. *The Savages* (written and directed by Tamara Jenkins, 2007) and *The Squid and the Whale* provide examples of this:

```
In dreamy SLOW MOTION, we TRACK down ominously unpeopled
streets: ONE-STORY HOUSES in matching pastels float by,
ECCENTRIC CACTI shoot up out of GRAVEL LAWNS. TOPIARY
GARDENS enhance the unrealness of this place, as do
lollipop trees and circular hedges. […] We are floating
through America's premiere master-planned retirement
community -- a geriatric Eden.⁶⁹

We START on the record sleeve of Pink Floyd's "The Wall"
and MOVE to the sheet music for the song, "Hey You". We
CONTINUE up to Walt, who sits crosslegged, headphones on,
playing along on guitar.⁷⁰
```

In neither of these examples is the word camera mentioned but both clearly indicate a camera movement, and the examples also describe fictional events: the first example describes the location, the second Walt's action. Again, the examples indicate both the extrafictional voice and the fictional voice.

There are also examples of where 'we see' formulations are mixed with the word camera, as this one from *The Savages*:

```
FROM THE HALLWAY, LOOKING INTO THE BATHROOM --
Lenny shuffles toward camera and SLAMS the bathroom door
in our face.⁷¹
```

---

⁶⁸ Tarantino, p. 17.
⁶⁹ Tamara Jenkins, *The Savages* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 1.
⁷⁰ Baumbach, p. 11.
⁷¹ Jenkins, p. 4.

Here, the narration indicates a clear camera position, but the interesting part of the example is when Lenny slams the door 'in our face', which indicates that the camera has been replaced by 'our face'.

The last examples that show the simultaneous narration by the extrafictional and impersonal fictional voice are from *Traffic* (written by Stephen Gaghan, directed by Steven Soderbergh, 2001) and *The Hurt Locker* (written by Mark Boal, directed by Kathryn Bigolow, 2009):

```
ON THE TABLE
the remnants of a meal. It was a steak and a small caesar
salad. The wine glass is half-empty. ANOTHER ANGLE ON
ROBERT
in front of the mirror now, trying on a dark, tasteful
jacket.
CLOSER
On Robert in the same position, only now we are in HIS
HOME.⁷²

Eldridge scans the horizon--
-- a small HERD of GOATS amble along the railroad tracks.
He rubs his eyes, looks again--
-- Somewhere within the herd a flutter of fabric--
Eldridge stiffens.⁷³
```

Both these examples indicate clear camera positions but without mentioning the word camera or using we-formulations. In the first example the camera is first angled on the table and then on Robert. The second example first shows Eldridge and then what he sees. In the first example the scene text also indicates a new location and a time jump as Robert goes from standing in front of the mirror in a hotel to his own bedroom. In these last two examples, the extrafictional voice is not as apparent as in the previous examples, but it can still be felt as a presence behind the fictional voice.

In the previous chapter instances where camera positions were implied but not directly stated, were referred to as the implied writer's indirect allusions. The more correct way of regarding these instances, however, is to refer to the narration as fictional but with a clear sense of the implied writer's presence. As Lanser states: 'When we enter the "story world" we do not leave behind the extrafictional voice or the "implied author"; that voice remains a

---

⁷² Stephen Gaghan, *Traffic* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), p. 3.
⁷³ Mark Boal, *The Hurt Locker* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2009), p. 68.

significant if hidden presence throughout our reading of the fictional discourse.'[74] Lanser also adds that the voice can be more or less 'obvious', and more or less 'disguised beneath levels of narrations'.[75] In the screenplay, a scene text's fictional narration can more or less hide the extrafictional voice of the implied writer. Narrations in scene texts can therefore be placed on a spectrum that ranges from the extrafictional to the fictional depending on if the narration foregrounds the fictional or the extrafictional voice. The examples from *The Hurt Locker* and *Traffic* would, for instance, end up closer to the fictional end of the spectrum than the examples from *Burn After Reading* and *Inglourious Basterds*. It is, however, impossible for a story in a screenplay to be completely told by an impersonal fictional voice since all scene headings are of a technical nature and thereby refer to the extrafictional real world and thus belong to the extrafictional voice.

4.6.1.2. 'We-formulations'

The use of 'we-formulations' is very common in screenplay texts but very uncommon in other narrative text-types. The first question that needs answering is who the 'we' actually refers to. The examples below show the different ways 'we-formulations' are used in screenplays, and who or what they refer to.

The most common way of using 'we-formulations' is by simply stating what the 'we' sees, as this example from *28 Days Later* shows:

```
As the camera rises upwards, we can see that the gridlock
snakes along the entire distance of the flyover. Like the
destroyed vehicles on the road to Basra, it stretches for
miles…[76]
```

The use of 'we' in the above example is very typical and straightforward. The 'we' sees what the camera shows.

In the next examples from *Never Let Me Go* (written by Alex Garland, directed by Mark Romanek, 2011) the 'we' is attached to characters, and thereby the fiction:

```
Miss Lucy is seeing what we are seeing – that the objects
of the children's enthusiasm are worthless.
```

---

[74] Susan Sniader Lanser, *The Narrative Act: Point of View in Prose Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 131.
[75] Lanser, *The Narrative Act*, p. 132.
[76] Garland, *28 Days*, p. 5, 55.

```
We stay in the car with Ruth - who watches, like a silent
film, as Tommy walks towards Kathy.77
```

Here the 'we' is clearly situated next to the characters. It sees what they are seeing but it is still kept separate from the characters.

In the following examples, the 'we' is given emotions and reactions to what it sees and hears. The examples are from *Love Actually* (written and directed by Richard Curtis, 2003), *Michael Clayton* (written and directed by Tony Gilroy, 2007), *An Education* (written by Nick Hornby, directed by Lone Scherfig, 2009), and *United 93* (written and directed by Paul Greengrass, 2006):

```
We realize that in the background we have been listening
to "Christmas Is All Around".78

MICHAEL's FACE as he walks. And later on we'll understand
all the forces roiling inside him, but for the moment, the
simplest thing to say is that this man who needs more than
anything to see one pure, natural thing, and by some
miracle has found his way to this place.79

Jenny feels humiliated; she is yet to realise what we can
see - that Helen is simply very dim.80

As we see Jarah's face clearly for the first time, we
wonder if there is any moment of doubt or hesitation, pity
or compassion.81

We begin to have an unnerving sense of their utter
disengagement from the polite rituals that attend our 21st
century lives.82
```

In these examples the 'we' feels, thinks, and reacts to the story and its characters and actions.

Another type of 'we', which is seen in *The Queen* (written by Peter Morgan, directed by Stephen Frears, 2006) and *Love Actually*, is given more of an editor's role:

```
(We intercut between the two locations as necessary.)83

We cut through moments of the wedding service:84
```

---

[77] Alex Garland, *Never Let Me Go* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), p. 25, 45.
[78] Richard Curtis, 'Love Actually', in *Six Weddings and Two Funerals*, by Richard Curtis (London: Penguin Group, 2006), pp. 217-363 (p. 243).
[79] Tony Gilroy, *Michael Clayton* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), pp. 15-16.
[80] Nick Hornby, *An Education* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), p. 38.
[81] Paul Greengrass, *United 93: Screenplay and Commentary* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2006), p. 7.
[82] Greengrass, p. 13.
[83] Peter Morgan, *The Queen* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), p. 23.

In these two examples, the 'we' is given editing tools, which enables it to 'cut' between scenes or within a scene.

The next example from *Little Children* (written by Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, directed by Todd Field, 2006) clearly refers to the 'we' as almost an invisible person within the story.

```
The laundry room door is slightly open, and she looks
toward the –
HALLWAY
Nobody's there, but us.[85]
```

This examples shows a 'we' that is a contradiction since it places the 'we' in the story world without it really being there. Another example of where the 'we' becomes an invisible person within the story was the example from *The Savages* where Lenny slams the door in 'our face' mentioned on p. 119 in this chapter.

The last example of how the 'we' can be used is taken from *Inglourious Basterds* where the 'we' reads a title placed in the sky:

```
We read a SUBTITLE in the sky above the farmhouse.[86]
```

The subtitle refers to the potential film and is therefore narrated by the extrafictional voice. The 'we' is thus seeing something that does not exist in the fictional world.

The examples above show the different ways 'we-formulations' work: as a substitute for the camera, as an editor, as a seeing (invisible) agent, as a feeling, reacting, and thinking agent, and as a spectator of the potential film. Since it works in so many ways the 'we' is difficult to pin down. In most cases the 'we' is positioned inside the story but without actually being there. Not as if the 'we' is behind the camera, or as if it were the camera, but rather as if it was seeing the potential film. The 'we' can therefore be best understood as the narrator and the narratee put together, viewing the potential film. They are not real as it is not the real writer and the real spectator; it is impossible for the writer to know (or dictate) the reactions of the spectator. The fictional narrator can thus be seen to place itself together with the fictional narratee in a fictional viewing situation of the potential film. The reactions, thoughts, and feelings of the narratee that the fictional narrator dictates are the reactions the writer ideally wants the reader/spectator to have when reading the screenplay or viewing the

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[84] Curtis, p. 221.
[85] Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, *Little Children* (New York: Newmarket press, 2006), p. 51.
[86] Tarantino, p. 1.

potential film. This places the 'we' clearly in the fiction, as it is not a real agent in the extrafictional world: it is not the real writer or the real spectator of the potential film.

Sternberg comes to a similar conclusion about the use of 'we-formulations', but she relates the 'we' to the writer and the reader instead of to the fictional world: 'Through the use of we-constructions […] the reader and writer are united into what would appear to be an abstract bond.'[87] Chapter 8 argues that the reader needs to merge with the narratee in order to fully experience the fictional story. Sternberg's conclusion that the reader and writer form an abstract bond through the use of 'we-formulations' can then be clarified through stating that the reader merges with the narratee while the writer merges with the narrator. A direct bond thus exists between the narrator and the narratee. Chapter 8 explains and discusses the bond further.

4.6.1.3. Concluding note on the impersonal fictional voice

The impersonal fictional voice is difficult to separate from the extrafictional voice, but this makes the two narrations the more interesting and important to examine. How the two narrations overlap and complete each other leads to different distancing effects between the reader and the story. A narration that clearly displays the extrafictional voice through direct camera directions and notes to the potential film's production team places the reader further away from the story, as the narration from the extrafictional voice continuously reminds the reader that the story is fictional and constructed by writers. The fewer references that are made to the extrafictional world, the more is the reader able to focus on the story. The word 'camera' puts an actual object between the reader and the story, which means that the reader does not experience the story directly in his or her mind but through a camera. 'We-formulations' have a similar effect as they place the reader in a fictive viewing situation but, similarly to using the word 'camera', it does not let the reader experience the story directly.

Another conclusion concerning camera indications and 'we- formulations', is that the use of camera-indications, and thereby the extrafictional voice, instructs the reader to visualise the potential film from a director's perspective, while the use of 'we-formulations' instruct the reader to visualise the potential film from a future spectator's perspective.

Lanser finds that 'in the absence of direct markings which separate the public narrator [the impersonal voice] from the extrafictional voice, so long as it is possible to give meaning to the text within the equation author = narrator, readers will conventionally make this

---

[87] Sternberg, p.75.

equation.'[88] Relating Lanser's statement to screenplays, it can be found that even though separating the extrafictional voice from the impersonal fictional voice enables the analyst to better examine how the two narrations provide the reader with information, the reader of the screenplay text is most likely to regard the voice of the impersonal fictional narrator as belonging to the writer(s).

4.6.2. The personal fictional voice

The term personal fictional voice is, just as the impersonal, mostly taken from Sternberg. She separates her personal narrative voice from the impersonal by stating that the personal narrative voice is '"personalized" by sound (off-screen narrator voice-over) and/or image (on-screen narrator)'.[89] Replacing Sternberg's term narrative for fictional, the personal fictional voice is defined as a narrating voice that has a specific, personalised voice, either off-screen or on-screen, and that provides the reader with information about the fictional story world. The personal fictional voice is thus the only narrating voice that is heard in the potential film, and it is thereby located in the dialogue section of the screenplay.

Two types of personal fictional voices exist in screenplay texts: the characterbound and the non-characterbound.[90] The characterbound personal fictional voice appears as a character in the story it tells, while the non-characterbound personal fictional voice does not. It is important to highlight, however, that both personal fictional voices are situated in a time different from the story they tell.

4.6.2.1. The non-characterbound personal fictional voice

The non-characterbound personal fictional voice exists in the dialogue section of the screenplay as a voice-over narrator, which has some part in telling the story but does not appear in the story.

The Narrator in *(500) Days of Summer* (written by Scott Neustadter and Michael H. Weber, directed by Marc Webb, 2009), narrates Tom and Summer's love story without appearing in the story:

```
And we're looking at a MAN (20s) and a WOMAN (20s) on a
bench, high above the city of Los Angeles.
[…]
And then a DISTINGUISHED VOICE begins to speak to us.
```

---

[88] Lanser, *The Narrative Act*, p. 151.
[89] Sternberg, p. 136.
[90] The terms are taken from Mieke Bal. For her definitions see Bal (2009) p. 21.

```
                            NARRATOR
           This is a story of boy meets girl.⁹¹
```

The Narrator is clearly separated from the impersonal fictional voice through the impersonal

fictional voice introducing the Narrator and describing how the voice sounds.

      Another example of a non-characterbound personal fictional voice is the Voice who

tells the story in *Little Children*:

```
  As we PUSH IN on her - A NEW VOICE EMERGES. IT IS MALE,
  CALM, AND NON-JUDGMENTAL, IN SHORT, GROWN-UP.
                             VOICE
                Smiling politely to mask a familiar
                feeling of desperation, Sarah
                reminded herself to think like an
                anthropologist. She was a
                researcher studying the behavior of
                typical suburban women. She was not
                a typical suburban woman herself.⁹²
```

Similar to the example from *(500) Days of Summer*, the impersonal fictional voice in *Little*

Children introduces and characterises the non-characterbound personal fictional voice. The

Voice in *Little Children* provides the reader with information about the characters, their

thoughts and feelings, and the story in general.

      A more unconventional use of a non-characterbound personal fictional voice is the

Narrator voice-over in *Inglourious Basterds*:

```
                         NARRATOR (VO)
                Sergeant Werner Rachtman has seen
                many interrogations since Germany
                decided it should rule Europe. But
                this is the first time he's ever
                been on the wrong end of the
                exchange. It's always been his
                belief that only a weakling in
                mind, body, and spirit complies
                with the enemy under threat of
                consequences. […] Well, Sergeant,
                this is your test. And the gods are
                watching.⁹³
```

---

[91] Scott Neustadter and Michael H. Weber, *(500) Days of Summer* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2009), p. 1.
[92] Field and Perrotta, p. 2.
[93] Tarantino, p. 25.

This case is unconventional because the Narrator only appears a few times throughout the screenplay text and can therefore not be regarded as being responsible for the fictional story that is being told. It is more a case of the Narrator providing the reader with additional information about the story and the characters at specific points in the story. The Narrator is introduced the following way:

> The LITERARY NARRATOR comes on the soundtrack in
> ENGLISH.[94]

Since the introduction of the Narrator refers to the soundtrack of the potential film, and thereby directs itself to the production team of the film, it is in fact the extrafictional voice that introduces the personal voice-over Narrator. The non-characterbound personal fictional voice in *Inglourious Basterds* can thus be differentiated from the personal fictional voices of both *(500) Days of Summer* and *Little Children* in two clear ways: through it only appearing on a few occasions, and through being introduced by the extrafictional voice.

4.6.2.2. The characterbound personal fictional voice

The characterbound personal fictional voice is bound to a character that plays a part in the story he or she tells. The character can either be the main character or a minor character but in most cases it is the main character telling his or her own story. One example of a characterbound personal fictional voice is Kathy's voice-over in *Never Let Me Go*:

> KATHY
> (*voice-over*)
> I'm twenty-six years old, and I've
> been a carer now for seven years.[95]

In *Never Let Me Go* it is the main character Kathy who tells her own story through a voice-over.

Another example of a characterbound personal fictional voice is the voice-over in *Juno* (written by Diablo Cody, directed by Jason Reitman, 2007):

> JUNO V.O.
> It started with a chair.[96]

---

[94] Tarantino, p. 43.
[95] Garland, *Never Let Me Go*, p. 3.
[96] Diablo Cody, *Juno* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 1.

Just as in *Never Let Me Go*, the characterbound personal fictional narrator belongs to the main character, who provides the reader with information about the story, her thoughts, and other characters.

```
                    JUNO V.O.
          My dad used to be in the Army, but
          now he's just your average HVAC
          specialist. He and my mom got
          divorced when I was five.[97]
```

The next chapter further examines the function of the characterbound fictional voice, as well as the other fictional voices.

4.6.2.3. Concluding note on the personal fictional voice

The examples above of how the personal fictional voice can appear in screenplay are clear and straightforward. This is, however, not always the case. In the screenplay *Stranger than Fiction* (written by Zach Helm, directed by Marc Forster, 2006), a narrating voice-over is introduced that seemingly is not bound to a character. Later on in the story, however, it becomes apparent that the voice-over actually does belong to a character that exists in the story. These instances where a non-characterbound personal fictional voice-over turns out to be characterbound are very rare, which is why they are not discussed in any greater detail in this thesis.

When speaking about the personal fictional voice it cannot be highlighted enough that a film can appear to be told by the personal fictional voice while a screenplay cannot. A spectator of the films *(500) Days of Summer*, *Never Let Me Go*, or *Juno* can regard the personal fictional voice as being responsible for the fictional story that s/he is being shown. A screenplay reader, however, will not regard the story as being told by the Narrator, Kathy, or Juno, because their narrations are enclosed by scene-texts that remind the reader of the fact that the personal fictional voices are fictional constructs created by the writer(s) and encompassed by the narrations of both the extrafictional voice and the impersonal fictional voice. The reader of the screenplay can therefore never forget entirely the existence of higher-level narrations.

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[97] Cody, p. 15.

4.7. Conclusion

Despite the fact that the existence and the definition of the fictional narrator are disagreed upon within film and literary theory, in relation to the screenplay the benefits of positing the concept outweigh the negatives. This is mainly because the screenplay text's narration is unique in continuously providing the reader with both extrafictional and fictional information. Positing an extrafictional voice and a fictional voice is beneficial, since it enables the analyst to more clearly examine how the two voices interact. The next chapter discusses and examines how the fictional voices function and interact in more detail.

Chapter 5: Characterising the fictional narrating voices

5.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the functions the impersonal and personal fictional voices carry out, and discusses how the fictional narrating voices can be characterised. The chapter shows that even though screenwriting manuals and how-to-books encourage the writer to only write what can be seen in the potential film, the reality is significantly different.

5.2. Functions

Despite the narrator being such a debated concept, what functions the narrator carries out is not as much discussed. Literary theorist Marie-Larue Ryan argues that a narrator's degree of 'narratorhood' is decided through how narrators carry out their pragmatic 'narratorial functions', which she identifies to be the 'creative', the' transmissive', and the 'testimonial' function.[1] Ryan thereby not only identifies a narrator's functions but also regards the functions as a way to define the narrator. If the narrator carries out all three functions its degree of narratorhood is greater than if the narrator only carries out two. Ryan emphasises, however, that the narratorial functions can be carried out by different narrating agents, that is, a narrative can consist of multiple narrating agents with low degrees of narratorhood that together accomplish the task of narrating the story.[2]

Gérard Genette also identifies a narrator's functions, but he does not regard them as a way of defining the narrator. Genette argues that the narrator carries out five functions that all relate to a distinct element of the narrative: the narrative function relates to the story, the directing function relates to the aspect of the text, the communication function relates to the narrating instance and the narratee, the testimonial function relates to the narrator's relation to itself, and the ideological function relates to the narrator's didactic interventions in the narrative, for example through comments. Genette emphasises that the narrative function is the only indispensible function as a narrator without a story is no narrator, and that the ideological function is the only function that does not have to be implemented by the narrator.[3] June Perry Levine applies Genette's functions to films and finds that the functions

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[1] Marie-Laure Ryan, 'The Narratorial Functions: Breaking Down a Theoretical Primitive', *Narrative*, 9.2 (2001), pp. 146-52 (pp. 146-47).
[2] Ryan, p. 148.
[3] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Oxford: Blackwell publishing, 1980), pp. 255-57.

are transferable to filmic narration, but some of them are being carried out through the use of image, sound, and editing tools.[4]

Roman Jakobson's functions, which were discussed on p. 41 in the present study, are also useful when discussing how a narration functions. Jakobson identifies six narrational functions: the emotive function, the referential function, the poetic function, the phatic function, the metalingual function, and the conative function. These functions are closely related to the addresser, the context, the message, the contact, the code, and the addressee.[5]

Claudia Sternberg, when analysing the screenplay text, argues that 'the screenplay contains all the modes of presentation – description, report, comment and speech – employed in prose fiction'. She further divides her comment mode into 'technical comments', for example camera instructions, 'para-technical comments', that is, indirect technical instructions, and literary comments.[6] Sternberg bases her modes of presentation on the theory presented by Helmut Bonheim who, quoted by Sternberg, defines the comment mode as follows:

> 'Comment is the explanation or interpretation of persons, places, objects and actions. Its chief functions are to define their nature by the application of abstract terms, especially by ethical and aesthetic judgments, but also political, social and economic ones. Comments assign purposes, causes, motivations. The language of comment is distinguished by a lack of space and time references […].'[7]

Even though Sternberg does not speak of the modes of presentation as narrating functions, they can still be used to examine how a narrating voice works. Steven Price, in regard to Sternberg's use of the modes, finds that screenplay texts differ greatly in their use of the comment mode, and that, even though the modes are useful when analysing screenplays, it is not always easy to separate them, especially in the case of the reporting and the description mode.[8]

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[4] June Perry Levine, 'The Functions of the Narrator's Voice in Literature and Film: Forster and Ivory's "Maurice"', *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 24.3 (1996),pp. 309-21 (pp. 320-21).
[5] Roman Jakobson, 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics', in *Style in Language* ed. by T. A. Sebeok (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), pp. 350-77 (pp. 353-57).
[6] Claudia Sternberg, *Written for the Screen: The American Motion-Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 66, pp. 73-75.
[7] Bonheim, as quoted in Sternberg, p. 73.
[8] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 114-15.

In examining the functions of the narrator, though incorporating the above, this chapter mainly draws from rhetorician James Phelan's theories, as they were used when discussing the extrafictional voice in chapter 3. Phelan finds that the narrator, similar to the implied author, performs three main telling functions: reporting, interpreting, and evaluating. These telling functions take place along the three axes of communication: the axis of facts, character, and events, the axis of perception or understanding, and the axis of ethics and evaluations. [9] In screenplay texts the fictional narrating voices, similar to the extrafictional voice, also alludes to the potential film along the axis of indication and visualisation. The fictional voices can then be seen to report on the action, interpret the action, and evaluate the action, as well as allude to the potential film.

In the case of a character-narrator, Phelan separates between its telling functions (reporting, interpreting, evaluating) and character functions. He then further divides the character functions into the 'mimetic function', the 'thematic function', and the 'synthetic function'. [10] Phelan's character functions will be related to the characterbound personal fictional voice later on in the chapter when discussing how the fictional voices can be characterised.

In regard to the above discussions of how the narrator functions, it is clear that even though different functions are identified there are several similarities. Genette's narrative function as well as Sternberg's report mode can be related to Phelan's reporting function along the axis of facts, characters, and events. Sternberg's description mode would also fall under Phelan's reporting function as it relates to the facts, characters, and events of the story. That both Sternberg's report and description mode fall under Phelan's reporting function further highlights the two modes' similarities and that they overlap, which Price highlights. [11] Sternberg's comment mode and Genette's commenting function can be related to both Phelan's interpreting and evaluating function depending on if the comments interpret or evaluate. Considering that Price and Sternberg regard the comment mode to be the mode that mostly differs between screenplay texts, separating comments further depending on if they interpret or evaluate is beneficial. Sternberg's technical and para-technical comments can then be related to the function of alluding to the potential film. Sternberg's speech mode refers to characters' dialogues and thus does not relate to the fictional voices being discussed in this

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[9] James Phelan, *Living to Tell About It: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 216.
[10] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, pp. 12-13.
[11] Price, pp. 114-15.

chapter. Genette's directing, communication, and testimonial functions are more relevant in relation to how the narrating voice can be characterised, and will therefore be examined together with Jakobson's functions when discussing the characterisation of the impersonal and personal fictional voice.

The main functions that the screenplay texts' fictional voices carry out are the reporting function, the alluding function, and the commenting function. The commenting function includes explanatory, interpretative, evaluative, and reflective comments.

5.2.1. The reporting function

Phelan relates a narrator's reporting function to the axis of facts, characters and events. Through the reporting function the narrator communicates information concerning the facts, characters, and events of the story. Sternberg finds that a screenplay text, if one would follow the guidelines of screenwriting manuals, should only contain the report mode and short descriptions of characters. Sternberg concludes, however, that few screenplays actually follow this limitation, which is also seen in the examples below, as well as in the discussion concerned with the evaluating and interpreting functions.[12]

In screenplay texts, the fictional voices' reports the action and describes locations and characters.

5.2.1.1. The impersonal fictional voice's action report

Even in screenplays that contain very little scene text, the impersonal fictional voice is identifiable through its reporting of actions. One screenplay that keeps the scene texts to a minimum is *Before Sunset* (written by Richard Linklater, Ethan Hawke, and Julie Delpy, directed by Richard Linklater, 2004). In the beginning of the screenplay, the reporting of the actions is more substantial and detailed:

```
There is a polite applause and people start to disperse.
JESSE looks back over to CELINE – she gives a little wave.
He gets the MANAGER's attention.

Outside the bookstore, JESSE puts his hands on CELINE's
shoulders and just looks at her.[13]
```

---

[12] Sternberg, pp. 72-73.
[13] Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke, 'Before Sunset', in *Before Sunrise and Before Sunset*, by Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy, and Ethan Hawke (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), pp. 111-209 (p. 121, 123).

Towards the middle, however, the action report is kept to a minimum but increases again as the end approaches:

```
Coffee arrives.

They laugh.

She starts crying.

She gets up and goes into the kitchen. While she's in
there, JESSE, pokes around through her CDs. By the time
she returns, a Nina Simone song is playing and he is
sitting on the couch.14
```

Even though the impersonal fictional voice in *Before Sunrise* most of the time keeps the reporting of the action to a minimum, the voice also interprets and evaluates which will be seen further on.

Most screenplays, however, contain more extensive action reports. Especially scenes that display an action sequence, for example a fight or a car chase, are bound to contain a more obvious report by the impersonal fictional voice. *Michael Clayton* (written and directed by Tony Gilroy, 2007) contains a good example of an action scene:

```
ARTHUR heading out -- pulling on his coat -- heading for
the door -- checking for keys -- there -- grabbing them
off the side table, as he opens the door and --

ZZZIIPPP!!!!!

A TASER -- 25,000 volts -- from nowhere -- ARTHUR'S BODY
clenching as it hits and --

WE'RE INTO ONE CONTINUOUS SHOT NOW

VERNE and IKER -- already flooding in -- gloves --
hairnets -- surgical boots -- like machines --

IKER -- the athlete -- perfect -- hands catching ARTHUR'S
WRITHING BODY before it hits the floor and --

VERNE -- attack -- gloved hand thrusting down and --

ARTHUR'S FACE -- AEROSOL CAN -- VERNE'S HAND -- two quick
bursts -- point blank -- words -- throat -- everything
choked off -- eyes rolling and --

IKER -- the body drops -- ready for the dead weight and --
```

---

[14] Linklater, Delpy, and Hawke, p. 144, 150, 192, 207.

```
VERNE -- kicking shut the door -- back to the body and --

                        IKER
              Ready and...

                        VERNE
              Lift.

ARTHUR -- like a prop -- limp -- effortless -- IKER and
VERNE flying him through the space -- this horrifying
freight train pas de trois -- and so far this whole thing
as taken eighteen seconds --[15]
```

The action report in *Michael Clayton*, though mainly focusing on reporting the action, contains some character descriptions and some evaluating comments. It also states how long the action sequence should last in the film: eighteen seconds. Examples of an impersonal fictional voice's action report that is more direct and compact are the following extracts from *Inception* (written and directed by Christopher Nolan, 2010):

```
A GUNSHOT slams into the van as Yusuf drives- he glances
back to see a MOTORCYCLE pulling up behind him, the REAR
PASSENGER FIRING A SHOTGUN- the bike pulls alongside
Yusuf's window as the passenger RELOADS- Yusuf YANKS the
wheel TOWARDS the bike, bringing the shotgun barrel into
the cab so he can GRAB it, spin the heel back- PULLING the
passenger from the back of the bike… Yusuf turns a corner,
heading into a disused MARKET-[16]
```

And:

```
As Arthur hurries down the corridor, the corridor starts
to TILT, and Arthur is forced to run UP ONTO THE WALL- he
rounds a corner- STRAIGHT INTO another Security Man-
Arthur HEAD BUTTS him and they STRUGGLE- as they struggle,
the corridor SPINS around, THROWING THEM UP ONTO THE
WALLS, THE CEILING- as wall becomes floor they DROP
through a door into-[17]
```

When reporting an action scene, both *Michael Clayton* and *Inception* use dashes instead of full stops to increase the pace and not stop the action. It is common to hire a specialist when creating fight scenes and car chases, but they usually work on the scene during the production of the film. If there is an action scene, the writer thus has to write it to enable the reader to

---

[15] Tony Gilroy, *Michael Clayton* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), pp. 81-82.
[16] Christopher Nolan, *Inception: The Shooting Script* (San Rafael: Insight Editions, 2010), p. 176.
[17] Gilroy, p. 176.

visualise it even though it might be changed later on during production. The examples from *Michael Clayton* and *Inception* appear in the films as they are in the screenplay text but it is unclear if anyone was brought in to stage them.

In most screenplays the action is reported by simply stating what happens. Here are two examples that display normal action reports, the first from *Billy Elliot* (written by Lee Hall, directed by Stephen Daldry, 2000), and the second from *Little Miss Sunshine* (written by Michael Arndt, directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris, 2006):

```
Billy shakes his foot as the girls turn to go into the
centre. He crouches down and unties his boot, as a pair of
ballet shoes drop in front of him.[18]

He tickles her. She squeals. He stops. She recovers. He
brushes her hair back.[19]
```

Both these examples display a clear reporting impersonal fictional voice that simply states what the characters do and what happens to them.

5.2.1.2. The impersonal fictional voice's descriptions of characters and locations

In addition to reporting the action, the fictional voice's reporting function also includes descriptions of the characters and the locations. Location descriptions are usually straightforward, but character descriptions often contain interpretations and evaluations. Some clear location descriptions can look like the following examples from *Sweet Sixteen* (written by Paul Laverty, directed by Ken Loach, 2002) and *Gosford Park* (written by Julian Fellowes, directed by Robert Altman, 2001):

```
Simple carpeted room with about fifteen sets of tables and
chairs. In one corner there is a little play corner for
toddlers. By the wall there is a cramped counter for
selling coffee and snacks.[20]

This is a simple, plainly furnished room with two beds.[21]
```

Most location descriptions, however, are accompanied by a description of the atmosphere and the action in the location, which gives the reader a sense of how the location feels rather than going into too much detail of how it looks. *The Pianist* (written by Ronald Harwood, directed

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[18] Lee Hall, *Billy Elliot* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000), p. 11.
[19] Michael Arndt, *Little Miss Sunshine* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006), p. 52.
[20] Paul Laverty, *Sweet Sixteen* (Ipswich: Screenpress, 2002), p. 23.
[21] Julian Fellowes, *Gosford Park* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2002), p. 10.

by Roman Polanski, 2002) and *State and Main* (written and directed by David Mamet, 2000)

contain such descriptions:

> ```
> The large café is crowded, hot and smoke-filled. Well-
> heeled customers, pimps, whores, businessmen sit at little
> tables, eating, talking, laughing, almost drowning the
> piano music. Some dance.[22]
> ```
>
> ```
> Inside the room, production boards being carried in,
> blackboards, schedules taped to the wall, sketches of Main
> street, a large "days till shoot...4" sign.[23]
> ```

These two descriptions focus more on the atmosphere of the locations, and it is the locations'

actions that define them.

Character descriptions, as stated above, usually involve explanatory comments that

give the reader more knowledge about the characters than simply describing how they look.

Examples from *Gosford Park*, *The Pianist*, and *Little Miss Sunshine* show this:

> ```
> As the car continues down the drive, it catches the
> attention of a beautiful woman who is cantering on her
> horse, Topaz. She wears jodhpurs and a loosely tied neck
> scarf over her hacking jacket. This is Lady Sylvia
> McCordle, daughter of an earl and doyenne of Gosford.[24]
> ```
>
> ```
> Wladyslaw Szpilman plays Chopin's Nocturne in C sharp
> minor, Posthumous. He's twenty-eight years old, elegant
> and handsome.[25]
> ```
>
> ```
> Richard (45) stands at the front of a generic community
> college classroom -- cinderblock walls, industrial
> carpeting.
> He wears pleated khaki shorts, a golf shirt, sneaker. He
> moves with the stocky, stiff-legged gait of a former
> athlete.
> His peppy, upbeat demeanor just barely masks a seething
> sense of insecurity and frustration.[26]
> ```

All of the above descriptions give information that the spectator of the potential film will not

receive. The spectator will not know who the beautiful lady on the horse is or her title until

later on in *Gosford Park*, only spectators who know Chopin's music will know what

---

[22] Ronald Harwood, 'The Pianist', in *The Pianist & Taking Sides*, by Ronald Harwood (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), pp. 1-115 (p. 29).
[23] David Mamet, *State and Main: A Screenplay by David Mamet* (London: Methuen, 2001), p. 10.
[24] Fellowes, p. 3.
[25] Harwood, p. 5.
[26] Arndt, p. 1.

Szpilman plays in *The Pianist*, and Richard's sense of insecurity and frustration does not become apparent for the *Little Miss Sunshine* film's spectator until much later on.

An extreme example of where the character descriptions give information that is completely 'unfilmable' is in *Michael Clayton* where the impersonal fictional voice describes the characters the following way:

```
MARTY BACH looks up from his papers. He's seventy.
It's his name on the door. Big Power. Sweet eyes. A
thousand neckties. A velvet switchblade.

MICHAEL CLAYTON'S FACE -- A PHOTOGRAPH laminated
onto a Kenner, Bach & Leden ID card -- FILLS OUR
FRAME. It's a man's face. Son of a second-generation
cop's face. Father of a ten-year-old boy's face. A
face women like more than they know why. The good
soldier's face.27
```

As opposed to the previous character descriptions, these two examples contain information that the spectator of the film will never be able to gain. The descriptions do, however, get a feeling of the characters across to the reader, and even though the information might be 'unfilmable' it enables the reader to get to know the characters and visualise them more clearly. In relation to unfilmable information, Steven Price emphasises that 'even if the script contains material that cannot be filmed, it can still be read.'28 Even though the spectator never will receive this information, the actors will, and they thereby gain a better understanding of the character they are portraying, which can help them bring the character alive. That said, screenwriting manuals discourage the use of too 'unfilmable' character descriptions as this statement by Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush shows: 'Try to limit your descriptive details to brief fragments that serve to place your characters in the reader's mind. Never indicate a precise, specific detail that doesn't pay off in the script.'29 The descriptions in *Michael Clayton* clearly break this rule as they contain specific details that are not mentioned later in the screenplay. Some manuals, however, allow the writer to be less restrictive in the case of character descriptions. Michael Hauge, for example, finds that:

---

27 Gilroy, p. 5, 6.
28 Price, p. 126.
29 Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*, 3rd edn (Boston: Focal Press, 2002), p. 220.

In writing character description, you can cheat a bit on the rule that nothing can go on the page that doesn't go on the screen. It is okay to make *limited* reference to a character's background as part of the description.[30]

5.2.1.3. The personal fictional voice's reporting function

In the case of the personal fictional voice, its reporting function is not as common or obligatory as in the case of the impersonal fictional voice. The personal fictional voice mainly interprets and evaluates the characters and the events. The personal fictional voice does, however, report some actions and some character descriptions. An extract of a character description from *Juno* (written by Diably Cody, directed by Jason Reitman, 2007) was shown on p. 128 in the present study. Below follows one more example from *Juno* and one example from *(500) Days of Summer* (written by Scott Neustadther and Michael Weber, directed by Marc Webb, 2009):

```
                    JUNO V.O.
          They were Mark and Vanessa Loring,
          and they were beautiful even in
          black and white.³¹
```

And:

```
                  NARRATOR
          Summer Finn was a woman.

  FREEZE on SUMMER. (Throughout the following, SUBTITLES
  will reveal specifics of the Narrator's points.)

                  NARRATOR
          Height: Average.

  Titles reveal specifics: 5' 5"


                  NARRATOR
          Weight: Average.

  Titles: 121 pounds.

                  NARRATOR
          Shoe size: slightly above average.

  Titles: Size 8.
```

---

[30] Michael Hauge, *Writing Screenplays that Sell: The Complete Guide to Turning Story Concepts into Movie and Television Deals* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 2011), p. 144 (emphasis in original).

[31] Diablo Cody, *Juno* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 44.

```
                            NARRATOR
             For all intents and purposes,
             Summer Finn... just another girl.

   RESUME regular speed.

                            NARRATOR
             Except she wasn't.[32]
```

The example from *(500) Days of Summer* shows how the information given by the personal fictional voice can be backed up by visual information alluded to by the extrafictional voice. This clearly shows that in the case of information given by the personal fictional voice and the extrafictional voice, the spectator of the potential film will receive the same information at the same time as the reader. It is thus only the impersonal fictional voice that can give information to the reader that the spectator of the potential film will not receive.

Even though the personal fictional voice provides some character and location descriptions, it mainly provides the reader with interpretations and evaluations, as well as characters' backstories and characters' thoughts and feelings. In the case of an interpretation or an evaluation of a story event or a character, the narrating takes place along the other axes, but in the case of providing backstory and a character's thoughts and feelings, the information belongs to the reporting function, since it reports what has previously appeared or is appearing in a character's mind.

Backstory gives the reader information about a character's past. Here follows examples from *(500) Days of Summer* and *Inglourious Basterds* (written and directed by Quentin Tarantino, 2009):

```
                            NARRATOR
             To wit: in 1999, Summer quoted a
             song by the Scottish band Belle &
             Sebastian in her highschool
             yearbook.
             […]
             This spike in Michigan sales of
             their album "Boy with the Arab
             Strap" continues to puzzle industry
             analysts.[33]
```

And:

---

[32] Scott Neustadther and Michael H. Weber, *(500) Days of Summer* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2009), p. 11.
[33] Neustadther and Weber, pp. 41-42.

```
          NARRATOR (VO)
To operate a cinema in Paris during
the occupation, one had two
choices. Either you could show new
German propaganda films, produced
under the watchful eye of Joseph
Goebbles. Or … you could have a
German night in your weekly
schedule and show allowed German
classic films.³⁴
```

In both of the above examples, non-characterbound personal fictional voices provide the backstory. Even though characterbound personal fictional voices also provide backstory, they more often report their own thoughts and feelings, as the following examples from *Juno* and *Never Let Me Go* (written by Alex Garland, directed by Mark Romanek, 2010) show:

```
          JUNO V.O.
I decided to not call Bleeker to
tell him that I was having the
baby. He had a big meet against
Manteno and I didn't want him to
get all worried about me and
choke.³⁵
```

And:

```
          KATHY
         (voice-over)
I didn't understand why, after all
her teasing, Ruth would decide that
Tommy was the boy she liked most of
all.
[…]
They say girls are always mean to
the boys they like. So maybe Ruth
had liked him all along.
[…]
Maybe I should have teased him
too.³⁶
```

Even though characterbound personal fictional voices mainly give inside information about characters, non-characterbound personal fictional voices also give information about characters' thoughts and feelings. The inside information given by non-characterbound voices

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³⁴ Quentin Tarantino, *Inglourious Basterds* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), p. 43.
³⁵ Cody, p. 96.
³⁶ Alex Garland, *Never Let Me Go* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), p. 43.

is, however, usually not restricted to one character. This is seen in *Little Children* (written by

Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, directed by Todd Field, 2006):

```
                    VOICE
          For the past few days, Sarah hadn't
          been able to concentrate on
          anything but the Prom King…and the
          curious thing that had happened
          between them on the playground.
          […]
          She didn't feel shame or guilt,
          only a sense of profound
          disorientation, as if she had been
          kidnapped by aliens, and then
          released, unharmed, a few hours
          later.
```

And:

```
                    VOICE
          Brad showered quickly, sensing a
          rare opportunity to have sex with
          his wife.
          […]
          This is just what I need, he
          thought. Something to take my mind
          of that kiss.³⁷
```

In the first example the Voice reports the thoughts of Sarah, and in the second example the

Voice reports Brad's thoughts.

Thought descriptions are, however, not exclusively used by the personal fictional

voices. The impersonal fictional voice also occasionally provides them, even though manuals

and how-to-books advise against it since thought descriptions are 'unfilmable'.³⁸ The

following examples from *United 93* (written and directed by Paul Greengrass, 2006), *Little*

Children, and *Inglourious Basterds* show direct thought descriptions given by the impersonal

fictional voice:

```
"Clockwork" Sliney thinks to himself. A thing of beauty.³⁹

Sarah smiles at the women, wondering how they'll react to
her impending proximity to "The Prom King."⁴⁰
```

³⁷ Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, *Little Children* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006), p.18, 27-28.
³⁸ See for example Hauge (2011) p. 140, Field (2006) p. 221, and McKee (1997) p. 396.
³⁹ Paul Greengrass, *United 93* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2006), p. 3.
⁴⁰ Field and Perrotta, p. 11.

```
He smiles and heads over to her. "Oh no, not this guy
again," she thinks.⁴¹
```

The examples clearly show an impersonal fictional voice reporting a character's thoughts. In most cases, however, thought descriptions are given through the use of free indirect discourse instead of through direct discourse. In the case of free indirect discourse the thoughts are unmediated, that is, they are not reported by the impersonal fictional voice. Free indirect discourse is therefore discussed and examined in relation to how characters narrate in the next chapter.

5.2.2. The impersonal fictional voice's alluding function

The alluding function, which takes place along the axis of indication and visualisation, is unique to the screenplay text. The extrafictional voice provides most of the allusion, and how the impersonal fictional voice's allusions overlap with the extrafictioal voice's allusions was discussed in chapter 3 and 4. Therefore, this chapter only mentions the fictional voice's alluding function briefly.

Before turning to the allusions by the impersonal fictional voice it needs to be emphasised that the personal fictional voice does not communicate along the axis of indication and visualisation as its communication takes place in the dialogue section of the screenplay. The personal fictional voice's narration can, however, be backed up by both the impersonal fictional voice's and the extrafictional voice's allusions to the potential film, which was seen in the example from *(500) Days of Summer* earlier on in this chapter.

Even though most allusions that the impersonal fictional voice makes to the potential film indicate the presence of the extrafictional voice, there are ways in which the impersonal fictional voice can direct the reader's visualisation of the film without the presence of the extrafictional voice being felt. Monika Fludernik states that the reading of a playscript is different from a novel since the playscript 'involves more visualisation than does novel reading'.⁴² This is also true for the reading of screenplay texts; the screenplay reader will always look for cues that help their visualisation of the potential film. When the impersonal fictional voice thus directs the reader to specific details or describes the scene from a specific perspective, the reader will take it as a cue for their visualisation. All information that highlights a specific detail or action does in some way direct the reader's visualisation. The

---

[41] Tarantino, p. 48.
[42] Monika Fludernik, 'Narrative and Drama', *Theorizing Narrativity*, ed. by John Pier and José Ángel Carcia Landa (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), pp. 355-88 (p. 363).

following example from *28 Days Later* (written by Alex Garland, directed by Danny Boyle, 2002) clearly cues the reader to visualise a close up shot of the button when it is being pressed but without bringing the presence of the extrafictional voice to the forefront:

```
A hand slams down the disconnect button.43
```

The Queen (written by Peter Morgan, directed by Stephen Frears, 2006) provides a similar example:

```
The Queen raises her eyebrows.44
```

Reporting that the Queen raises her eyebrows clearly cues to the reader to visualise a close up shot of the Queen's face. Sometimes simply stating that a character reacts indicates a close-up shot, as in this example from *The Constant Gardener* (written by Jeffrey Caine, directed by Fernando Meirelles, 2005):

```
The doctor beckons to Justin, who steps forward, Sandy
shadowing him. The doctor rolls back the sheet, revealing
the body beneath. What Justin sees we, mercifully do not.

JUSTIN'S REACTION45
```

In this example, however, the presence of the extrafictional voice is felt more clearly since Justin's reaction is capitalised.

The most common way the impersonal fictional voice directs the reader's visualisation is through indications of a character's gaze: what s/he sees and from where s/he sees it. Through connecting the visualisation to a character the allusions are firmly placed within the fictional world. *Sweet Sixteen* (written by Paul Laverty, directed by Ken Loach, 2002) and *Brokeback Mountain* (written by Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, directed by Ang Lee, 2006) contain examples of this:

```
Liam stares at his mother from under his cap. He examines
her hair and her eyes. He looks for any mark on her arm.
He catches a tremor in her hand as she brings a cigarette
to her mouth.46
```

---

[43] Alex Garland, *28 Days Later* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), p. 5.
[44] Peter Morgan, *The Queen* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), p. 25.
[45] Jeffrey Caine, *The Constant Gardener* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2005), p. 42.
[46] Paul Laverty, *Sweet Sixteen* (Ipswich: Screenpress Publishing), p. 25.

```
JACK nods politely, but is looking over her [Lashawn's]
shoulder at LUREEN and RANDALL. LUREEN smokes. RANDALL
studies JACK and LASHAWN on the dance floor.⁴⁷
```

The second example, from *Brokeback Mountain*, clearly indicates a shot of Jack looking over Lashawn's shoulder followed by a shot of Lureen and Randall, which is specifically indicated by reporting that Lureen is smoking and that Randall is watching Jack. How looks can create the space of the story and direct the readers' visualisation will be further discussed in chapter 7, which focuses on the concept of focalisation.

Allusions to the potential film provided by the impersonal fictional voice are the only allusions that the screenwriting manuals support. The manuals discourage the use of direct camera directions. They thus do not agree with using the extrafictional voice in the scene text to allude to the potential film, but argue that descriptions should be used instead. Hauge, for example, states that 'to create a close-up in the mind of the reader, *simply describe in detail the object the camera would move in on*.'[48] Syd Field similarly finds that '[i]f you're ever in doubt about whether to use the word "camera," *do not use* it; find another term to replace it.'[49]

5.2.3. Comments by the impersonal fictional voice: interpretations, evaluations, explanations and reflections

Sternberg does not separate an impersonal fictional voice's comments into different categories. Considering, however, that the impersonal fictional voice's different types of comments help characterise the narrating voices, it is beneficial to do so. Here the impersonal fictional voice's comments will be separated into Phelan's two categories of interpretations and evaluation, with the added categories of explanations and reflections.

5.2.3.1. Explanatory comments

The most common, and perhaps the most accepted, comments given by the impersonal fictional voice are the explanatory comments, since they refer to the story events without relating the impersonal voice's opinion: the voice simply explains a character's actions. All screenplays studied for this thesis contain this kind of comment. Here follows a selection

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[47] Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, 'Brokeback Mountain', in *Brokeback Mountain: Story to Screenplay* by Annie Proulx, Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), pp. 29-97 (p. 75).
[48] Hauge, p. 152 (emphasis in original).
[49] Syd Field, *The Screenwriter's Workbook: Exercises and Step-by-Step Instruction for Creating a Successful Screenplay*, rev. edn (New York: Bantam Dell, 2006), p. 224 (emphasis in original).

from *Billy Elliot*, *Inglourious Basterds*, *Love Actually* (written and directed by Richard Curtis,

2003), and *Traffic* (written by Stephen Gaghan, directed by Steven Soderbergh, 2000):

```
Billy is crestfallen by her lack of encouragement.
Suddenly he realises this is a tacit recognition of his
success. He smiles.⁵⁰

He looks her in the face and, filled with tremendous
guilt, because if he's successful tonight he's going to
blow this cute French girl to smithereeens, he says:⁵¹

Sarah is taken aback - she thought this was a total
secret.⁵²

A power cocktail party in full swing. This is where most
of the business in Washington gets done.⁵³

He has come, at last, to that private place he has been
seeking. And here the e-mail's final vindication of Tessa
bursts the dam. The weight of Justin's grief, so long held
back by suspicion and doubt, now floods through the breach
with astonishing violence, racking every muscle of his
body.⁵⁴
```

Explanatory comments, as the examples from *Billy Elliot*, *Inglourious Basterds*, and *Love*

Actually show, usually explain a character's reaction. Similarly they can also explain the

importance of a location as in the example from *Traffic*. In some instances, however, the

explanation goes deeper and gives more details about why a certain character feels the way

s/he feels. This is seen in the example from *The Constant Gardener*.

Even though explanatory comments, as opposed to the other types of comments, do

not reveal an opinion held by the fictional voice, the comments are exclusively for the

screenplay reader. That the spectator of the potential film will not receive the same

information as the reader when it comes to the explanatory comments, or all comments for

that matter, raises the question of to whom the comments are directed; who is it that needs the

explanation? The conclusion of this chapter, as well as chapter 8 that focuses on the reader,

discuss to whom the comments are directed.

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[50] Hall, p. 29.
[51] Tarantino, p. 133.
[52] Richard Curtis, 'Love Actually', in *Six Weddings and Two Funerals*, by Richard Curtis (London: Penguin Group, 2006), pp. 217-363 (p. 242).
[53] Stephen Gaghan, *Traffic* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), p. 25.
[54] Caine, p. 87.

5.2.3.2. Interpretative comments

Interpretative comments give the impersonal fictional voice's interpretation of a character or an action. Though not as common as the explanatory comment, interpretations appear in most screenplays. The following examples are from *Never Let Me Go*, *The Constant Gardener*, *Love Actually*, and *28 Days Later*:

> ```
> Miss Lucy shrugs, almost as if to shrug off the intense
> gaze of the little girl in front of her.[55]
> ```
>
> ```
> Across the room Lorbeer has opened Wanza's cupboard and is
> now scooping into a bag what we assume to be her
> medicines: small blue boxes marked with a logo we can't
> clearly see.[56]
> ```
>
> ```
> The experts are talking. PM looking intently on. The
> meeting is very tense. It's clearly been going on for
> hours - lots of files and papers around.[57]
> ```
>
> ```
> Some distance away, in the fields below, a group of three
> horses - two adults and a foal - are galloping over the
> fields as if wild. A majestic and surreal sight, and it
> somehow implies the way the world will change.[58]
> ```

Interpretative comments, as opposed to explanatory comments, are given by a narrating voice that does not appear to know whether or not the interpretations are correct or not. This relates the impersonal fictional voice closer to the potential spectator of the film as the spectator could make similar interpretations. This is implied through the use of 'we assume' in the example from *The Constant Gardener*. 'We-formulations' are therefore often used in relation to an interpretative comment. 'As if' is another formulation that usually indicates an interpretative comment, which is seen in the extract from *Never Let Me Go*.

Screenwriting manuals often advise against the use of we-formulations and 'as if' formulations, which this statement from Robert McKee shows: 'Eliminate all […] that cannot pass this test: "What do I see (or hear) onscreen?" […] "As if," for example, is a trope that doesn't exist onscreen.'[59] As the above examples show, however, the professional screenwriters do not follow the advice.

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[55] Garland, *Never Let Me Go*, p. 17.
[56] Caine, p. 27.
[57] Curtis, p. 269.
[58] Garland, *28 Days Later*, p. 58.
[59] Robert McKee, *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting* (London: Methuen Publishing Limited, 1998), p. 396.

5.2.3.3. Evaluative comments

Evaluative comments reveal the impersonal fictional voice's opinion and judgement. In most cases they are concerned with characters, but evaluative comments can also refer to locations, objects, sounds, actions, and scenes. *Love Actually*, *The Constant Gardener*, and *Cold Mountain* (written and directed by Anthony Minghella, 2003) contain clear evaluations of characters, including both how the characters look and their personalities:

```
Bernie is an unpleasant little bugger.[60]

Tessa is in her mid-twenties, a dark-haired Anglo-Italian
beauty in an advanced stage of pregnancy. Though she is
physically attractive, the truly striking thing about her
is an inner energy which hints at a range of passions, a
capacity for commitments fierce enough to govern a life.[61]

She turns to him. She's young, tiny, painfully beautiful.
Inman, despite himself, is mesmerized.[62]
```

An Education (written by Nick Hornby, directed by Lone Scherfig, 2009) contains an evaluation of a character together with a location:

```
The office is dark, wood-panelled, foreboding, apparently
designed to make all visitors ill-at-ease. The
headmistress would probably choose to be wood-panelled if
she could. She's tweedy, bespectacled, severe.[63]
```

An example of a pure location evaluation is the following from *Burn After Reading* (written and directed by Ethan and Joel Coen, 2008):

```
Wide shot of the exterior of the house. Peaceful
neighbourhood. Birds chirp.[64]
```

In *Never Let Me Go* the impersonal fictional voice evaluates objects:

```
And we finally see the sale items themselves – which
reveal themselves to be the kind of things one might find
in a junk shop, or a car boot sale. […] There is a frozen
quality to Miss Lucy's expression. Miss Lucy is seeing
```

---

[60] Curtis, p. 236.
[61] Caine, p. 1.
[62] Anthony Minghella, *Cold Mountain* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), p. 123.
[63] Nick Hornby, *An Education* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), p. 95.
[64] Joel and Ethan Coen, *Burn After Reading* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008), p. 98.

```
what we are seeing - that the objects of the children's
enthusiasm are worthless.⁶⁵
```

Music is evaluated in *Cold Mountain* as well as in *The Savages* (written and directed by

Tamara Jenkins, 2007):

```
Strobrod plays. It's wrenching.⁶⁶
```

```
UNDER BLACK -- THE SICKENING SOUND OF CHEERY SLEIGH
BELLS.⁶⁷
```

The last two examples, taken from *Michael Clayton* and *28 Days Later*, display an evaluation

of an action and a scene:

```
PAUL JULIAN with a quick hello. Handshake. The usual
crap.⁶⁸
```

```
A surreal scene.
Dinner, with full silver service, candles, wine and
crystal glasses, napkins, and everyone rather formally sat
while Jones lays food on the table, wearing an apron over
his uniform. Made all the more surreal by Jim and Selena's
grubby clothes, and Hanna's dazed, tear-streaked face.⁶⁹
```

What distinguishes an evaluative comment from an explanatory comment or description is

that an evaluation given by the impersonal fictional voice is not necessarily shared by others.

The impersonal fictional voice's evaluation of the sound of sleigh bells in *The Savages* as

sickening, for example, would probably not be shared by everyone.

5.2.3.4. Reflective comments

Perhaps the most interesting comments in the case of screenplay texts are the reflective

comments. This is due to the fact that reflective comments often create a pause in the

storytelling; a break that highlights a point or simply gives some time for reflection.

Reflective comments, similarly to the other types of comments can be found in most

screenplays. Here follows examples from *Hugo* (written by John Logan, directed by Martin

Scorsese, 2011), *Juno*, *The Savages*, *An Education*, *The Constant Gardener*, and *Inglourious*

Basterds:

---

[65] Garland, *Never Let Me Go*, pp. 25-26.
[66] Minghella, p. 18.
[67] Tamara Jenkins, *The Savages* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 97.
[68] Gilroy, p. 23.
[69] Garland, *28 Days Later*, p. 78.

```
The platform ends in a SPIKED IRON FENCE.
HUGO is going to be trapped!70


It is now WINTER. The TRACK team jogs in formation,
leaving tracks in the snow. Those bastards never stop
running.71


As the father continues the beating, the boy magically
BEGINS TO FLOAT UP IN THE AIR. What is this we're
watching? A memory? A dream?72


We know now that her life can never be the same again, and
there will be no going back to fish-paste sandwiches with
spotty Graham.73


This is a perspective he hasn't been aware of before. It
gives him pause, as it should give us pause.74


Donny YANKS/DRAGS the old man out of bed, in his almost
comical nightshirt (which makes him cuter, thus the
brutality against him hurts more) toward the door ...75
```

As the above examples show, the reflective comment can take the form of a question, a bracket, an exclamation, or remind the reader of a past event that highlights the importance of a current event.

5.2.4. Comments by the personal fictional voice

Comments provided by the personal fictional voice differ slightly from the impersonal in that they are more focused on giving information about the past or inside views of a character. Especially non-characterbound personal fictional voices rarely give any personal interpretations, evaluations, or reflections. Interpretations are especially rare since the voices would rather state a fact through backstory or give information about the character's feelings instead of guessing what something means. The non-characterbound personal voice almost exclusively communicates facts to the reader. In *Little Children*, for example, the non-characterbound personal fictional voice mainly reports the characters' thoughts and feelings and provides backstory. It leaves the introduction and the evaluation of the characters to the

---

[70] John Logan, *Hugo* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2011), p. 9.
[71] Cody, p. 43.
[72] Jenkins, p. 115.
[73] Hornby, pp. 40-41.
[74] Caine, p. 65.
[75] Tarantino, p. 115.

impersonal fictional voice. On the rare occasions that the Voice comments on characters or

locations, it is backed up by the impersonal fictional voice in the scene text:

```
  A formidable colonial on a hilly double lot.


                          VOICE
              Number two Hillcrest was an
              impressive piece of real estate.⁷⁶
```

The Narrator in *(500) Days of Summer* is not as restricted in its comments as the Voice in

Little Children, explaining from the start what kind of story it is and what kind it is not:

```
                          NARRATOR
              This is a story of boy meets girl.
              […]
              You should know up front, this is
              not a love story.⁷⁷
```

The Narrator in *(500) Days of Summer* also on two occasions gives the reader information

about his own thoughts:

```
                          NARRATOR
              There's only two kinds of people in
              the world. There's women… and
              there's men.
              […]
              That's the third kind of person in
              the world...
              […]
              ... the kind that breaks hearts
              without even trying.⁷⁸




                          NARRATOR
              Coincidence. That's all anything
              ever is. Nothing more than
              coincidence.⁷⁹
```

The Narrator in *(500) Days of Summer* has fewer commentating lines than the impersonal

fictional voice. This makes the comments by the impersonal fictional voice more noticeable

and more prominent when reading the screenplay text.

---

[76] Field and Perrotta, p. 28.
[77] Neustadther and Weber, pp. 2-3.
[78] Neustadther and Weber, pp. 11-13.
[79] Neustadther and Weber, p. 108.

Characterbound personal fictional voices give their own interpretations, evaluations, and reflection on the events. Similarly to the non-characterbound voice there are not that many of them, which again puts the comments by the impersonal fictional voice in the forefront. The most common type of comment that a characterbound personal voice makes is the reflective comment. The following examples are from *Juno* and *Never Let Me Go*:

> JUNO V.O.
> I hate it when adults use the term
> "sexually active."
> […]
> What does that even mean? Can I
> deactivate someday, or is this a
> permanent state of being?[80]

> KATHY
> (voice-over)
> It surprises me to think that Miss
> Lucy was only actually with us at
> Hailsham for a few weeks. Not
> really very long at all. (Beat.)
> Yet by the time she left,
> everything was different somehow.[81]

The personal fictional voice-over in *Juno* also provides some character evaluations:

> JUNO V.O.
> He and my mom got divorced when I
> was five. She lives on a Havasu
> reservation in Arizona…
> […]
> … with her new husband and three
> replacement kids. Oh, and she
> inexplicably mails me a cactus
> every Valentine's Day.
> […]
> And I'm like, "Thanks a heap,
> Coyote Ugly. This cactus-gram
> stings even worse than your
> abandonment."[82]

> JUNO V.O.

---

[80] Cody, p. 15.
[81] Garland, *Never Let Me go*, p. 41.
[82] Cody, pp. 15-16.

```
                    They were Mark and Vanessa Loring,
                    and they were beautiful even in
                    black and white.⁸³
```

It is apparent that the personal fictional voice provides fewer comments than the impersonal fictional voice, and that they are more focused on reflections than interpretations and evaluations. The main difference between the comments is, however, that the spectator of the potential film will not receive the comments by the impersonal voice but it will receive the comments by the personal voice. It is up to the production team to achieve the effects given by the comments of the impersonal fictional voice.

5.3. Characterising the fictional voice

When characterising the fictional voice the concept of knowledge plays a significant part: How much knowledge does the voice possess? How willing is the voice to share its knowledge? And, does the voice flaunt its knowledge?

These characterising questions are taken from David Bordwell, who finds that a narration can be more or less knowledgeable about the story, more or less communicative, and more or less self-conscious.[84] These three categories, together with Mieke Bal's and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's categories of perceptible and non-perceptible narrators, will serve as a starting point when characterising the fictional voice in screenplay texts.[85] In addition, the functions by Genette and Jakobson are also discussed and related to the characterisation of screenplay texts' fictional voices.

5.3.1. The fictional voice's degree of perceptibility

A personal fictional voice is always perceptible and this discussion therefore solely concerns the impersonal fictional voice. The perceptibility of an impersonal fictional voice can be determined through examining how the voice performs its functions along the axes of facts, characters and events, perception and understanding, ethics and evaluation, and indication and visualisation. A voice that communicates along all axes becomes more perceptible.

An impersonal fictional voice that carries out the reporting function along the axis of facts, characters and events, is less perceptible than an impersonal fictional voice that frequently comments on the reported events. Returning to Sternberg's statement that a

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[83] Cody, p. 24.
[84] David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (London: Methuen Press, 1985), pp. 57-61.
[85] See Mieke Bal (2009) p.17, and Shlomith Rimmon Kenan (2002) pp. 97-101.

screenplay which follows the guidelines of screenwriting manuals should only contain the report mode, impersonal fictional voices of screenplays should be minimally perceptible. They should show the reader what happens but without interfering or commenting on the action. As Sternberg finds, and as can be seen through the extensive examples from screenplay texts in this thesis, few screenplays (if any) restrict the impersonal fictional voice's function to reporting the action. How much the impersonal fictional voice comments, however, differs between screenplay texts. The impersonal fictional voice of *Before Sunset* can therefore be determined to be less perceptible than the impersonal fictional voice of *Inglourious Basterds*, since the impersonal fictional voice of *Before Sunset* only comments on a few occasions.

All screenplays thus have a more or less perceptible impersonal fictional voice, but its degree of perceptibility varies depending on how much it explains, interprets, evaluates, and reflects on the characters and the events.

5.3.2. The fictional voice's knowledgeability

Bordwell and Edward Branigan argue that knowledge is a central concept when discussing a film's narration.[86] Branigan defines narration as the 'overall regulation and distribution of knowledge', and he argues that through positioning narrators on different narrational levels, knowledge can be concealed and delayed from the spectator.[87] Branigan thus finds that a narrator positioned on a lower level of narration possesses less knowledge than a narrator on a higher level. In the case of the screenplay text, this means that the impersonal fictional voice possesses less knowledge than the extrafictional voice. This is a valid conclusion as the extrafictional voice possesses knowledge not only about the fictional world but also about the extrafictional real world where the potential film will be produced.

When discussing a narration's knowledge, Bordwell makes a distinction between a narration's range of story information and its depth of story information.[88] Depending on a narration's range of story information, the film's narration is either restricted or unrestricted, and, depending on a narration's depth of story information, the narration is eiither objective or subjective.[89] Depth of knowledge thus refers to 'how deeply the plot plunges into a

---

[86] See Bordwell (1985) p. 57, and Branigan (1992), p. 76.
[87] Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 76.
[88] Bordwell, *Narration*, pp. 57-58.
[89] David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 8th edn (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), pp. 88-92. See also Bordwell (1985), pp. 57-61.

character's psychological states.'[90] The discussion of how knowledgeable the fictional voices in screenplay texts are uses Bordwell's distinctions between a restricted and an unrestricted narration and an objective and a subjective narration.

5.3.2.1. Restricted and unrestricted fictional voices

Starting with the concepts restricted and unrestricted, Bordwell states that in the case of an unrestricted narration the spectator knows more than the characters, but in the case of a restricted narration the knowledge given to the spectator is restricted to that of a character. Bordwell emphasises that a film can oscillate between an unrestricted and a restricted narration, and that a narration rarely is completely unrestricted as it often keeps information in order to increase the level of suspense.[91]

In the case of the screenplay, the characterbound personal fictional voice is always restricted to that character's knowledge at the moment of narration. The narration is not restricted to the character's knowledge in the scene but to the character's knowledge at the time of the narrating, which is after the event has taken place. It is crucial to separate a character's voice-over narration from the character that we see in the scene. The narrating voice of the character always knows more than the character that appears in the scene, which this example from *Never Let Me Go* shows:

```
                KATHY
            (voice-over)
    It had never occurred to me that
    our lives, until then so closely
    interwoven, could unravel and
    separate with such speed.


 EXT. COTTAGES – DAY

 Kathy is carrying a suitcase out of the front door to the
 Cottages –
 – towards the open boot of the minibus.
 Standing beside the minibus is Keffers.

                KATHY
            (voice-over)
    If I had known, maybe I'd have kept
    tighter hold of them, and not let
    unseen tides pull us apart.[92]
```

---

[90] Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 90-91.
[91] Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 88-90.
[92] Garland, *Never Let Me Go*, pp. 71-72.

The narrating voice-over of Kathy clearly knows more than the Kathy who appears in the scene, leaving the Cottages. It is through her added knowledge that Kathy can reflect on her previous situation and actions.

The case of the non-characterbound personal fictional voice is similar to the impersonal fictional voice in that it can be more or less restricted. The Voice that narrates through the voice-over in *Little Children*, for example, knows the thoughts and feelings of all the characters and is not restricted to the main character.

Most impersonal fictional voices in screenplays have, to some extent, unrestricted knowledge of the characters and the events. The degree to which the impersonal fictional voice and the non-characterbound voice are unrestricted or restricted, however, varies. In order to identify how restricted a voice is, it is useful to look at the functions the voice performs. If, for instance, the impersonal fictional voice, in addition to reporting the action, also gives explanations, it is more unrestricted than an impersonal fictional voice that only reports, interprets, evaluates and reflects. A voice can interpret, evaluate and reflect on actions and characters without knowing the truth about the action or character. As soon as the narrating voice explains something, however, it must possess more knowledge. 'We see' formulations thereby often present a more restricted impersonal voice since they place the narrating voice firmly outside of the characters in a similar situation to a spectator of a film who does not know the thoughts and feelings of the character but can only guess at them. It is common, however, that the restriction to a spectorial view in the case of 'we see' formulation alternates with a more unrestricted view, as the following examples from *The Constant Gardener* show:

```
Across the room Lorbeer has opened Wanza's cupboard and is
now scooping into a bag what we assume to be her
medicines: small blue boxes marked with a logo we can't
clearly see.[93]
```

```
This time it's Tessa who is watching Justin. He has come
to advise Gloria about her garden and Tessa, with motives
of her own, has come along with him.[94]
```

The first quotation displays a restricted impersonal fictional voice that does not know exactly what the blue boxes contain or which logo they are marked with. The second quote, on the other hand, shows a very unrestricted impersonal fictional voice that knows why Justin is

---

[93] Caine, p. 27.
[94] Caine, p. 32.

visiting Gloria and that Tessa has come along not only to keep him company but to carry out her own agenda. The reasons for the restriction in the first case are that the logo on the medicine, and what kind of medicine it is, will be revealed in a dramatic scene later on in the screenplay. If the reader had been told all the facts in this scene the level of suspense and curiosity would not have been heavily decreased but completely taken away. Whether or not a fictional voice is restricted is thus often dependent on the effect the restriction has on the reader, and if the restriction can increase the level of suspense.

5.3.2.2. Depth of the fictional voice's knowledge

The depth of the narrating voice's knowledge refers to the extent to which the reader is given inside views of characters, as well as views of the fictional voice's thoughts.

The characterbound personal fictional voice is, again, more restricted, since it only knows about its own thoughts and feelings – both at the time of the narrating and the time of the action. The characterbound personal fictional voice's knowledge of the character that it is bound to can, however, be greater than the impersonal fictional voice's and the non-characterbound personal fictional voice's knowledge about that character.

In the case of the impersonal fictional voice and the non-characterbound personal fictional voice the degree of depth provided differs between screenplays. How the impersonal and personal fictional voices provide the reader with information about a character's thoughts and feeling was shown when discussing the voices' reporting and commenting function earlier in this chapter. It should be highlighted, however, that the voices often give more inside views of the main character than other characters in the story. The non-characterbound personal fictional voice in *Little Children*, for example, only gives inside views of the two main characters Sarah and Brad, which was seen on p. 142 in this chapter.

Even though the impersonal and personal fictional voices can provide information about a character's thoughts and feelings, that information can also be given by the character in question through a voice-over telling its thoughts, or through showing them as a dream or a hallucination. The next chapter discusses how characters narrate their own stories and thoughts.

5.3.3. The fictional voice's communicativeness

Even though the fictional narrating voices possess certain knowledge, they do not always share it with the reader. Depending on how much information the reader is provided with, Bordwell and Branigan argue that a feeling of suspense, curiosity, or surprise is created. The

reader knowing more than the characters creates suspense, the reader knowing the same as the characters creates curiosity, and the reader knowing less than the characters creates surprise.[95] As was seen in the example from *The Constant Gardener,* the impersonal fictional voice in one instant raised the level of curiosity by not telling the reader certain information about the medicine.

In the case of screenplay texts, the most interesting point when it comes to the distribution of knowledge is the gaps that are created between the reader and the potential spectator. In most cases the reader is given much more information than the future spectator will receive. This, again, goes against the instructions of screenwriting manuals that argue that if something cannot be seen it should not be told; the reader of a screenplay should not receive information that the spectator of the potential film will not receive.[96] As has already been shown, however, professional screenwriters almost never adhere to this guideline set out by the manuals.

The discrepancy of knowledge that occurs between the screenplay reader and the spectator of the potential film can be divided into two categories: temporary gaps of knowledge and permanent gaps of knowledge. Gaps of knowledge can only be created by the impersonal fictional voice, as the information provided by the personal fictional voice is the same for both the reader and the spectator.

5.3.3.1. Permanent gaps of knowledge

Permanent gaps of knowledge usually arise when the impersonal fictional voice describes characters, reports characters' thoughts, explains actions, evaluates characters and events, or reflects on the characters, the events, or the story. Interpretations are a special case since they do not provide the reader with any certain knowledge, and they often anticipate (or even instruct) the spectator to make the same interpretation, which is especially the case with 'we-formulations'.

A few examples of 'unfilmable information' have already been given when discussing the functions of the fictional voices. Here are five more where the spectator of the potential film will not receive the information provided to the reader of the screenplay text. The examples are from *The Constant Gardener*, *Never Let Me Go*, *Hugo*, *Gosford Park*, and *Inglourious Basterds*:

---

[95] Bordwell, *Narration*, p. 54. Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension*, p. 75.
[96] See for example, Syd Field, p. 221.

> One wife, HELENA AYALA, 32, ex-model, with a sweetness and
> intelligence that almost contradicts her beauty, stares
> out the window at a small BOY, 5, using a putter as tall
> as he is. Helena is six months pregnant and radiant.[97]
>
> Kathy puts her book down, bristling slightly — thinking
> that this conversation will relate to their earlier
> exchange, and that in some way Ruth is going to rub
> Kathy's nose in her friendship with the older couple.[98]
>
> He [Hugo] is extremely uncomfortable at the idea of
> leaving the station. It has become his whole world.
> Everything beyond is threatening.[99]
>
> With these words, she has broken the basic rule of
> domestic service. She has released terrible reverberations
> by speaking as she did to William. Not only has she called
> him "Bill," *she has engaged in the conversation of the
> family*. The table is as silent as the dead, forks are
> stilled in mid-air, glasses half-way to lips.[100]
>
> Strangling the very life out of somebody with your bare
> hands is the most violent act a human being can commit.
> Alas, only humans strangle, opposable thumbs being a quite
> important part of the endeavour. As Hans Landa stands, the
> sheer violence he had to call on to accomplish this task
> still surges through him.[101]

All of the above examples contain some information that the spectator of the potential film will not receive. That said, some of the information could be given through an actor's performance or through a mood set in the film. Hugo's terror of the world outside could, for example, be shown through good acting, and how taboo it is for a servant to speak to the lords, ladies, and guests of Gosford Park could be communicated to the spectator through the reactions given by all the characters present in the scene.

Another type of knowledge that the spectator is not able to receive is indications of smells. Smell indications do not occur very often but *Brokeback Mountain* and *Sweet Sixteen* contain examples:

> ENNIS, his chest heaving, does not turn away from Alma,
> but can still smell Jack -- the intensely familiar odor of

---

[97] Gaghan, p. 21.
[98] Garland, *Never Let Me Go*, p. 34.
[99] Logan, p. 13.
[100] Fellowes, p. 78.
[101] Tarantino, p. 137.

```
cigarettes, musky sweat, and a faint sweetness like grass,
and with it the rushing cold of the mountain.¹⁰²
```

```
He [Liam] enters a filthy close and makes his way up
through rubbish, cans and the smell of piss.¹⁰³
```

A screenplay that contains extensive permanent gaps of knowledge is *United 93*. The reader

receives inside views of characters, reflections, and most importantly explanations that cannot

come across to the spectator:

```
They [the leaders of the Flight 93 operation] begin to
shave all excess hair and wash their bodies. They dry and
perfume. They dress, following an intense and particular
ritual, the details of which were later discovered in
Mohammed Atta's luggage.
    Vow to accept death, renew admonition, shave the extra
hair on your body, perfume yourself, and ritually wash
yourself.
    Completely forget something called 'this life'. The
time for play is over and the serious time is upon us.
    Let your breast be filled with gladness, for there is
nothing between you and your wedding but mere seconds.¹⁰⁴
```

Not only does the reader receive information about the ritual that takes place but also how that

ritual was discovered to have taken place. Unless shown on a titlecard, this information is not

available to the spectator.

5.3.3.2. Temporary gaps of knowledge

In the case of temporary gaps of knowledge the reader of the screenplay text receives

information that the spectator does not receive until later on. It can be the case of information

about a character, as in the following examples from *The Constant Gardener* and *The Hours*

(written by David Hare, directed by Stephen Daldry, 2002):

```
JUSTIN is being violently hugged by HAM, a pink-faced
cuddly man with twinkly eyes, bundled up in a voluminous
brown overcoat. He is Tessa's first cousin (mid 30's).¹⁰⁵
```

```
RICHARD is in his late 40s, gaunt with Aids, a noble skull
merely, his boxer's nose and high forehead lit by a streak
of light from between the blinds.¹⁰⁶
```

---

¹⁰² McMurtry and Ossana, p. 49.
¹⁰³ Laverty, p. 89.
¹⁰⁴ Greengrass, p. 5.
¹⁰⁵ Caine, p. 75.

In *The Constant Gardener* the spectator finds out that Ham is Tessa's first-cousin through a statement in the dialogue two pages later. In the case of *The Hours* the spectator finds out that Richard has Aids four pages later, also through the characters' dialogue.

Information about the story world is given sooner to the reader than the spectator in *Never Let Me Go*:

> ```
> Both wear metal bracelets – as do all students at
> Hailsham, and all other facilities like it.[107]
> ```

The spectator has to wait more than twenty pages until they know that Hailsham is not the only place where donor-children are being brought up.

In the next example, from *The Constant Gardener*, it is actually stated that the spectator should not know the source of a montage while the reader is being given that information:

> **COMPUTER INSERT B – DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE**
>
> ```
> As before, it will not be apparent that this is a
> documentary extract from a website. The topic on this
> occasion: corrupt doctors, drug endorsements for sale.[108]
> ```

A few pages later the spectator is cued in:

> ```
> TESSA at her computer. REVEALING that this has been the
> source of the unidentified documentaries.[109]
> ```

In the selection of screenplays read for this thesis there was only one example where the spectator of the film is indicated to receive information before the reader. The example occurs in *28 Days Later*:

> ```
> The Scientist grabs a desk-map base and starts running
> towards the screaming Female Activist … who has ripped off
> her balaclava – revealing her face – the face of an
> Infected.[110]
> ```

At this stage the reader does not know how the face of an Infected looks like but the spectator of the film will know as s/he can see the face on the screen. The reader of the screenplay finds out how an Infected looks five pages later:

---

[106] David Hare, *The Hours* (London: Faber and Faber), p. 21.
[107] Garland, *Never Let Me Go*, p. 13.
[108] Caine, p. 30.
[109] Caine, p. 32.
[110] Garland, *28 Days Later*, p. 7.

```
And now the moonlight catches the Priest's face. Showing
clearly: the eyes. The blood smeared and collected around
his nose, ears and mouth. Darkened and crusted,
accumulated over days and weeks. Fresh blood glistening.[111]
```

In most screenplays, however, the gap of knowledge is the other way around: the screenplay reader knows more than the spectator of the potential film.

The majority of the examples mentioned do not contain the gap for a specific purpose, that is, the gap is not present to elicit a certain effect such as suspense, curiosity, or surprise. When the reader finds out that Richard has AIDS, for example, it does not really affect the reader's or the spectator's level of suspense, curiosity, or surprise. It is, in most instances, rather a case of where the writer finds a suitable place to give the information. The best suited place to give information about characters, is usually when a character first appears. Indications of smells, however, are different. They are usually in a scene to better give the mood of a character or a location. That Ennis can smell Jack shows how connected he is to Jack, and how affected he is by Jack's arrival. Even though the smell never reaches the spectator, the actor will read the description and will hopefully be able to show the spectators the affect Jack's smell has on Ennis.

5.3.4. The fictional voice's self-consciousness

The last characterising category is the narrating voice's self-consciousness, which refers to how aware the narrating voice is of its narrating. Bordwell finds that a narration's degree of self-consciousness implies 'to what extent and with what effects the film lets a recognition of the audience's presence shape the syuzhet [plot].'[112]

In the screenplay, all communication by the extrafictional voice is very self-conscious since it intentionally addresses a reader in the real world. The personal fictional voice also always carries a certain degree of self-consciousness as it is actively telling someone a story. In the case of the impersonal fictional voice it is not as clear. If the voice only communicates along the axis of facts, characters and events it has a very low degree of self-consciousness. If the voice, on the other hand, makes interpretations, evaluations, and reflections it becomes more self-conscious as this gives away information about the narrating voice. Through the use of 'we-formulations' the impersonal fictional voice also increases its self-consciousness as the 'we' includes an anticipation of the spectator, that is, an addressee.

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[111] Garland, *28 Days Later*, p. 12.
[112] Bordwell, *Narration*, p. 59.

Another way of identifying a high degree of self-consciousness is when the impersonal fictional voice intentionally keeps knowledge from the reader and admits to it, thereby flaunting its position as a narrating voice. This is not very common but it does occur. Here is an example from *Michael Clayton*:

```
 And there's no need to get into the text of this
 memo right now. It is, however, important that we
 feel the extreme danger and power this document has
 for KAREN.[113]
```

In this example the impersonal fictional voice flaunts that it knows what the memo says and that it is important while keeping it from the reader.

5.3.5. Additional ways to characterise the fictional voices

In addition to the characterising categories reviewed, the fictional voices can also be characterised by Jakobson's and Genette's functions. The characterbound personal fictional voice can also be further characterised through Phelan's character functions.

In the beginning of this chapter Genette's directing function, communication function, and testimonial function were determined to be relevant when discussing how to characterise the fictional voices. Genette, in his discussion of these functions, refers to Jakobson's phatic, conative, and emotive function. Genette's directing function relates the narrator to the text itself. Genette finds that a narrator can refer to the text in a 'discourse that is to some extent metalinguistic (metanarrative, in this case) to mark its articulations, connections, interrelationships, in short, its internal organization.'[114] A narrating voice that expresses the directing function in the screenplay text can be seen as referring not only to the fictional story world but also to the text itself, which, in case of the screenplay, would incorporate the potential film since that is what the screenplay text refers to through its format. The most common way in which an impersonal fictional voice refers to the text is through its allusion to the potential film as they relate the story to the purpose of the text: becoming a film. An impersonal fictional voice that refers to the text, and thereby uses the directing function, can then be seen as directing, or guiding, the reader's perception of the potential film. Genette's directing function can thus be linked to the alluding function discussed earlier in the chapter. The directing function can also be used as a characterising function as the more allusions the impersonal fictional voice makes to the potential film the more perceptible the voice becomes.

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[113] Gilroy, p. 47.
[114] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, p. 255.

Genette's function of communication is concerned with 'the narrator's orientation toward the narratee – his care in establishing or maintaining with the narratee a contact, indeed, a dialogue.'[115] Genette finds that his function of communication incorporates Jakobson's phatic and conative functions since both relate to the connection between the narrator and the narratee. Jakobson's 'phatic function' concerns how the contact is sustained and prolonged, and his conative function concerns the narrator's orientation towards the narratee.[116] The clearest case in which the impersonal fictional voice connects to the narratee in screenplay texts is through the use of 'we-formulations' since the 'we' merges the narrating voice and the narratee. The contact can also be upheld through the use of explanatory and reflective comments since they imply the existence of a narratee. Explanatory comments imply the narratee since they explain something to the narratee, and reflective comments imply the narratee since they indicate that the narratee should pause and make the same reflection. Similar to the directing function, the function of communication (or the phatic and the conative function) can help characterise the impersonal fictional voice as more or less perceptible and self-conscious depending on how often the impersonal fictional voice indicates its contact with the narratee.

Genette refers to Jakobson's emotive function when he identifies and discusses the testimonial function, or function of attestation, which refers to the 'narrator's orientation toward himself' and the relation the narrator maintains with the story.[117] Jakobson's emotive function concerns the addresser's (in this case the narrator's) 'attitude toward what he is speaking about'.[118] The characterbound personal fictional voice, for example, always has a specific attitude towards the story it tells since it tells its own story. The characterbound personal fictional voice thus has a personal relationship to what it is narrating. How emotive, or emotional, the impersonal fictional and the non-characterbound personal fictional voices are towards the story they narrate can be determined through their comments, especially their use of interpretative, evaluative, and reflective comments. The fictional voices' use of the testimonial or emotive function can thereby be used to characterise the voices' relationship to the story: what their opinion of the story and the characters are.

Phelan finds that narrators who take part in the story they tell can be identified through the following character functions: the 'mimetic function', the 'thematic function', and the

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[115] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, p. 255
[116] Jakobson, p. 355.
[117] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, p. 256.
[118] Jakobson, p. 354.

'synthetic function'.[119] The mimetic function refers to the 'ways in which characters work as representations of possible people', the thematic component refers to the ways in which characters work as 'representative of larger groups or ideas', and the synthetic component refers to the ways in which characters work as 'artificial constructs within the larger construct of the work.'[120] The characterbound personal fictional voice of Juno can, for example, be characterised the following way: Juno's mimetic component is defined by how Juno represents a possible and believable teenage girl. The mimetic component identifies Juno as being a 'real' human being with emotions that the reader can relate to. Juno's thematic component is defined by how Juno represents a teenager in today's America. The thematic component is most apparent in Juno's conversations with her best friend, since the way they talk represents current teenage slang:

```
                    LEAH
             (answering phone)
       Yo-yo-yiggity-yo.

                    JUNO
       I am a suicide risk.

                    LEAH
       Is this Juno?

                    JUNO
       No it's Morgan Freeman. Got any
       bones that need collecting?

                    LEAH
       Only the one in my pants.

                    JUNO
             (in low tones)
       Dude, I'm pregnant.[121]
```

Juno's synthetic component is defined by how Juno works as a made-up artificial character. The synthetic component mainly becomes apparent through Juno's development in the story and her happy ending.

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[119] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, pp. 12-13.
[120] Phelan, *Living to Tell*, pp. 12-13.
[121] Cody, p. 5.

5.4. Conclusion

According to screenwriting manuals, the writer should not report any character's thoughts, no explanatory, interpretive, evaluative, or reflective comments should be given, and there should not exist any gaps of knowledge between the reader and the anticipated spectator of the potential film. The only function that the screenwriter is 'allowed' is the reporting of actions, characters, locations as well as allusions to the potential film if they are given through highlighting a specific detail or action. [122] It is clear from the abundance of examples that screenwriters do not heed the advice given by the screenwriting manuals. The question that needs answering is why professional writers use the prohibited functions.

A screenplay text is dependent on a successful communication in order to fulfil its purpose of becoming a film. The writer will do anything s/he can in order to achieve this. If comments can help communicate the story of the potential film to the reader, the writer is likely to use them. Through explaining a character's actions in an explanatory comment the writer knows that the reader understands the character completely. Explanatory comments are therefore often included to ensure that there are no misunderstandings between the writer and the reader. Interpretative and evaluative comments, on the other hand, are there to show the reader how an event should be regarded, or rather, how the writer wants the future spectator of the potential film to interpret and evaluate an event or a character. Through using reflective comments the writer is able to emphasise a certain moment, which will make the reader notice it and give it the weight that the writer believes it deserves.

The comments are thus there to show the reader exactly what the writer intends the potential film to be and how the future spectator should react when watching the film, that is, how the film should affect the spectator. It is then up to the blueprint readers to find a way to transfer the meaning of the comments to the film. What is clear is that screenwriters will do everything in their power to make sure that their communication of the story and the potential film is successful, and that the reader fully understands the story, the characters, and their actions.

In the case of temporary and permanent gaps of knowledge, however, there is not as clear a reason for why the writer chooses to incorporate them. Most likely they exist because the writer wants to be certain that the reader knows everything s/he needs to know in order to

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[122] See for example Hauge (2011) p. 140 and p. 152, Field (2006) p. 215, p. 218, p. 221, and p. 224, and Aronson (2010) p. 467.

understand the text and to transform it into a film, even if that means providing the reader with information that the spectator will not obtain.

One way of getting around the prohibitions is the use of the personal fictional voice that can explain, give inside views of the characters, and comment on the action. As will be seen in the next chapter, however, the use of a narrating voice-over (characterbound or not) is also often discouraged in manuals and regarded as a last resort for the desperate writer.

Chapter 6: Character narrations through dialogue

6.1. Introduction

The model suited to the screenplay text's communication situation presented in chapter 1 identifies the first four levels as belonging to the writer, the extrafictional voice, the impersonal fictional voice, and the personal fictional voice. There are, however, more possible levels since a character can always start to tell a story in the story told by the personal fictional narrator, and then a character in that story can tell a new story, and so on. Gérard Genette identifies the level that displays a story in a story as the 'the metadiegetic level'.[1]

This chapter focuses on this 'metadiegetic level' of narration, referring to it as the *level of the character* since it takes place through a character starting to tell a story in the story told by the impersonal and/or personal fictional voice. It is important to clearly separate the level of the character from the level of the characterbound personal fictional voice. The two levels are separated through their different times of narrating. In the case of the characterbound personal fictional voice the narrating takes place at a time different from the scene in which it appears, and the specific time and place of the narrating is usually unknown. In the case of character narration the character narrates at the same time as the action occurs in the scene, or rather, the character narration is part of the action in the scene, and the reader always knows exactly when and where the narrating act takes place. In screenplay texts, stories within the story can take two forms: a character can simply tell the story or the character can tell it while it is also being shown. First, however, the chapter discusses how screenplay dialogue functions in general.

6.2. Screenplay dialogue

The majority of screenwriting manuals focus more on structure and character than on how to write dialogue. When they do mention it, most manuals instruct their readers to write as little dialogue as possible. Syd Field, for example, argues that '[y]ou [the writer] don't need pages and pages of dialogue to set up, explain or move your story forward; just a few lines will do, if you enter the scene at the right time.'[2] Through stating that as long as the scene starts at the right time a few lines of dialogue is sufficient, Field clearly prioritises structure over dialogue.

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[1] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 228-29.
[2] Syd Field, *Screenplay: The Foundation of Screenwriting: A Step-by-Step Guide from Concept to Finished Script*, rev. edn (New York: Random House Publishing, 2005), p. 256.

Robert McKee similarly states that '[t]he best advice for writing film dialogue is *don't*', and Joseph McBride advises his students to 'think of a scene first in visual terms and only resort to dialogue when it is truly necessary'.[3] J.J. Murphy highlights that most manuals 'do not privilege dialogue as much as we might expect', and he finds that writers who write independent films do not often follow the dialogue rules set up by the manuals.[4]

Claudia Sternberg, similarly to the screenwriting manuals, and despite stating that the dialogue text is not subordinated to the scene text, devotes considerably fewer pages to discuss it compared to the scene text. Sternberg argues that the majority of screenplay dialogue strives to be natural with the occasionally implemented filmic technique, such as a split screen, voice-over, or a direct camera address. Sternberg finds that Manfred Pfister's categorisation of the quality of verbal communication in drama can be applied to the screenplay text. Sternberg does not, however, actually apply Pfister's categories in her analysis.

Steven Price provides the most detailed discussion of dialogue in screenplay texts. He examines why the dialogue is neglected and disregarded by both theorists and screenwriting manuals, and he discusses how dialogue functions in screenplays.[5] Price regards Sternberg's marginalisation of the dialogue as representative for research concerned with screenplays, finding that the screenplay's 'dominant element proportionally is also, apparently, the least important critically'.[6] Price highlights that the dialogue's marginalisation is also apparent by the fact that credit distribution puts more emphasis on the structure of a screenplay than on its dialogue. Price disagrees with Sternberg's emphasis on natural dialogue, and instead refers to Sarah Kozloff who regards natural conversation as only one part of film dialogue, stressing that the dialogue has two addressees: the other participant in the conversation and the film spectator.[7] Price refers to the two addressees as a 'dual audience', identifying two 'communication systems': the 'internal communication system' that exists within the diegetic

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[3] Robert McKee, *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting* (London: Methuen Publishing, 1998), p. 393.
Joseph McBride, *Writing in Pictures: Screenwriting made (mostly) Painless* (London: Faber and Faber, 2013), p. 65.
[4] J. J. Murphy, *Me and You and Memento and Fargo: How Independent Screenplays Work* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), pp. 22-23.
[5] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory, and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 135-66.
[6] Price, p. 137.
[7] Sarah Kozloff, *Overhearing Film Dialogue* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 18-19.

world, and the 'external communication system' to which the film spectator belongs.[8] In line
with Sternberg, Price refers to Pfister's six categories that express the 'polyfunctionality' of
verbal dramatic language: 'referential,' 'expressive,' 'appellative,' 'phatic,' 'metalingual,'
and 'poetic'.[9] As opposed to Sternberg, however, Price applies Pfister's terms in his analysis
of screenplay dialogue, and he finds that the difference between the stage play and the
screenplay is the proportion of dialogue that belongs to each of Pfister's categories. Price adds
that the proportion also differs between different genres, and he finds that dialogue for film is
minimised and uses visual representation to replace verbal statements when possible. Price
concludes that stylised language in dialogues, the use of voice-over and the one-liner,
expressively address the external audience and thereby call attention to themselves as being
constructed, written, and Price finds that 'in this lies much of the textual specificity and
pleasure of the screenplay'.[10]

Kozloff, in her discussion of dialogue in films, clearly distinguishes film dialogue
from dialogues in stage plays and novels:

> [F]ilm dialogue is distinguished from stage dialogue in two key ways: by the
> simultaneous signification of camerawork/misè-en-scene/editing that serves to select,
> emphasize, undercut, distract, reveal, or deform the filmgoer's interpretation; and by the
> phenomenological absence of the actors from the filmgoer's space and reality […]. Film
> dialogue is distinguished from dialogue in novels by the absence of the literary narrator
> who could explicitly summarize or interpret the characters' speeches or even render
> interior views of the characters' minds and emotions […]. Moreover, the difference
> between reading words printed on a page and hearing them spoken aloud by actors is
> immeasurable.[11]

Price, similarly, distinguishes the screenplay dialogue from the dialogue in stage plays
and films:

> Three major distinctions need to be made in attempting to identify any unique qualities
> of screenplay dialogue: what distinguishes film and stage dialogue from everyday
> speech is the implied or actual presence of an auditor in the cinema or theatre; what
> distinguishes film from stage dialogue is the relative fluidity of space and time in

---

[8] Price, p. 138, pp. 148-49.
[9] Price, p. 146.
[10] Price, p. 149.
[11] Kozloff, *Overhearing Film Dialogue*, pp. 16-17.

cinema; and what distinguishes screenplay dialogue from film dialogue is that the former is written and the latter is spoken.[12]

Though distinguishing the screenplay dialogue from dialogue in films and stage place, Price's distinction of the screenplay does not take the dialogue in novels into consideration. The previous chapter discussed reports of character thoughts, and it mentioned that screenplays could contain a character's thoughts through free indirect discourse in the scene text, which clearly distinguishes screenplays from films and aligns the text-type closer to novels. This chapter's discussion of character narration specifically focuses on how characters address the external audience, both the future spectator of the potential film and the screenplay reader, through giving inside views of themselves. The chapter, as mentioned above, will also focus on how characters narrate embedded stories. Through having this focus, the chapter examines the character as narrator rather than the character as speaker.

6.3. Character narrations that provide inside views

A character can narrate inside views of themselves in three ways: through a voice-over, through free indirect discourse, or through it being shown. The shown inside views are regarded as embedded narratives and are therefore discussed further on in the chapter.

6.3.1. Character voice-over

A character's voice-over that provides inside views of the character can be identified through the narration stemming from the character when the character appears in the scene. Examples that clarify the immediacy of the narration are the following extracts from *Adaptation* (written by Charlie Kaufman, directed by Spike Jonze, 2002):

```
Kaufman stands dejectedly outside the soundstage.

                    KAUFMAN (VOICE OVER)
          What am I doing here? Why did I
          bother to come here today? Nobody
          even seems to know my name.[13]
```

And:

```
Kaufman sitting with Valerie, an attractive woman. They
both pick at salads. Kaufman steals glances at her lips,
```

---

[12] Price, pp. 137-38.

[13] Charlie Kaufman, *Adaptation* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2002), p. 3.

```
her hair, her breasts. She looks up at him. He blanches,
looks down.

                    KAUFMAN (VOICE OVER)
          I'm starting to sweat. Stop
          sweating. I've got to stop
          sweating.
          […]
          Can she see it dripping down my
          forehead? … She looked at my
          hairline. She thinks I'm bald.[14]
```

What distinguishes the character Kaufman's voice-over from a characterbound personal fictional voice's report of inside views, is that Kaufman reports his thoughts as they occur to him during the scene.

Sternberg defines this type of voice-over as a character's interior monologue, which she finds is usually used to 'unveil character's thoughts'.[15] Kozloff makes a similar observation, stating that '[w]hen verbalization of inner states is desirable or necessary, films are more likely to allow characters to express themselves directly through interior monologue than to have the narrator articulate their feelings.'[16] Even though Kozloff's observation might hold true for films, in screenplays it is more common that an impersonal fictional voice reports a character's thoughts and feelings in the scene text than a character telling them through interior monologue in the dialogue.

The screenplay selection chosen for this thesis only contains two screenplays that display a character's interior monologue in the dialogue through a voice-over: *Adaptation* and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (written by Charlie Kaufman, directed by Michel Gondry, 2004), both of which are written by Charlie Kaufman. In an interview on *Adaptation*, Charlie Kaufman gives his view on the use of a voice-over:

I wouldn't rule it [using voice-over again] out. I like voice-over. I like it a lot. You're not supposed to anymore, but I do. It's hard sometimes, when you're doing very internal pieces. Some movies don't operate that way. Plus, I like the idea of having

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[14] Kaufman, *Adaptation*, p. 4.
[15] Sternberg, p. 146.
[16] Sarah Kozloff, *Invisible Storytellers: Voice-over Narration in American Fiction Film* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), p. 81.

different types of voice-over - voice-over that's representative of Charlie's writing and

the voice-over that's inside of Charlie's head. The clash of those things interests me.[17]

 Kaufman did use voice-over again in *Eternal Sunshine*, and again he used different types of voice-overs. There has not been an examination of the different types of character voice-over that exist in screenplays, only brief mentioning of an interior monologue or a voice-over narration by characters. In order to have a closer look at the different types of voice-over, how Kaufman uses them in *Adaptation* and *Eternal Sunshine* is discussed in more detail.

6.3.1.1. Different types of character voice-over

Adaptation follows screenwriter Charlie Kaufman's attempt to adapt the non-fiction book *The Orchid Thief* by Susan Orlean, which depicts her investigation of John Laroche's arrest for stealing rare orchids in Florida. *Adaptation* is thus a screenplay that not only contains a story in a story but also another story in that story: In the story about Charlie Kaufman's attempt to adapt *The Orchid Thief*, Kaufman tells the story of the potential film *The Orchid Thief*, and in the story of the potential film *The Orchid Thief*, Orlean tells the story of how she investigates Laroche.

Eternal Sunshine* is the story of how Joel, after finding out that his girlfriend Clementine has erased him from her memory, erases her from his memory. Halfway through erasing her, however, Joel realises that he does not want to have her erased and tries to fight it. The story thus consists of two parts: Joel having Clementine erased and Joel waking up afterwards. The part where Joel's memory is being altered shows the memories that are being erased and how Joel becomes aware of what is happening. That part thereby actually takes place inside Joel's mind, and Joel thereby becomes the narrator of his own memories.

Adaptation* contains six different voice-overs: two that belong to the character Kaufman, two that belong to Orlean, one that belongs to Laroche, and one that belongs to Darwin. *Eternal Sunshine* contains three different types of voice-over, all belonging to Joel. All of these voice-overs can be separated from a characterbound personal fictional voice-over by their immediacy, that is, the character voice-overs report what the character is thinking, narrating, or remembering in a specific scene. The reader thus knows exactly where and when the narration takes place. Three different types of character voice-over exist: a voice-over that is related to a character's immediate thoughts, a voice-over that is related to an act of writing, and a voice-over that is related to an embedded narrative.

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[17] Rob Feld, 'Q & A with Charlie Kaufman & Spike Jonze', in *Adaptation*, by Charlie Kaufman (New York: Newmarket Press, 2002), pp. 115-30 (p. 125).

Joel's three types of voice-overs in *Eternal Sunshine* consist of one voice-over that voices what he writes in his journal, one that voices his immediate thoughts, and one that is related to an embedded narrative. In *Adaptation*, Kaufman has one voice-over that displays his immediate thoughts and one that displays his writing. Both of Orlean's voice-overs are related to embedded narratives but one is displayed through her writing and one through thoughts. Laroche's voice-over is also related to an embedded narrative, and Darwin's voice-over is related to his act of writing.

Starting with the type of voice-over that relates immediate thoughts, two examples from *Adaptation* were given above but here follows one more example from *Adaptation* and one example from *Eternal Sunshine*:

```
Kaufman is in his car, waiting to give his ticket to the
attendant so he can leave the garage. He thinks about
something and smiles.

                        KAUFMAN (VOICE OVER)
                    I have to go right home. I know how
                    to finish the script now. It ends
                    with Kaufman driving home after his
                    lunch with Amelia, thinking he
                    knows how to finish the script.
                    Shit, that's voice over. McKee
                    wouldn't approve. How else can I
                    show his thoughts? I don't know.
                    Well who cares what McKee says? It
                    feels right. Conclusive. I wonder
                    who's gonna play me. Someone not
                    too fat. I like that Gerard
                    Depardieu, but can he not do the
                    accent? Anyway, it's done…and
                    that's something. So…Kaufman drives
                    off from his encounter with Amelia,
                    filled for the first time with
                    hope. I like this. This is good.[18]
```

```
Joel and Clementine eat dinner in silence. Joel looks
around at other couples in the restaurant. Some seem happy
and engaged. Others seem bored with each other. He turns
back to his food.

          JOEL                          VOICE-OVER
    How's the chicken?              Is that like us? Are we
                                    just bored with each
                                    other? I can't stand
                                    the idea of being a
                                    couple that people
```

---

[18] Kaufman, *Adaptation*, pp. 99-100.

```
                                                      think that about. ¹⁹
```

As is seen in the second example, Kaufman not only uses different kinds of voice-overs but in some cases he also envisage them to be spoken simultaneous with other lines by the same character. Price emphasises that a voice-over in screenplay texts cannot function the same way it functions in the film. The audience watching a film processes the narration simultaneously with the image, while the screenplay either has to provide the scene description first, followed by the voice-over, or present them in two columns in an effort to create a sense of simultaneity.[20] The above example thus strives for simultaneity through presenting the lines in columns, but the reader will read one before the other. In the case of *Eternal Sunshine*, the film did not display the lines simultaneously, which again highlights that the production team not always follows the writer's directions.

Returning to the different types of voice-overs, the voice-over related to writing usually appears together with an embedded narrative. The voice-over introduces the story and the narrator of the embedded story. A character writes something and then what s/he writes becomes a story in the story. This is for instance the case in *The Hobbit* (written by Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, Peter Jackson, and Guillermo del Toro, directed by Peter Jackson, 2012), where the main character Bilbo writes down his adventure and the main part of the film/screenplay displays that adventure. A written voice-over is not, however, always connected to an embedded narrative, but can instead describe the thoughts of the character that is responsible for the writing. In *Eternal Sunshine,* Joel keeps a diary. Whenever he writes in it, what he writes is told through a voice-over:

```
Joel sits on a bench waiting for the train. Clementine
enters the platform, sees Joel, the only other person
there. She waves, sort of goofily enthusiastic, playing as
if they're old friends. He waves back, embarrassed. She
takes a seat on a bench far down the platform. Joel stares
at his hands, pulls his journal from his briefcase and
tries to write in order to conceal his awkwardness.
```

---

[19] Charlie Kaufman, *Eternals Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2004), p. 54.
[20] Price, pp. 155-57.

>   JOEL (V.O.)
>   Why do I fall in love with every
>   woman I see who shows me the least
>   bit of attention?[21]

In *Adaptation*, Kaufman writes his screenplay and, similarly to *Eternal Sunshine*, what he writes is told through a voice-over:

> Kaufman traces a stubby, nail-bitten finger along
> State Road 29 on a Florida road map. He turns to his
> typewriter, and types in clumsy hunt-and-peck style.
>
>   KAUFMAN (VOICE OVER)
>   We open on State Road twenty-
>   nine. A battered white van
>   speeds along making a sharp
>   skidding right into the
>   Fakahatchee Strand State
>   Preserve. The driver of the van
>   is a skinny man with no front
>   teeth. This is John Laroche.[22]

The third type of voice-over, where the voice-over is connected to an embedded narrative, exists in both *Adaptation* and *Eternal Sunshine*. Orlean's voice-over in *Adaptation*, which states what she writes, is used as an introduction to the embedded narrative that tells her story: how she started to research her article:

> We glide over a desk piled with orchid books, past a photo
> of Laroche tacked to an overwhelmed bulletin board, and
> come to rest on a woman typing. It's Susan Orlean: pale,
> delicate, blonde. We lose ourselves in her melancholy
> beauty.
>
>   ORLEAN (VOICE OVER)
>   John Laroche is a tall guy, skinny
>   as a stick, pale-eyed, slouch-
>   shouldered, sharply handsome,
>   despite the fact he's missing all
>   his front teeth. I went to Florida
>   two years ago to write a piece for
>   The New Yorker. It was after
>   reading a small article about a
>   white man and three Seminole men
>   arrested with rare orchids they'd
>   stolen out of a place called the
>   Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve.

---

[21] Kaufman, *Eternal Sunshine*, p. 4.
[22] Kaufman, *Adaptation*, p. 17.

```
EXT. STATE ROAD 29 - DAWN

A lonely two-lane highway cutting through swampland.
TITLE: STATE ROAD 29, TWO YEARS EARLIER[23]
```

The scene goes on to show how Laroche and the three Seminole men were arrested. Having

introduced Orlean's voice-over as stemming from her writing her book, the voice-over

appears from time to time in the embedded narrative of how she met Laroche, as a

commenting and more knowing voice:

```
                    ORLEAN (VOICE OVER)
                  (staring at reflection)
            I wanted to want something as much
            as people wanted...

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Orlean is back at the dining room table. The joking
conversation is going on. She is participating but with no
enthusiasm. She has been crying.

                    ORLEAN (VOICE OVER)
            ...these plants. But it isn't part
            of my constitution. I suppose I do
            have one embarrassed passion...

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Orlean lies in bed with her husband. He sleeps. She stares
up at the ceiling.

                    ORLEAN (VOICE OVER)
            ...I want to know what it feels
            like to care about something
            passionately.[24]
```

Her voice-over that stems from her writing can also in a few instances be heard when

Kaufman reads the published book. In those cases the voice-over is used as a smooth bridge

between two scenes that happen years apart. In the following example the voice-over

functions as a bridge between Orlean's embedded narrative and Kaufman writing his

screenplay at the present time (of the story). It should be highlighted, however, that the voice-

over originates at the time of Orlean writing the embedded story, which is somewhere

halfway between the embedded events taking place and Kaufman writing his screenplay.

---

[23] Kaufman, *Adaptation*, p. 6.

[24] Kaufman, *Adaptation*, p. 26.

```
                          LAROCHE
          Look, I'll tell you a story. All
          right? I once fell deeply, you
          know, profoundly in love with
          tropical fish. I had sixty goddamn
          fish tanks in my house. I'd skin
          dive to find just the right ones.
          […] Then one day I say, fuck fish.
          I renounce fish. I vow never to set
          foot in that ocean again. That's
          how much I "fuck fish". That was
          seventeen years ago, and I have
          never since stuck so much as a toe
          in that ocean. And I love the
          ocean!

                          ORLEAN
          But why?

                          LAROCHE
          Done with fish.

                     ORLEAN (VOICE OVER)
          If you'd really loved something
          wouldn't a little bit of it linger?
          Evidently Laroche's finishes were
          downright and absolute. He just
          moved on...
```

INT. L.A. PASTA PLACE – DAY

Kaufman, in a booth, reads The Orchid Thief, takes notes.

```
                     ORLEAN (VOICE OVER)
          ...I sometimes wished I could do
          the same.[25]
```

Eternal Sunshine also contains a voice-over that is related to an embedded narrative:
Joel's memories of his relationship with Clementine which are shown while being erased. As
Joel becomes aware that his memories of Clementine are being erased he starts commentating
on them, and these comments take the form of a voice-over. The origin of the voice-over
commentary, then, is the sedated Joel who is having his memory wiped. Here follows three
examples of Joel's commenting voice-over while his memory is being erased:

```
Joel distractedly reads a book, checks the clock, goes
back to the book. The door opens. He looks up. Clementine
is staggering in, drunk.
```

---

[25] Kaufman, *Adaptation*, p. 28.

                              CLEMENTINE
                          Yo ho ho!

              JOEL   VOICE-OVER
          It's three.   Shit. The last time I
                                             saw you. [26]

      Joel miserably smashes the bird repeatedly with the
      hammer. Red jelly guts cover the hammer and the wagon
      bottom. The kids hoot.

                              VOICE-OVER
                          I can't believe I did that. I'm so
                          ashamed.[27]

      The theater lights flash and the crowd begins to head back
      inside. Joel looks nervous. Clementine takes his hand and
      leads him into the crowd.

              VOICE-OVER   JOEL
          Your hand, I remember   I'm done Clem. I'm just
          it.   going to ride it out.
                                         Hiding is clearly not
                                         working.

                              CLEMENTINE
                          Yeah.

                                JOEL
                          I want to enjoy my little time left
                          with you.

                              CLEMENTINE
                          This is our first "date" date.[28]

The last example also indicates that Joel's awareness of the memory is not constricted to his

voice-over. The characters that are a part of his memory also become aware of the fact that it

is a memory, and they speak in the scene with the awareness that it is a memory and that the

memory is being erased. In an interview, Kaufman explains:

> The problem that I had was, is he in the memories, is he out of the memories? […] But,
>
> the solution that I came up with, which I think works, was that he would go in and out.
>
> The memory would be happening, and then he would catch himself in the memory.[29]

[26] Kaufman, *Eternal Sunshine*, p. 43.
[27] Kaufman, *Eternal Sunshine*, p. 82.
[28] Kaufman, *Eternal Sunshine*, p. 89.
[29] Rob Feld, 'Q & A with Charlie Kaufman', in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, by Charlie
Kaufman (New York: Newmarket Press, 2004), pp. 131-45 (pp. 133-34).

Kaufman thereby created a way of having both a commenting character narration through a voice-over, and a commenting character that is present in the scene. In the interview Kaufman also stresses that everything that appears in Joel's mind is Joel's perception of how it happened, which is not necessarily how it really appeared but it is his memories of how it appeared. 'Clementine is really not in the movie very much, and I was very clear about that in my own head. Almost everything you see about Clementine is Joel, really.'[30]

6.3.1.2. Concluding note on character voice-over

Adaptation and *Eternal Sunshine* make it clear that different types of voice-overs exist in screenplay texts, and that they fulfil different functions. *Adaptation* and *Eternal Sunshine* contain three different types of voice-overs: a voice-over that relates immediate thoughts, a voice-over that stems from an act of writing, and a voice-over that relates to an embedded narrative. The voice-over that is related to an act of writing is often also linked to an embedded narrative or to the thoughts of a character. Joel's diary, for instance, displays his thoughts, and Kaufman's voice-over that communicates what he is writing in his screenplay is linked to the embedded narrative that shows that story.

The uses of different types of voice-overs create a more layered narrative with multiple narrations that exist on different levels and are closely related. How the different embedded stories, such as Joel's memory and Kaufman's screenplay, relate to other levels of narrations is examined further on in the chapter when discussing different types of embedded narratives.

6.3.2. The use of free indirect discourse

The only speech representation that should exist in screenplay texts if one follows the advice given by screenwriting manuals is quoted speech displayed in the dialogue section. This was not always the case, however, as screenplay texts during the 1930s and 40s often indicated characters' speeches through indirect discourse.

Another instance where a character's speech is not given through direct discourse (that is, through reporting it directly) is where improvisation should be used. This still appears today as this example from *Sideways* (written by Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor, directed by Alexander Payne, 2004) shows:

```
DINNER is improvised, but includes:
```

---

[30] Rob Feld, in *Eternal Sunshine*, p. 135.

```
[…]

Miles returns to earth to find Jack and Stephanie now in
their own little world — Jack explaining something to
Stephanie that she finds fascinating, just FASCINATING.

-- Miles converses with Maya, but it's clear from her
bemused expression that he's being charming if not
entirely coherent.[31]
```

In the example it is not stated exactly what the characters talk about but rather what the effect of the conversation should be, that is, the effect that should be achieved, is given.

With the exception of improvisations, screenplay texts should only contain a character's speech representations through that character's dialogue. It is not uncommon, however, that screenplays also contain instances of free indirect discourse that convey a character's thoughts. It is thus not only through the use of a voice-over that a character gives his or her own thoughts. The difference is, however, that the spectator of the potential film will not receive the thoughts given through free indirect discourse.

Mieke Bal states that free indirect discourse refers to instances where a 'narrator adopts an actor's discourse' so that a 'form of interference between narrator's text and actor's text' takes place.[32] Bal further states that free indirect discourse is indicated through:

- The signals of a personal language situation, referring to an actor.
- A strikingly personal style, attributable to an actor.
- More details about what has been said than is necessary for the course of the fabula.[33]

Jeff Rush and Cynthia Baughman relate the concept of free indirect discourse to the screenplay text and the question of attribution. Rush and Baughman define free indirect discourse as instances where 'the narrator's voice starts to blend with the character's voice: the narrator starts to speak the character's thoughts, perhaps using the character's idiom.'[34] Rush and Baughman examine the concept in relation to both the film and the screenplay, but not in relation to the character, which is the focus here.

Thought reports through free indirect discourse are seperable from thought reports given directly or indirectly through the fact that free indirect discourse is untagged. That is, it

---

[31] Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor, *Sideways: The Shooting Script* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2004), pp. 55-56.
[32] Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 3rd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009 [1985]), pp. 53-54.
[33] Bal, p. 55.
[34] Jeff Rush and Cynthia Baughman, 'Languages as Narrative Voice: The Poetics of the Highly Inflected Screenplay', *Journal of Film and Video*, 49.3 (1997), pp. 28-37 (pp. 32-33).

is not clearly stated who the thought belongs to. Here follow three examples of thought reports where the first is a case of direct discourse, the second a case of indirect discourse and the third a case of free indirect discourse. The examples are taken from *Inglourious Basterds* (written and directed by Quentin Tarantino, 2009), *Love Actually* (written and directed by Richard Curtis, 2003), and *Hugo* (written by John Logan, directed by Martin Scorsese, 2012):

```
He smiles and heads over to her. "Oh no, not this guy
again," she thinks.³⁵

Sarah is taken aback - she thought this was a total
secret.³⁶

She [Isabelle] disappears into the crowd.
He [Hugo] watches her go.
Be steadfast? What a peculiar girl.³⁷
```

In the first example, the impersonal fictional voice reports the character's thought exactly as it appears through a direct quotation. In the second example, the impersonal fictional voice reports what Sarah thinks, but maybe not exactly as the thought appeared in her head. Finally, in the third example a thought is reported, which can be attributed to Hugo even though it is not clearly stated that it is Hugo's thought.

An example that contains thoughts both reported through direct and free indirect discourse is the following from *United 93* (written and directed by Paul Greengrass, 2006):

```
"Clockwork" Sliney thinks to himself. A thing of beauty.³⁸
```

Here, the first sentence displays Sliney's thought in direct discourse while the second sentence displays his thought through free indirect discourse. Who the thought belongs to is clearer in this example than it was in the example from *Hugo*.

Other examples of how free indirect discourse are found in *United 93*, *The Queen* (written by Peter Morgan, directed by Stephen Frears, 2006), *The Savages* (written and directed by Tamara Jenkins, 2007), *Cold Mountain* (written and directed by Anthony Minghella, 2003), and *The Hurt Locker* (written by Mark Boal, directed by Kathryn Bigolow, 2009):

---

³⁵ Quentin Tarantino, *Inglourious Basterds* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), p. 48.
³⁶ Richard Curtis, 'Love Actually', in *Six Weddings and Two Funerals*, by Richard Curtis (London: Penguin Group, 2006), pp. 217-363 (p. 242).
³⁷ John Logan, *Hugo* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2012), p. 28.
³⁸ Paul Greengrass, *United 93* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2006), p. 3.

```
She [Bradshaw] replaces the receiver. Looks at her shaking
hands. Why me? Why this flight. I want to see my family
again.³⁹

The Queen closes her eyes. All around her, silence except
for the sounds of the great outdoors. Privacy at last. The
first moment in what feels like months. The Queen breathes
deeply. It's all been a bit much. No time to think. One
shock after another. Everyone shouting.⁴⁰

Wendy looks at him. Huh?⁴¹

ONE OF THE FEDERAL CAVALRY THINKS HE HEARS SOMETHING. He
listens, yes, a shout.⁴²

Thompson twists to get his chest protection on. Eyes
tight, brow furrowed, squints into the far distance.
That's going to be a mean motherfucker.⁴³
```

All of these examples contain reports of a character's thoughts. How easily the thoughts are attributable to a character differs, however. The thought report in the extract from *The Hurt Locker*, for example, is more clearly attributable to Thompson than the thoughts presented in *The Queen* are to the Queen. This is mainly due to the fact that the thought report in *The Hurt Locker* is presented in italics.

Even though characters' thoughts are not meant to be displayed in the scene text, since they cannot be transferred to the potential film, they do fulfil a purpose in that they can highlight an event and clarify what it means to the character. In the foreword to the screenplay *Hugo*, the author of the source text, Brian Selznick, especially comments on one scene. Selznick was disappointed when he read a scene in the screenplay that was particularly shortened from how it appeared in the book. In the scene in question Hugo tells Isabelle where he lives, information that she in the book really has to fight for. Selznick writes that:

> In the screenplay, however, Isabelle simply says, "Hugo, where do you live?" while the two characters are standing on the bridge. Hugo points toward the train station and says, "There."
>
> What?? I thought. That's it??

---

³⁹ Greengrass, p. 68.
⁴⁰ Peter Morgan, *The Queen* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), p. 70.
⁴¹ Tamara Jenkins, *The Savages* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 94.
⁴² Anthony Minghella, *Cold Mountain* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), p. 96.
⁴³ Mark Boal, *The Hurt Locker* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2009), p. 7.

I was really disappointed by this scene as written on the page. But I happened to be
on the set in London when Scorsese filmed it with Asa Butterfield and Chloë Grace
Moretz. […] Chloe(spelling?) gently asked the question, "Hugo…where do you live?"
and Asa paused. You could see him making a thousand decisions in his mind, deciding
whether or not to trust her.

John had actually provided these directions in the script, which at first I'd
overlooked: "He stops. Looks at her. Should he tell her? Should he trust her? Yes."
Slowly Asa lifted his arm and pointed behind him. "There", he said very quietly. Tears
came to my eyes as he pointed towards the train station. It was so simple and yet so
moving. And it was perfect for the screen, just as John knew it would be.[44]

 Maybe the actor would have got his thoughts across to the audience without having read it in
the screenplay but, if the line helped the actor (and reader) to understand the character's
struggle to tell the truth, why should it not be made clear? Again, Price's emphasis that 'even
if the script contains material that cannot be filmed, it can still be read' highlights the fact that
some information might be too important to leave out of the script even though it may appear
to be 'unfilmable'.[45] The amount of screenplay texts that contain free indirect discourse
clearly indicates that many writers find the technique beneficial and helpful in their
communication of the potential film to the reader.

6.4. Embedded narratives

It is now time to take a closer look at embedded narratives that are narrated by characters. In
the introduction to the chapter it was stated that there exist two types of embedded character
narrations: narratives that are simply told by a character, and narratives that are told as well as
being shown. Both types of embedded narratives are identifiable through Genette's categories
of embedded meta-diegetic narratives. Genette finds that there are three types of metadiegetic
narratives: explanatory, thematic, and non-explicit.[46] An explanatory metadiegetic narrative
gives information that explains a certain event or action. A thematic metadiegetic narrative
has a thematic relationship to the narrative in which it exists, and Genette finds that it usually
is a case of either thematic contrast or analogy with the specific purpose to persuade, deter,
frighten, and so on. A non-explicit metadiegetic narrative has no explicit relationship to the

---

[44] Brian Selznick, 'Foreword', in *Hugo*, by John Logan (New York: Newmarket Press, 2011), pp. vii-
ix (pp. vii-ix).
[45] Price, p. 126.
[46] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, pp. 228-33.

narrative in which it exists, and it is thus the act of narrating that fulfils a function. Genette states that a non-explicit metadiegetic narrative usually fulfils a function of either distraction or obstruction. In screenplay texts the most common type of embedded narrative is the explanatory narrative, which usually is related to a character's backstory.

6.4.1. Told embedded narratives

In screenplay texts there are not many embedded narratives that are simply told since that involves a character having a long monologue, which slows the action. The most common type of told embedded narrative is the explanatory narrative that provides background information about a character, but the backstory is usually given over a period of time instead of in one long monologue. If the information is given in one instance other characters usually comment on it. This is the case in the following extract from *Brokeback Mountain* (written by Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, directed by Ang Lee, 2006):

```
JACK reaches over for a bean can. Begins to scrape the
last beans out of the bottom.

                        JACK
                        (eats)
               Your brother and sister do right by
               you?

Throws the empty can on the fire.

                        ENNIS
               Did the best they could after my
               folks was gone, considerin' they
               didn't leave us nothin' but $24 in
               a coffee can.

A beat.

ENNIS'S tongue loosens suddenly.

                        ENNIS
               Got me a year a high school before
               the transmission went on the
               pickup. My sis left, married a
               roughneck, moved to Casper. Me and
               my brother got work on a ranch up
               near Worland until I was nineteen.
               He got married last month. No room
               for me. That's how come me to end
               up here.

Silence.
```

```
   JACK looks over at ENNIS, smiles.

                          ENNIS
                ...What?

                          JACK
                Friend, that's more words than
                you've spoke in the past two weeks.

   ENNIS smiles, for the first time.

                          ENNIS
                Hell, it's the most I've spoke in a
                year.[47]
```

Not only do both Jack and Ennis comment on the rarity of Ennis's long speech, but the

impersonal fictional voice also comments on it through stating that 'ENNIS'S tongue

loosens suddenly'.[48]

Screenplays that contain the most spoken embedded narratives are screenplays that are

dialogue driven, such as *Before Sunset* (written by Richard Linklater, Ethan Hawke and Julie

Delpy, directed by Richard Linklater, 2004). The screenplay exclusively contains scenes

where the main characters, Jesse and Celine, talk to each other. Jesse and Celine, in the story,

meet for the first time in nine years and try to find out what has happened to the other

character: who they are, and how they feel about each other. This set up is well suited to

spoken embedded narratives, and not only explanatory ones but also thematic and non-

explicit.

An example of an explanatory embedded narrative occurs when Celine tells Jesse

about her work:

```
                          CELINE
                When I came out of political
                science, I thought I'd be working
                for the government. And I did for a
                short while, and then I got tired
                of having conversations with
                friends about how the world was
                falling to pieces. I realized that
                the only thing I wanted to do was
```

---

[47] Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, 'Brokeback Mountain', in *Brokeback Mountain: Story to Screenplay* by Annie Proulx, Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), pp. 29-97 (p. 15).
[48] McMurtry and Ossana, p. 15.

```
                        to look at things that really can
                        be fixed and try to fix them.⁴⁹
```

Celine simply tells Jesse what she has been doing and why she chose to do it.

An example of an embedded narrative that has a thematic message, both directed at the dialogue partner (Jesse) and at the reader, is the following example in which Celine tells Jesse about an experience that she's had:

```
                            CELINE
            I was living in terror. The final
            straw was one night I heard some
            noises on my fire escape. I called
            911 and the cops came…

                            JESSE
            Like three hours later.

                            CELINE
            After I'd been raped and killed
            about ten times. It was a man and a
            woman officer. I was describing to
            them what I had heard when the
            woman had to run downstairs to move
            the police car. I was alone with
            the male cop, and right away he
            asked me if I had a gun. I said no,
            and he told me I'd better think
            about getting one – this was
            America, not France. I told him I
            didn't know how to shoot a gun and
            that I wasn't interested in
            firearms. That was when he pulled
            out his gun and said to me,
                    (cop voice)
            "One day you're going to have
            something like this in your face,
            and if you want to live a long
            life, you're going to have to
            choose between you or them." They
            left, and the next morning I
            actually called for an application
            to get a gun. Me! A gun! But then I
            started thinking that something was
```

---

⁴⁹ Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke, 'Before Sunset', in *Before Sunrise and Before Sunset*, by Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), pp. 111-209 (p. 137).

```
        wrong, the way that cop had pulled
        his gun.⁵⁰
```

In this example, Celine's told embedded narrative has a function that goes beyond telling backstory or explaining an action: the embedded narrative comments on the use of guns in America. It can thereby be identified as a thematic embedded narrative.

Before Sunset also contains embedded narratives that serve to lighten the tension, to take the focus away from Jesse's and Celine's relationship and direct it at something else. The function of these embedded narratives is more the telling of them than any message that they carry since the narratives do not relate to the story in which they appear. One such example of a non-explicit told embedded narrative is the following dialogue turn:

```
                      JESSE
        Notre Dame. Check that out. I heard
        a story once that when the Germans
        were occupying Paris and they had
        to retreat back, they wired Notre
        Dame to blow up, and they had to
        leave one guy in charge of hitting
        the switch. But the guy, the
        soldier, just waited, sitting
        there, and he just couldn't do it.
        When the Allied troops eventually
        came in, they found all the
        explosives and the switch just
        lying there. They found the same
        thing at Sacré Coeur, the Eiffel
        Tower, and two other places, I
        think. I always liked that story.⁵¹
```

This narrative takes place between two tense dialogue exchanges that deal with their feelings and their relationship, and it successfully lightens the mood.

Even though longer told embedded narratives are rare, shorter explanatory dialogues, which give information about a character's action or backstory, are fairly common. One was seen in *Brokeback Mountain* and here follows one more example from *Billy Elliot* (written by Lee Hall, directed by Stephen Daldry, 2000):

```
                      BILLY
        I thought he was gonna hit me or
        something.
```

---

[50] Linklater, Delpy, and Hawke, pp. 142-43.
[51] Linklater, Delpy, and Hawke, p. 179.

>   DEBBIE
> Don't be daft, he's just under a
> lot of pressure. That's what Mam
> says. I think it's because he
> drinks too much.
>
>   BILLY
> Does he drink too much, like?
>
>   DEBBIE
> He's always pissed. Once he pissed
> himself.
>
>   BILLY
> Your dad?
>
>   DEBBIE
> Cos he's unhappy and that, because
> they sleep in separate beds.
>
>   BILLY
> Why do they sleep in separate beds?
>
>   DEBBIE
> So they can't have sex.
>
>   BILLY
> Do they not have sex, like?
>
>   DEBBIE
> Dad did it with this woman from
> work but they don't think I know.
> Do you miss your mom?
>
>   BILLY
> I don't really miss her, as such.
> It's more like just feeling sad.
> Specially when I remember her all
> of a sudden when I'd forgot she was
> dead and that. What about your mam?
> Does she not have sex?
>
>   DEBBIE
> No. She's unfulfilled. That's why
> she does dancing.[52]

This example explains why Debbie's father acted the way he did, it gives backstory about

Debbie's family, and it explains how Billy feels about his mother. The example displays a

typical way of giving explanations and backstory: through characters taking shorter dialogue

---

[52] Lee Hall, *Billy Elliot* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000), pp. 39-40.

turns. Longer told embedded narratives are much more uncommon in screenplay texts than they are in novels, which emphasises Price's conclusion that 'the greater visual flexibility of cinema means that dialogue tends to be more compressed in the screenplay'.[53]

6.4.2. Told and shown embedded narratives

In the case of embedded narratives that are shown as well as told, screenplays provide more examples than in the case of told narratives. These narratives can, again, be classified as explaining something, making a thematic comment, or being non-explicit (not related to the story in which they exist). It is also useful to make a distinction between brief and long embedded narratives. If an embedded narrative only exists in one scene or sequence, it can be classified as a brief embedded narrative. If it occupies the greater part of the screenplay, on the other hand, it can be classified as a long embedded narrative.

6.4.2.1. Brief embedded told and shown narratives

Brief embedded narratives that serve an explanatory function are reasonably common in screenplays, and they usually take the form of a flashback connected to a character.

An example of where an explanatory embedded flashback narrative is very much needed occurs in *28 Days Later* (written by Alex Garland, directed by Danny Boyle, 2002). In the story the main character wakes up after a coma only to find that London (and the world), as he knew it, is gone. Virus infected humans have killed or infected almost all of the population and there are only a few survivors. It is crucial for the main character, and for the reader, to find out how and what happened. The answer is given through an embedded narrative told by the character Selena:

```
Selena starts to tell her story, and as the story unfolds
we see the images she describes.

                        SELENA
            It began as rioting. And right from
            the beginning, you knew something
            bad was going on because the
            rioters were killing people. And
            then it wasn't on TV any more. It
            was in the street outside. It was
            coming through your windows. We all
            guessed it was a virus. An
            infection. You didn't need a doctor
            to tell you that. It was the blood.
            Something in the blood. By the time
```

---

[53] Price, p. 147.

```
they tried to evacuate the cities,
it was already too late. The
infection was everywhere. The army
blockades were overrun. And that
was when the exodus started. The
day before the radio and TV stopped
broadcasting there were reports of
infection in Paris and New York. We
didn't hear anything more after
that.[54]
```

Another example of a flashback that serves as an explanatory embedded narrative, which provides the reader with information about a character's past, is the following from *The Constant Gardener* (written by Jeffrey Caine, directed by Fernando Meirelles, 2005). The example also indicates a transition between the memory (the embedded narrative) and the character's actual surrounding (him being captured):

```
CLOSE ON JUSTIN'S HANDS as he struggles to free them.


CLOSE ON JUSTIN'S HANDS

now carefully digging up a plant, gently conserving with a
cupped palm the soil around its roots.
INT. FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, LONDON. DAY
The plant is in a window box outside Justin's office at
the FCO, an office cluttered with packing cases labelled
"BRITTISH HIGH COMMISSION, NAIROBI" and a profusion of
books about Kenya.

Turning from the window with the excavated plant, to lay
it alongside others in an insulated travel box ("PLANTS
WITH CARE. DO NOT EXPOSE TO FROST"), Justin finds

TESSA in the 12-foot-high doorway.

[…]

BACK TO PRESENT-DAY SCENE

AS Justin's hands come free of the bindings-[55]
```

It is important to highlight that to whom the information provided by the embedded narrative is directed differs in the above examples. In the first example the information is given to both the reader and a character in the story. In the second example, however, the information is

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[54] Alex Garland, *28 Days Later* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), p. 16.
[55] Jeffrey Caine, *The Constant Gardener* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2005), pp. 98-100.

only given to the reader since the embedded narrative is only shown and not told in the
dialogue. It does thus solely belong to the external communication system between the
character and the reader/spectator.

A different and unique way of displaying an embedded explanatory narrative occurs in
Inglourious Basterds. The screenplay contains traditional flashback memories as well, but the
example below uses a think bubble in the style of comic books, resulting in a split screen:

```
At the top of the staircase, looking down at the master
race in all their finery, is Col. Hans Landa, dressed in
his finest S.S. dress uniform.


CAMERA FRAME
directly behind him. On the right side, we see the figure
of Col. Landa, from behind, watching the guests entering
the cinema. On the left side of the frame is the cinema
entrance, from a looking-down perspective of the guests
entering the building.


THEN...


A THINK BUBBLE, like in a comic book, appears on the left
side of the frame, obscuring the cinema entrance. Inside
Landa's think bubble a little scene plays out.


THINK BUBBLE
A hospital room filled with DOCTORS, NURSES, and a PATIENT
in a hospital bed. Then Col. Landa enters the room and
screams at everybody:

                        COL. LANDA
            I want everybody out of this room!

They start to leave.

                        COL. LANDA
            That means now, goddamnit!

They RUSH OUT.

He walks over to the patient in the hospital bed. It's
none other than SGT. WILLI, and yes, he's still alive.

Landa pulls up a chair next to the bed and sits down.

                        COL. LANDA
            Can you speak, Sergeant?

                        SGT. WILLI
            Yes, Colonel.
```

```
                    COL. LANDA
          Tell me everything that happened in
          there.

  The THINK BUBBLE DISSOLVES away, revealing the entrance
  again, and as if on perfect cue, in walks Bridget von
  Hammersmark, dressed lovely, leg in a big white cast. The
  three Basterds in their tuxedos flank her.[56]
```

As in the case of *The Constant Gardener*, the information provided by Col. Landa's memory is only provided to the reader, not any other characters in the story. In this case the information provided serves to heighten the tension. The think bubble shows the reader that Col. Landa knows about the Basterd's plan to infiltrate the premiere while the Basterds themselves remain in the dark about Col. Landa's knowledge.

Thematic brief embedded narratives are often connected to a character's dream or hallucination as they thereby can comment on a character's personality or on an event. In *Adaptation*, for example, Kaufman fantasises sexually about unobtainable women as well as his screenplay's success, which emphasises the theme of his lack of confidence and failure that follow him throughout the story.

```
  INT. VALERIE'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

  Valerie, in bed in a white T-shirt and reading glasses,
  studies some script pages. The bathroom door opens and
  Charlie emerges in pajamas. He sits down next to her,
  reads over her shoulder. She doesn't look up.

  As she continues to read, with no change of expression,
  she drapes one of her legs over his. He studies the line
  of her neck. She feels it, gets a little smile on her
  face, continues to read. She laughs at something in the
  script.

                    KAUFMAN
          What? What'd you laugh at?

                    VALERIE
          You're a genius.

                    KAUFMAN
          Which line?

                    VALERIE
          You're a genius. You're a genius.
```

---

[56] Tarantino, pp. 127-28.

```
He cranes closer to see. She leans in and kisses him,
pulls herself on top of him, straddles him. He looks up at
her towering over him. She tosses the script on the floor.

INT. EMPTY BEDROOM - DAY

Kaufman, alone in bed, ejaculates.⁵⁷
```

This takes place inside Kaufman's head, which means that the embedded narrative is for the reader's (and the future spectator's) eyes only.

In *The Hours* (written by David Hare, directed by Stephen Daldry, 2003), Laura has a fantasy that thematically relates to her character:

```
Now LAURA is stretched out reading on the bed, a pillow
against her back. As LAURA reads her book, the text is
heard in VIRGINIA'S voice.

                    VIRGINIA (V.O.)
          Did it matter, then she asked
          herself, walking towards Bond
          Street, did it matter that she must
          inevitably cease completely...

LAURA pulls her blouse out from her skirt to loosen it,
and puts her hand on her pregnant stomach.

                    VIRGINIA (V.O.)
          All this must go on without her;
          did she resent it; or did it not
          become consoling that death ended
          absolutely?

LAURA rubs her naked stomach slightly, feeling the child
within.

                    VIRGINIA (V.O.)
          It is possible to die.

Suddenly brackish water floods from underneath, washing up
over the sides of the bed. LAURA, in her imagination,
sinks under the water, strewn with weeds, and then
drowns.⁵⁸
```

In this example, the theme is committing suicide, which Laura is contemplating and Virginia did.

---

⁵⁷ Kaufman, *Adaptation*, pp. 48-49.
⁵⁸ David Hare, *The Hours* (London: Faber and Faber), pp. 76-77.

A different example of a thematic embedded narrative, where it is not a character's imagination that is shown but what a character reads, occurs in *Hugo*:

```
They turn the page...


And we go with them...

INTO THE BOOK...

Flickering images from the very first movies...

Fragile fragments of life captured forever...

A stream of factory workers leaving work ... Two Edison
technicians dancing ... Skyscrapers in New York ... London
street scene ... a boxing match ...

                        HUGO (V.O.)
               "What began as a sideshow novelty
               soon grew into something more as
               the first filmmakers discovered
               they could use the new medium to
               tell stories..."

And now we see storytelling and narrative replacing the
quaint real life images…⁵⁹
```

The theme in this case is movies – especially silent movies – which permeates the story and connects the characters.

Non-explicit shown embedded narratives where it is the act of narrating that fulfils a function are less common than explanatory and thematic narratives. *Love Actually*, however, contains one such non-explicit embedded narrative. In the following scene Karen has been called to her son Bernie's school because he has written a somewhat odd essay:

```
                        HEADMISTRESS
               Bernard was asked to write an essay
               for Religious Education about his
               Christmas Wish ...
```

[…]

```
                        HEADMISTRESS
               I would like you to read your son's
               contribution.
```

[…]

---

⁵⁹ Logan, p. 68.

```
She starts to read - we hear her son's voiceover and
actually see the images he is describing.

                    BERNIE (V/O)
          I have thought long and hard about
          what I would wish for at Christmas
          - but after long consideration... .
          […]
          After long consideration I have
          decided this is my Christmas wish -
          that just for one day, you could
          see people's farts.
```

[…]

```
INT. A CHRISTMAS HOME. AFTERNOON

A lovely traditional Christmas dinner is being eaten - all
the family there.

                    BERNIE (V/O)
          You get to the end of a huge
          Christmas meal, and your
          grandmother lets rip - and, at
          last, for once, she can't blame the
          dog.

A small blue bubble rises up from the grandmother.[60]
```

Hearing Bernie's story makes Karen realise how much she loves her son:

```
                    KAREN
          You heard me. This is high class
          comedy - this is first rate stuff.
          (Swelling music) You're my son -
          and obviously I have to love you.
          But now, I really do LOVE you.[61]
```

The embedded story thus functions as a way for Karen and Bernie to get closer but the embedded story itself has no relation to the main story.

6.4.2.2. Long embedded shown narratives

Two screenplays that contain lengthy embedded narratives are *Adaptation* and *Eternal Sunshine*. In *Adaptation* Orlean's flashbacks make out a substantial part of the entire screenplay, and in *Eternal Sunshine* Joel's memories which are being erased take up the main

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[60] Curtis, pp. 285-86.
[61] Curtis, p. 288.

part of the screenplay. Another example, which has not been previously mentioned, is *Slumdog Millionaire* (written by Simon Beaufoy, directed by Danny Boyle, 2008). In the story the police interrogates the main character Jamal for cheating on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire". As Jamal is being questioned he narrates his story of how he got to where he is, and how he knew the answers to the questions. In addition to Jamal's narration, the story also flashbacks to him being on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire".

```
Constable Srinivas's hand pulls back Jamal's head by the
hair, forcing him to stare directly into the lights.

                    CONSTABLE SRINIVAS
          Your name!

                         JAMAL
          Jamal Malik.

And seamlessly we are back....
INT. STUDIO. NIGHT
...on the set of Who Wants to be a Millionaire.⁶²
```

Jamal's narrating voice sometimes enters the memories as a voice-over:

```
EXT. TRAIN. MORNING.
Salim and Jamal are sitting on top of the train. Jamal is
staring blankly down the track.

[…]

Interspersed with the seemingly endless tumble are images
of Jamal and Salim on top of different trains-

- huddled together against the freezing rain…

- surfing the wind at the front of the train…

- admiring the distant Himalaya…

                         JAMAL V/O
          We criss-crossed the country from
          Rajasthan to Calcutta. Every time
          we were thrown off we got back on
          again. This was our home for years.
          A home with wheels and a whistle.⁶³
```

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⁶² Simon Beaufoy, *Slumdog Millionaire* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2008), pp. 2-3.
⁶³ Beaufoy, pp. 47-49.

Attributing all flashbacks to Jamal, however, faces some problems as on a few occasions the reader is provided with information that Jamal does not have:

> They [Jamal, Salim, and Latika] run over the tracks, between the trains, but the shouts are getting louder, the torches closer. A diesel engine is moving out of the station. Jamal, Latika and Salim sprint for the Guard's Van at the very back of the moving train. Punnoose is closest to them. Salim is fastest and first to jump the train. He holds out his hand. Jamal grabs it and is hauled in. Jamal holds his hand out to Latika.
>
> […]
>
> Salim barges Jamal out of the way. Jamal stumbles back as Salim reaches his hand out to Latika, so he doesn't see Latika's hand grasp Salim's, nor see their eyes lock onto each other, nor see Salim very deliberately let go of her hand. Latika stumbles.[64]

Not only does Jamal not have the information about Salim's deed, but it is explicitly stated that he does not have it. The flashback in this case should therefore be attributed to the impersonal fictional voice.

6.5. Conclusion

Characters narrate in the screenplay through thoughts given through free indirect discourse in the scene text, through a voice-over, and through told and shown embedded narratives. A character's narration takes place on a meta-diegetic level of narration, that is, a lower level of narration than the impersonal fictional voice's narration. In the communication model suited to the screenplay text these levels appear as follows:

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[64] Beaufoy, p. 46.

WRITER

EXTRAFICTIONAL VOICE

IMPERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

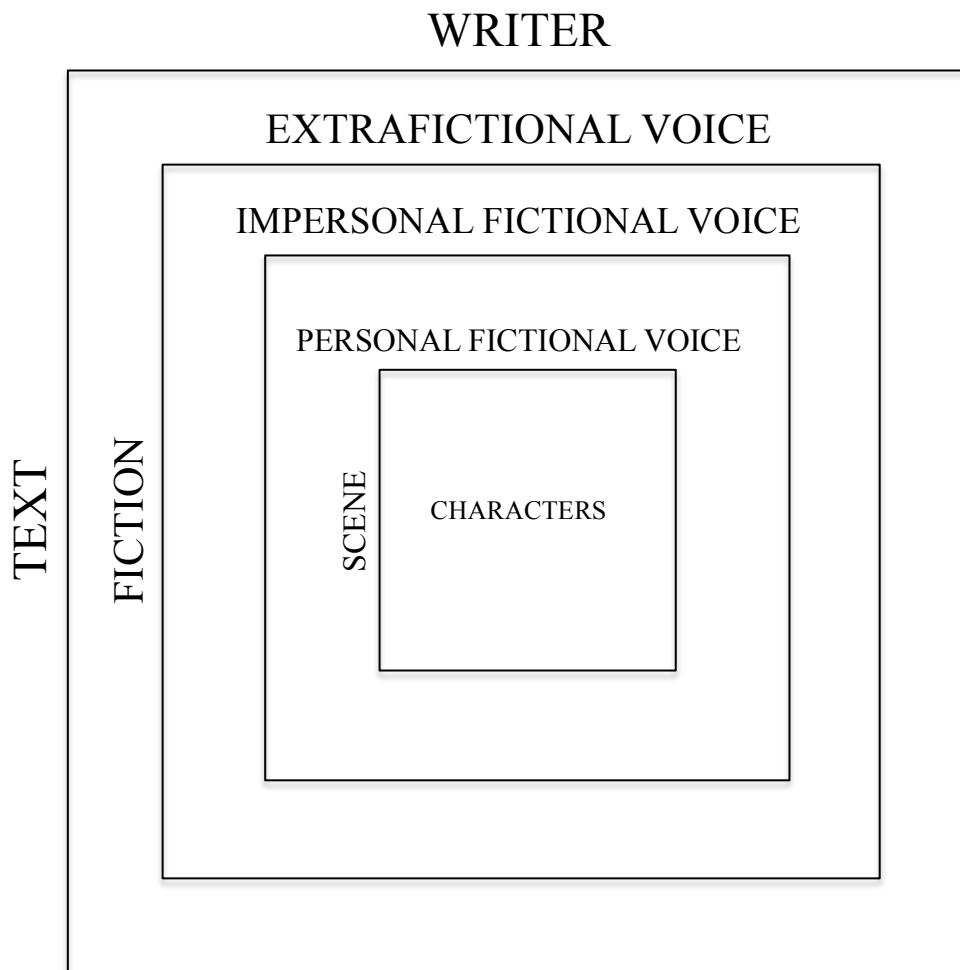PERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

TEXT

FICTION

SCENE

CHARACTERS

Figure 12. Communication model incorporating the level of the characters.

It is only a character's shown embedded narrative that screenwriting manuals regard in a favourable way. Thoughts given through free indirect discourse is not approved of in the manuals since the manuals deem the information to be 'unfilmable'. Told narratives through longer monologues are also discouraged in the manuals since they stop the action of the story and seem unnatural.[65] Narrating through the use of a voice-over is accepted but not encouraged, which was seen in the quote from *Adaptation* on p. 174 in the present study. Using a voice-over is often regarded as a failure on the writer's behalf since the writer was not able to show the information but had to resort to telling it through a voice-over. It is thus only shown character narrations that are regarded in a favourable way. This is a film's unique trait as a pictorial media. Any narrational techniques that highlight and take advantage of this aspect will therefore be regarded as a superior way of telling the story. Laura Shellhardt highlights this point in her manual through arguing that the writer should 'avoid narration'

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[65] See for example McKee (1998) p. 393, and Field (2005) p. 256.

considering that the '[f]ilm is, after all, a visual medium'.[66] Linda Aronson similarly identifies the 'intrusive narrative voice' as one of the 'most common distractions' for a reader while reading a screenplay text.[67]

Through introducing multiple levels of narration, and multiple narrators, the writer is able to create a more complex story that is more likely to remain unchanged throughout the production process since it is more difficult to change a complex and layered story than a straight-forward one. Sternberg comes to a similar conclusion when she states that 'embedded narrative constructions […] cannot be created ad hoc by the director on location. The more complex the narrative perspective, the more clearly it is anchored in the screenplay.'[68]

Through using different types of voice-overs, giving characters' thoughts through free indirect discourse, and through told and shown embedded narratives, the writer is thus not only able to explain characters' backstories and actions, comment on a theme, but the writer is also able to create a more layered story that will make the screenplay text more indispensable during the production process.

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[66] Laura Shellhardt, *Screenwriting for Dummies* (New York: Wiley Publishing Inc., 2003), pp. 137-38.
[67] Linda Aronson, *The 21st Century Screenplay: A Comprehensive Guide to Writing Tomorrow's Films* (Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 2010), p. 470.
[68] Sternberg, p. 147.

Chapter 7: Focalisation

This chapter focuses on how space is created in screenplay texts, or rather, how different focalisation points create the space of the potential film. Gérard Genette coined the term focalisation to refer to the answer to the question 'who sees?' (the focaliser) as opposed to 'who speaks?' (the narrator).[1] Focalisation thus refers to the point of view from which the narrative is narrated – a point of view that is more or less restricted.

Considering that the screenplay text needs to communicate both the story and how it should be visualised, it is of great importance to examine how the space of the story is created in the text, and how this directs the reader's visualisation of the potential film. Previous chapters mention point of view descriptions, but this chapter relates point of view descriptions to how the space of the story is created, and how point of view descriptions create a link between the observer and the observed object. This chapter thus examines the focaliser, the focalised object, and the relation between the focaliser and the focalised object.

7.1. Focalisation within literary theory

Since Genette coined the term focalisation, the concept has been expanded and developed by other theoreticians. The definition has broadened:

> Focalization denotes the perspectival restriction and orientation of narrative information relative to somebody's (usually a character's) perception, imagination, knowledge or point of view. Hence, focalization theory covers the various means of regulating, selecting, and channelling narrative information, particularly of seeing events from somebody's point of view, no matter how subjective or fallible this point of view might turn out to be.[2]

As can be seen from this definition both the focaliser's attitude towards the focalised object as well as the focalised object itself have come more into focus. The main issues that are discussed concern whether or not the concept should refer to vision alone or all cognitive perceptions, and whether or not a narrator can focalise or only narrate.

Genette, when introducing focalisation, proposes three types of focalisations:

- Non-focalisation: Events are narrated from an unrestricted point view, that is, an omniscient point of view.

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[1] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p. 186.
[2] Manfred Jahn, 'Focalization', in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, ed. by David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 173-77 (p. 173).

- Internal focalisation: Events are focalised through/from within a character, that is, a restricted point of view.

- External focalisation: Events are focalised from the outside, which denotes that no inside views are given of the characters or objects that are being focalised.[3]

Genette further states that internal focalisation can either be canonical (there is only one focal character), variable (there are two or more focal characters), or multiple (the same event is told multiple times through different characters' points of view).[4] All of Genette's types of focalisations are transferable to the screenplay text, since the scene text usually indicates a perspective. How the different types of focalisation are transferable, and what terms to use in relation to the screenplay text, will be determined later on in the chapter.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan expands on Genette's definition of the concept through putting more focus on the focalised objects, identifying them as either seen from without or seen from within.[5] In order to examine the relation between the focaliser and the focalised object, Rimmon-Kenan further differentiates between three 'facets of focalization': the 'perceptual facet' (determined by space and time), the 'psychological facet' (concerned with the mind and emotions of the focaliser), and the 'ideological facet' (concerned with the ideological standpoint of the focaliser).[6]

Mieke Bal, similar to Rimmon-Kenan, expands the concept, but she first argues against Genette in the case of non-focalisations. Bal states that all narratives present a specific point of view, and when there is no focalising character the focalisation must belong to the narrator; there are no objective narratives.[7] Bal defines focalisation as the relation between the presented elements and the vision through which they are presented. Bal further focuses on the focalised object, finding that the object of focalisation either is perceptible (events/objects visible in the real world to other characters) or imperceptible (events/objects only present in the character's mind).[8] Both Rimmon-Kenan's facets of focalisation as well as Bal's categories of perceptible and imperceptible focalisations are useful when characterising the focalisations that appear in screenplay texts.

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[3] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, pp. 185-90.
[4] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, pp. 189-90.
[5] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2002 [1983]), p. 75.
[6] Rimmon-Kenan, pp. 77-82.
[7] Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009 [1985]), pp. 152-53.
[8] Bal, p. 156.

Seymour Chatman and Gerald Prince argue against Bal's statement that a narrator can focalise. Chatman states that, even though focalisation is a more appropriate term than perspective or point of view, the term does not solve the main problem, which he identifies as 'the need to recognize *different* terms for the two different narrative agents' (the narrator and the character).[9] Chatman's main argument is that narrators are reporters but not observers:

> It makes no sense to say that a story is told "through" the narrator's perception since he/she/it is precisely *narrating*, which is not an act of perception but of presentation or representation, of transmitting story events and existents through words or images.[10]

Chatman especially stresses that since only characters are actually present in the diegetic world, only they can have a diegetic consciousness and actually see objects and events. Chatman introduces the term 'slant' to account for the narrator's attitude to what he/she/it reports, and he introduces the term 'filter' to account for characters' mental activities, for example perceptions, cognitions, attitudes, emotions, memories, and fantasies. Slant, then, expresses a narrator's psychological, sociological, and ideological attitude, which is either explicitly expressed or implicitly implied.[11]

Gerald Prince, similar to Chatman, argues against a focalising narrator. Prince finds that 'regardless of his or her (homo- or hetero-, intra- or extra-) diegetic status and narrational stance, s/he [the narrator] is never part of the *diegesis* she presents', which makes it impossible for a narrator to focalise, s/he can only present.[12] Prince, in line with Chatman, argues that the same holds true in case of filmic narration: a camera does not focalise but present.

In screenplay texts, the space of the potential film is often created through camera directions, which indicates that the focalisation is attributable to the extrafictional voice. Limiting focalisations to characters therefore seems unsuitable and unnecessarily restrictive. Using the term 'present' instead of focalise also restricts the examination of focalisations in screenplays, as this leaves 'we-formulations' in a difficult position. 'We see formulations' indicate a focalisation by the 'we', and the 'we' obviously sees something and does not only present something to the reader. Therefore, in the case of screenplay texts, the term

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[9] Seymour Chatman. *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 139 (emphasis in original).

[10] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 142.

[11] Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, p. 143.

[12] Gerald Prince, 'A Point of View on Point of View or Refocusing Focalization', in *New Perspectives on Narrative Perspective*, ed. by Willie Van Peer and Seymour Chatman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), pp. 43-50 (p. 46) (emphasis in original).

focalisation will be used to refer to both characters' and narrators' focalisations, that is, their productions of space.

James Phelan, when arguing against Chatman and Prince, finds that Chatman and Prince use the story/discourse distinction for their argument: the narrator exists in the discourse space and can therefore not focalise/experience the space of the story. Phelan, argues the opposite:

> A human narrator, I submit, cannot report a coherent sequence of evens without also revealing his or her perception of those events. The story/discourse distinction itself helps to explain why. From the perspective of story, the distinction implies that any coherent sequence of events can be reported in more than one way; from the perspective of discourse, it implies that any narration takes only one of many possible paths through the story world. Consequently, any path marked by the narrator's perspective (whether we call it "slant" or "focalization") will be not only a report on the story world but also a reflection of how the narrator perceives that world which, in turn, influences how audiences perceive that word.[13]

The link that Phelan makes between the narrator's perception and the audience's perception is especially important in the case of the screenplay text where the reader not only needs to perceive the space of the story but, more importantly, needs to create that space during the production of the film. Phelan also states that the narrator can 'function as a set of lenses through which the audience perceives the story world', which again links to films and the perspective the camera has on the story; a perspective already indicated in the screenplay text.[14] Phelan further finds that shifts in focalisation points indicate a more self-conscious narrator that constructs the story with a specific purpose. Phelan concludes that focalisation for him is a 'straightforward question of who perceives', and that examinations of focalisation enables the analyst to 'recognize the role that narrators play in influencing audience's vision of the story world.'[15] Phelan's conclusion is equally true in the case of screenplay texts. Through examining how the different narrating voices in a screenplay focalise the story it is possible to examine the role the voices play in influencing not only the reader's vision of the story world but also the reader's vision of the potential film.

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[13] James Phelan, 'Why Narrators can be Focalizers – and Why It Matters', in *New Perspectives on Narrative Perspective*, ed. by Willie Van Peer and Seymour Chatman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), pp. 51-64 (p. 57).
[14] Phelan, 'Why Narrators can be Focailzers', p. 57.
[15] Phelan, 'Why Narrators can be Focailzers', p. 63.

Manfred Jahn takes a different approach to the concept of focalisation through using the Jamesian metaphor of 'windows'. Henry James, quoted by Jahn, writes:

> The house of fiction has in short not one window, but a million – a number of possible windows to be reckoned; every one of which has been pierced, or is still piercable, in its vast front, by the need of the individual vision and by the pressure of the individual will. […] they are not hinged doors opening straight upon life. But they have this mark of their own that at each of them stands a figure with a pair of eyes, or at least with a field-glass, which forms, again and again, for observation, a unique instrument.[16]

Jahn relates James's writings to narratology and argues that the figure standing at the window can be seen as the narrator, whose 'primary activity, apart from the piercing of walls, is the contemplation of the […] story, or diegesis.'[17] Jahn further states that what 'the narrators actually see is determined by a number of factors: the shape of the window […], the "instrument" used ("a pair of eyes," a "field-glass"), but above all, the viewer's "consciousness" and its construction of reality.'[18] Jahn, then, defines his view of focalisation theory as dealing with the 'possibilities of a text's windows on story events and existents.'[19] In a later article Jahn more specifically defines focalisation as 'a matter of providing and managing windows into the narrative world, and of regulating (guiding, manipulating) readerly imaginary perception.'[20]

Jahn distinguishes between focalisations that originate outside the window, in an extradiegetic narrator, from focalisations that originate from a 'reflector' who is internal to the story. Jahn defines his 'reflector' as 'a story-internal subject of consciousness', which in most cases is a character.[21] Jahn argues that his approach enables closer examination of the 'characteristics of the agent providing the focus […], the angle of perception, the extent of the "field" of focalization, as well as the nature, selection, and filtering of centrally or peripherally seen object.'[22] Jahn also finds that a narrative's focalisations can be arranged on a scale that ranges from 'zero focalisation', 'weak focalization', 'ambient focalization', to

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[16] Manfred Jahn, 'Windows of Focalization: Deconstructing and Reconstructing a Narratological Concept', *Style* 30.2 (1996), pp. 241-67, (p. 251).
[17] Jahn, 'Windows of Focalization', p. 251.
[18] Jahn, 'Windows of Focalization', p. 252.
[19] Jahn, 'Windows of Focalization', p. 256.
[20] Manfred Jahn, 'More Aspects of Focalisation: Refinements and Applications', *GRAAT*, 21 (1997), pp. 85-110, (p. 94).
[21] Jahn, 'More Aspects of Focalisation', p. 88.
[22] Jahn, 'Windows of Focalization', p. 263.

'strict focalization'.[23] These characterising categories are relevant when examining focalisations in screenplay texts.

Jahn's use of 'windows of focalization' is useful when transferring the concept to screenplay texts, since the screen of the potential film can be compared to a window. Jahn's comment that links the reader's visualisation with focalisation is especially relevant in the case of the screenplay text and how the reader constructs the potential film in his or her mind. Jahn concludes that more examinations of focalisations are needed, and they can 'begin with the question of how readerly imaginary perception correlates with fields of focalisation and why it might be profitable to say that narrators, talking about what they imaginatively perceive, enable readers to adopt (transpose to) fictional points of view.'[24] This conclusion, since it focuses on the point of view that the reader adopts, is applicable and relevant to screenplay texts.

7.2. Focalisation within film theory

Genette's term focalisation has been taken up within film theory by Edward Branigan who links the term to his four lower levels of narration: character (nonfocalized) narration, external focalisation, internal focalisation (surface), and internal focalisation (depth).[25] It is important to note that Branigan relates focalisation with a character 'actually experiencing something through seeing or hearing it', but he does not relate it to a narrator.[26] Focalisation, for Branigan, is thus always related to a character's subjective point of view of the action. Branigan's term external focalisation therefore bears little resemblance to how the term is used within literary theory.

The level of non-focalized character narration displays an intermediate form of subjectivity. Branigan distinguishes between two possible types: 'character reflection' and 'character projection'.[27] Character reflection occurs when the spectator sees what the character sees, when the character sees it, but not from the character's point in space. Character projection occurs when the spectator sees what the character sees, when the character sees it, receives knowledge about how the character sees it and knowledge about the character's mental state, but the spectator does not see it from the character's point in space.

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[23] Jahn, 'More Aspects of Focalisation', pp. 88-89, 96-97.
[24] Jahn, 'More Aspects of Focalisation', p. 90.
[25] Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 107.
[26] Branigan, *Comprehension*, p. 101.
[27] Edward Branigan, *Point of View in the Cinema: A Theory of Narration and Subjectivity in Classical Film* (New York: Mouton, 1984), pp. 122-38.

Branigan finds that character reflection and character projection is a result of the spectator interpreting a scene subjectively even though the scene is shot from neutral angles, and he draws a parallel to the style of the 'free indirect' discourse in literature.[28]

External focalisation refers to the so-called point-of-view shot that lets the spectator see what the character is seeing, when the character is seeing it, and from the point in space from which the character is seeing it. Internal focalisation (surface) refers to the 'perception shot' that differs from the point-of-view shot by indicating the character's mental state, that is, how the character sees it.[29] A common perception shot is an out-of-focus shot indicating that the character is drunk, dizzy, and so on. Internal focalisation (depth) refers to when the spectator attains deeper knowledge about the character's mental state. It is then a 'mental process' narration.[30] The existence of a character's mental condition is the unifying element of a scene narrated through a mental process – it is what makes the scene coherent and functioning. An example of a mental process narration is a character's hallucination or dream.

Even though Branigan's categories of character focalisations are very useful and transferable to the screenplay, his use of the term focalisation seems restrictive as it only identifies characters as possible focalisers. Especially considering that a film always shows the story from a specific point: the camera's position. François Jost, for instance, finds that visual point of view in cinema is 'not a metaphor' but 'rather a narrative reality'.[31] Jost further finds it necessary to distinguish between a cognitive point of view and a visual point of view, using the term focalisation to refer to the cognitive point of view and the term ocularisation for the visual point of view shot.[32]

Film narratologist Markus Kühn, in line with Jost, argues for a broader definition of focalisation, Kühn uses the terms 'ocularization' and 'auricularization' to refer to visual and aural points of view.[33] Kühn also makes the very important reflection that '[w]hen cinematic narration is realized through showing, there is no categorical separation between what the camera shows within a shot, and what the editing reveals through the combination of shots.'[34]

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[28] Branigan, *Point of View*, p. 125.

[29] Branigan, *Point of View*, pp. 79-81.

[30] Branigan, *Point of View*, pp. 85-94.

[31] François Jost, 'The Look: From Film to Novel - An Essay in Comparative Narratology', in *A Companion to Literature and Film*, ed. by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), pp. 71-80. (p. 74).

[32] Jost, p. 74.

[33] Markus Kühn, 'Film Narratology: Who Tells? Who Shows? Who Focalizes?', in *Point of View, Perspective, and Focalization: Modelling Mediation in Narrative*, ed. by Peter Hühn, Wolf Schmid, and Jörg Schönert (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 259-78, (p. 263).

[34] Kühn, 'Film Narratology', p. 262.

Focalisations in film scenes are thus not merely constructed through one specific camera angle but through a series of camera angles. Making a distinction between ocularisations, auricularisation, and focalisations seems unnecessary in the case of screenplay texts since auricularisations are rare and there are other terms that can be used to characterise a focalisation as depicting a specific cognitive point of view.

7.3. Focalisation and the screenplay text

The concept of focalisation is not much discussed within screenplay research. Claudia Sternberg is the exception, and she finds that the concept of focalisation can be 'deictically realized on film in a purer form than in narrative literature', and that screenplays can indicate the focalisation that will be displayed in the potential film.[35] Sternberg discusses internal focalisation, which she relates to a character's point of view, and she states that the screenplay can define whether or not a character's visual distortions are to be simulated by the camera, for example if the character is loosing consciousness or is disorientated.[36] Sternberg does not, however, let these distortions become a distinction between different types of focalisations. Sternberg instead, in line with Bal, distinguishes between imperceptible and perceptible focalised objects, concluding that focalisations encompass not only a character's perceptions, but also a character's apperceptions.[37]

Sternberg only mentions the case of external focalisation in a footnote in which she states that, '[i]f no character is present, character focalisation cannot take place. Perception must then be related to the impersonal narrative "voice" in which case it is external focalisation.'[38]

7.4. Concluding note and a definition of the term focalisation

How the term focalisation is defined and used differs between fields of research as well as between researchers. Sternberg's discussion of the term in relation to the screenplay, and especially her brief mention of external focalisation, needs to be expanded on. Considering the different uses of the term, there are three main areas that need to be examined and identified when relating the concept of focalisation to the screenplay text: the focaliser, the

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[35] Claudia Sternberg, *Written for the Screen: The American Motion-Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 141.
[36] Sternberg, pp. 141-42.
[37] Sternberg, p. 144.
[38] Sternberg, p. 141.

focalised object or action, and the relation between the focaliser and the focalised object or action. First, however, the term needs to be defined.

In the above discussion, both Phelan's and Jahn's definitions of focalisation include the reader's visualisation of the story. Jahn states that how a story is focalised regulates the 'readerly imaginary perception', and Phelan finds that through examining focalisation the 'role that narrators play in influencing audience's vision of the story world' can be recognised and examined.[39] Relating the concept of focalisation to the reader's construction of the story, as already mentioned, is important in the case of screenplay texts where a reader might not only need to imagine the story but actually build the setting for it. The importance of the reader's visualisation of the story cannot be stressed enough. If a reader cannot visualise the story as a film the screenplay text does not fulfil its purpose. Examining how a story is focalised in the screenplay text is therefore crucial.

Taking Phelan's and Jahn's definitions into consideration, a definition of the concept in relation to the screenplay text is as follows: Focalisation is the construction of the space of the story through displaying the story from a specific perspective that regulates the readers' visualisations of the space of the potential film. In the case of screenplay texts, Genette's question of 'who sees?' could then be substituted with the question of 'who constructs the space of the story for the reader?'

Having defined the concept, the questions that need answers are: who can focalise in screenplay texts? What can be focalised? And, how is it focalised, that is, what is the relation between the focaliser and the focalised?

7.5. Possible focalisers in screenplay texts

In a film, as Jost emphasises, focalisation is not optional but necessary since the camera frames every shot, showing the scene from a specific perspective.[40] Focalisations in films are therefore, as Sternberg states, 'purer' than in novels.[41] In a screenplay, similar to a novel, every scene does not necessarily have to be focalised from a specific perspective. The difference between a novel and a screenplay, however, is that, when the film's production process starts, every scene will be broken up into camera shots. The reader of a screenplay will therefore visualise the scene from specific points of view even though the screenplay text does not give explicit directions.

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[39] Jahn, 'More Aspects of Focalisation', p. 94. Phelan, 'Why Narrators can be Focalisers', p. 63.
[40] Jost, p. 74.
[41] Sternberg, p. 141.

In order to find an answer to the question of 'who focalises?' or rather 'who constructs the space of the story for the reader?', it is useful to determine where and how focalisations appear in the screenplay text. For a focalisation to exist a description of the space of the story is necessary; therefore focalisations cannot take place in the dialogue section of the screenplay but only in the scene text. The personal fictional voice, which only exists in the dialogue section of the screenplay, can therefore not function as a focalising agent. Dialogues can still, however, indicate a focalisation since it is often the case that dialogue is filmed using the shot-reverse-shot set-up. This inclines the reader to visualise a dialogue heavy scene in a specific way without having been given any focalisation points. Scene headings only give information about the time of day and whether the scene is taking place outside or inside (EXT/INT), and do therefore not contain any focalisations. When analysing how focalisations appear in screenplay texts, it is thus the scene text that needs examining. That focalisations only appear in the scene text does not mean, however, that only one type of focaliser exists, which can be seen in the following three examples that each show a different focalising agent. The examples are from *State and Main* (written and directed by David Mamet, 2000), *Gosford Park* (written by Julian Fellowes, directed by Robert Altman, 2001), and *An Education* (written by Nick Hornby, directed by Lone Scherfig, 2009), and they show three different types of focalisers: the impersonal fictional voice, the character, and the camera.

```
A desk CLERK looks up. Behind the desk a display of
serveral souvenir plates, 'Souvenir of Waterfod,
VT', with a picture of the Old Mill on them.[42]


It is a grey day. Mary Maceachran, a young Scottish
lady's maid, watches a liveried chauffeur trying to
start a green 1920s Daimler in front of a London
house.[43]


The camera pulls back to show her [Jenny] cycling
through the streets of Oxford — a male student is
cycling with her.[44]
```

The first scene does not give any specific direction of how the scene is focalised (from what point of view the scene is narrated) or who it is that focalises, it only reports what can be seen. Despite this, the focalisation can be ascribed to the impersonal fictional voice as it is the

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[42] David Mamet, *State and Main: A Screenplay by David Mamet* (London: Methuen, 2001), p. 7.
[43] Julian Fellows, *Gosford Park* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2002), p. 1.
[44] Nick Hornby, *An Education* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), p. 157.

impersonal fictional voice that constructs the space of the story (the lobby) for the reader and describes how the lobby is decorated.

The example from *Gosford Park* actually contains two focalisations: the maid Mary is focalised by the impersonal voice, and she in turn becomes the focaliser of the chauffeur. It is worth emphasising, however, that Mary's focalisation does not become a case of 'true' character focalisation unless the reader visualises the chauffeur from her point of view and not only visualises Mary watching the chauffeur.

The third example displays the clearest and most direct case of focalisation: the camera clearly focalises Jenny and her friend cycling through Oxford. This does not mean, however, that the camera is the focalising agent. Since any direct camera directions have been assigned to the extrafictional voice, the focalising agent in case of camera directions is actually the extrafictional voice, that is, the implied writer(s).

The above examples identify three focalising agents: the extraficitonal voice, the impersonal fictional voice, and the character. It is important to emphasise that even though all focalisations are direct or indirect allusions to the potential film, the concept of focalisation should not be confused with the concept of allusions. It should rather be regarded as being encompassed by the concept as all focalisations create a link between the reader and the potential film. The concept of focalisation can also be separated from the concept of allusions through the fact that all focalisations are related to the production of the space of the story whereas allusions do not always indicate how the potential film should be visualised. Allusions, as mentioned in chapter 2 and 3, can also consist of production notes that refer to other aspects of the film production than camera angles.

As focalisations form a part of possible allusions to the potential film, the techniques used for both focalisations and allusions are similar. Focalisations are often created through camera directions, we-formulations, and detailed descriptions, which are attributable to the extrafictional voice and the impersonal voice.

7.5.1. Focalisation by the extrafictional voice and the impersonal fictional voice

Chapter 4 argues that the extrafictional voice is not easily separated from the impersonal fictional voice in case of allusions to the fictional film. This indicates that screenplay texts use more than one technique to allude to the potential film and direct the reader's visualisation. In the case of focalisations the same problem arises. It is often difficult to identify the agent

responsible for a focalisation. The concept of focalisation is therefore discussed in relation to different techniques rather than to the agent responsible for the chosen perspective.

The most common techniques to create the space of the story in screenplay texts are camera directions, we-see formulations, and descriptions of settings, characters and actions.

7.5.1.1. Focalisation through camera directions

Chapter 3 discussed how camera directions are used in screenplay texts, but this chapter relates them to the production of the space. There are multiple ways to use camera directions in order to focalise a scene. Here follows a few examples from *Traffic* (written by Stephen Gaghan, directed by Steven Soderbergh, 2000), *The Savages, Little Children* (written by Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, directed by Todd Field, 2006), *Billy Elliot* (written by Lee Hall, directed by Stephen Daldry, 2000), *Slumdog Millionarie* (written by Simon Beaufoy, directed by Danny Boyle, 2008), *The Squid and the Whale* (written and directed by Noah Baumbach), and *The Queen* (written by Peter Morgan, directed by Stephen Frears, 2006):

```
CLOSER
On Robert in the same position.[45]

A WIDE SHOT reveals that Lenny's pants have collapsed
around his ankles.[46]

SLOW ZOOM OUT from the flag high above the stadium.[47]

BILLY runs into the long grass. To Billy it is almost a
jungle. The camera follows him at his own eye-level,
running and running as the Marc Bolan track reaches its
climax.[48]

The camera pulls up and up until Jamal is nothing but a
dot wandering the maze of lances, railways and highways,
one among endless millions of people.[49]

The car turns the corner, we PAN to a subway stop and down
the stairs.[50]

The Queen appears to continue writing, but our camera
slowly turns to reveal her pen is not moving. Nor
writing.[51]
```

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[45] Stephen Gaghan, *Traffic* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), p. 3.
[46] Tamara Jenkins, *The Savages* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 40.
[47] Todd Field and Tom Perrotta, *Little Children* (New York: Newmarket press, 2006), p. 91.
[48] Lee Hall, *Billy Elliot* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000), p. 2.
[49] Simon Beaufoy, *Slumdog Millionaire* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2008), p. 62.
[50] Noah Baumbach, *The Squid and the Whale* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2005), p. 30.

These examples display how camera indications can focalise a scene. The first two examples specify the size of the shot, whether it is a close-up or a wide shot, and the third example uses a camera movement (a zoom out) to create the space of the potential film. The examples from *Billy Elliot* and *Slumdog Millionaire* use the name 'camera' to clearly specify the origin of the focalisation, and to give the reader a clear indication of the space (and the size) of the shot, both examples show the distance between the focaliser and the focalised object (Billy and Jamal). The last two examples, from *The Squid and the Whale* and *The Queen*, similarly to the examples from *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Billy Elliot*, use the word 'camera' and a movement to indicate the space seen, but the last two examples also use the word 'we', which places the impersonal fictional voice and the narratee in a viewing situation. The four last examples, then, give the same information about the space of the potential film but the examples from *The Squid* and *The Queen* do not only create a relation between the camera and the focalised object, but they also relate the narratee (and in extension the reader) to the camera and the focalised object.

Focalising a scene through the use of camera directions enables the writer to characterise the focalisation, for instance by specifying the exact camera technique that should be used: '`AGITATED HAND-HELD`' or '`[i]n dreamy SLOW MOTION`.[52] This chapter discusses how focalisations can be characterised further on.

7.5.1.2. Focalisation through we-formulations

A few examples of how we-formulations can create the space of a scene for the reader have already been mentioned but here follow examples that do not position the 'we' behind a camera but straight into the scene. The examples are from *Burn After Reading* (written and directed by Ethan and Joel Coen, 2008), *Traffic*, *Inglourious Basterds* (written and directed by Quentin Tarantino, 2009), *Michael Clayton* (written and directed by Tony Gilroy, 2007), *The Constant Gardener* (written by Jeffrey Caine, directed by Fernando Meirelles, 2005), and *Billy Elliot*.

```
High in the air — so high we can see the curvature of the
earth. The eastern seaboard stretches away, flecked with
clouds.
We close in on the city of Washington, D.C.[53]
```

[51] Peter Morgan, *The Queen* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), p. 26.
[52] Tamara Jenkins*, The Savages* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 23, 1.
[53] Joel and Ethan Coen, *Burn After Reading* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008), p. 3.

```
HALLWAY
We track at floor level, following a pair of well-shined
shoes down a well-polished hallway.⁵⁴
```

```
From the hallway we see Robert and Barbara and Caroline
having dinner. A familiar tableau. We hear Barbara
talking, the murmur of the days events.⁵⁵
```

```
We don't move into them but keep observing them from a
distance, like the farmer.⁵⁶
```

```
A XEROX MACHINE — cranking out high-speed copies — ten
pages a second flashing before our eyes — all information
a blur except for the letterhead which is constant.⁵⁷
```

```
Across the room Lorbeer has opened Wanza's cupboard and is
now scooping into a bag what we assume to be her
medicines: small blue boxes marked with a logo we can't
clearly see.⁵⁸
```

```
The music increasing in tension. BILLY, now in his early
twenties, is looking on to the stage. We don't see his
face but see the back of his head as the music is playing
loudly in his ears. We feel the heart beating fast. The
music wells up still further. […] The music gets louder
and louder. The anticipation cannot get any higher.
BILLY's heart is pounding. He leaps onto the stage.
Silence. As if we were inside Billy's skull. The bright
lights seem blinding.⁵⁹
```

The first two examples bear great similarity to the examples from *Slumdog Millionaire* and

Billy Elliot shown previously with the difference that there are no mentions of cameras in the

examples from *Burn After Reading*. Instead the camera reference has been exchanged with a

'we' that observes and can move freely within the space of the story (albeit like a camera).

The first two examples also show two opposites as the first example displays a birds-eye view

of the entire planet while the second example shows a pair of shoes walking down a hallway.

The first example thus opens up the space of the story while the second example constricts it.

The examples from *Traffic* and *Inglourious Basterds* position the observer (us) firmly at a

distance from the scene, keeping the action at a distance. In *Traffic,* the distance emphasises

the family as a unit and, in *Inglourious Basterds*, it emphasises the approaching threat to the

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⁵⁴ Coen and Coen, p. 3.
⁵⁵ Gaghan, p. 37.
⁵⁶ Quentin Tarantino, *Inglourious Basterds* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), p. 2.
⁵⁷ Tony Gilroy, *Michael Clayton* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 1.
⁵⁸ Jeffrey Caine, *The Constant Gardener* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2005), p. 27.
⁵⁹ Hall, pp. 96-97.

farmer. The examples from *Michael Clayton* and *The Constant Gardener* not only position the focaliser at a distance but further insinuates that there is important information that the observer does not receive since the observer is either standing too far away or does not look close enough. In the last example, on the other hand, the focalising 'we' is allowed to almost merge with the character's (Billy's) experience: there is nothing that the character knows that the observer does not share in. The last example, since it aligns the focaliser so closely to Billy, could also be regarded as character focalisation despite the scene text separating the 'we' from the character.

7.5.1.3. Focalisation through descriptions

Focalisations, or focalisers, do not necessarily need to be related to an agent (we) or an object (the camera) but can also be accomplished through descriptions of actions and objects. The following examples are from *Cold Mountain* (written and directed by Anthony Minghella, 2003), *The Hours* (written by David Hare, directed by Stephen Daldry, 2002), *Love Actually* (written and directed by Richard Curtis, 2003), and *Atonement* (written by Christopher Hampton, directed by Joe Wright, 2007).

> AN ARMY OF TINY CRABS scuttle across the sandy march. A LARGE HAND grabs at a clutch of them. Inman, starving, swills the crabs in a puddle then proceeds to eat them.[60]
>
> At once a man's finger pressing the intercom.[61]
>
> [A] man and his 11-year old step son in church — with a crowd of 80 behind them, dressed in black.[62]
>
> ROBBIE approaches the towering bulk of the house, dragging his feet. […] Finally, he takes a deep breath and tugs at the bell-pull.[63]
>
> CECILIA swims by, powerful underwater breast-stroke.[64]

The first two examples indicate close up shots just as clearly as if they had said 'close on'. The space of the scenes, or the shots, is thus clearly specified. The third example also clearly

---

[60] Anthony Minghella, *Cold Mountain* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), p. 57. [Check spelling of scuttle/s]

[61] David Hare, *The Hours* (London: Faber and Faber), p. 61.

[62] Richard Curtis, 'Love Actually', in *Six Weddings and Two Funerals,* by Richard Curtis (London: Penguin Group, 2006), pp. 217-363 (p. 223).

[63] Christopher Hampton, *Atonement* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. 29.

[64] Hampton, p. 18.

indicates the size of the shot but in this case it is a wide-shot. If a wide-shot is not used all the 80 people in church will not be seen. The scene from *Love Actually* thereby clearly focalises the space of the scene without referring to a 'camera' or an observing 'we'.

In the first example from *Atonement* two different angles on the scene are indicated: First a wide shot that displays the 'towering bulk of the house' and then a closer shot of Robbie when he takes a deep breath and rings the bell. Again, however, the focalisations are achieved without relating them to a 'camera' or a 'we'.

In the last example the focalisation point is specified as being fixed as well as being under water. The example could easily have included the word camera or 'we' in front of the focalisation: 'Cecilia swims by us/the camera', but again the same effect is accomplished without a specified focalising object or agent. As easily as the 'camera' or 'we' can be added to the above examples, however, they can also be removed from the examples that included them. Focalisations in the screenplay text are thus not bound to the existence of an object or agent to which it is fixed. Since it is the impersonal fictional voice that is responsible for the descriptions that evoke the focalisations, however, the focalisations can be connected to the impersonal fictional voice.

7.5.2. Focalisation by characters

The discussion of character focalisations uses Branigan's terminology, but in order to clearly separate his external focalisation from the extrafictional and impersonal fictional voices' external focalisations, it will be referred to as external character focalisation from now on.

The most important point to make is that true character focalisations can only appear in embedded narratives when everything in the scene, including scene text and scene heading, can be attributed to the character. Most often it is a case of imaginations or memories. These kind of embedded narratives have already been discussed in the previous chapter. As was emphasised then, however, a flashback is often shown from the impersonal fictional voice's perspective as well as from the character's perspective. This was the case in *Slumdog Millionaire* when Jamal's brother pushed Latika off the train in one of Jamal's flashbacks even though Jamal wasn't aware of the action. In that case the flashback is not attributable to the character but to the impersonal fictional voice, and the scene is then also focalised by the impersonal fictional voice and not the character. The opposite can also be found. In *Atonement*, an older Briony confesses in a voice-over at the end of the screenplay that 'I `never made that journey to Balham. So the scene in which I`

`confess to them is invented, imagined.`'[65] In that case a scene that the reader
interprets as true actually turns out to be false since it was an imagined scene by one of the
characters. Another film that similarly tricks the reader and the viewer is *The Usual Suspects*
(written by Christopher McQuarrie, directed by Bryan Singer, 1995).

Even though true character focalisations are rare there are many instances where
characters focalise within a scene. It is through character focalisations that emotional
connections between a character and another character or object is most easily shown.
Screenplay texts' different types of character focalisations can be discussed using Branigan's
categories. Branigan identifies character reflection, character projection, external focalisation,
internal focalisation (surface), and internal focalisation (depth) as possible kinds of
focalisation.

Branigan defines character reflection to be instances where the spectator sees what the
character sees, when the character sees it, but not from the character's point in space. In
relation to the screenplay, character reflection is defined as cases where the reader visualises
what the character sees, when the character sees it, but not from the character's point in space.
The Queen and *Hugo* contain examples of character reflections:

```
The Queen stares in fear and disbelief at the people
lining the Mall. In places, the crowds are standing twenty
deep. The faces are reflected in the car windows.⁶⁶
```

```
He [Hugo] glances back.
Sees Mama Jeanne tenderly holding her disconsolate
husband.⁶⁷
```

Through not showing the scene from the character's point in space the writer leaves the scene
more open to the reader to visualise as s/he pleases but the writer still manages to create a
connection between the character and the scene/object of focalisation.

In relation to the screenplay, Branigan's term character projection is defined as
instances where the reader visualises what the character sees, when the character sees it,
receives knowledge about how the character sees it, but the reader does not visualise it from
the character's point in space. Examples of character projection are the following from *An
Education* and *28 Days Later*:

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[65] Hampton, p. 90.
[66] Morgan, p. 89.
[67] Logan, p. 62.

> Jenny looks at him with what might, from one angle, be
> construed as fondness.[68]
>
> JIM'S VALIUM DREAM
> Jim is riding his bike through the city. It's London back
> to normal, pre-infection. Busy streets, traffic,
> pedestrians, car horns, radios playing.[69]

It is through character projections that the reader receives knowledge not only about what the character sees but more importantly how the character sees it and their mental state.

Branigan's external focalisation will here be referred to as external character focalisation as to not confuse it with other types of external focalisations. External character focalisation in relation to the screenplay occurs when the reader visualises what the character sees, when the character sees it, and from the character's point in space. Examples can be found in *Hugo* and *The Hurt Locker* (written by Mark Boal, directed by Kathryn Bigolow, 2009):

> She [Isabelle] looks up at him [Hugo]. From her
> perspective, he is beautifully framed by the
> intricate clockwork.[70]
>
> Another AGENT peers out a window through
> binoculars. HIS POV: the exterior of the office
> where Castro, Gordon, and Ruiz talk.[71]

As the second examples shows, the extrafictional voice can be used to indicate a character's focalisation.

Internal character focalisation (surface) occurs in the screenplay when the reader visualises what the character sees, when the character sees it, from the character's point in space, and receives knowledge about how the character sees it. Again, the word character has been added to Branigan's term in order to clearly link the focalisation to the character. The following extracts from *Sideways* (written by Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor, directed by Alexander Payne, 2004) and *Atonement* are good examples of internal character focalisations (surface):

> As Miles get DRUNKER, the camera angles become sloppier,
> the cutting choppier.[72]

---

[68] Hornby, p. 107.
[69] Garland, *28 Days Later*, p. 63.
[70] Logan, p. 77.
[71] Gaghan, p. 11.

```
ROBBIE, watches, unable to look away, his expression a
queasy mixture of fear and longing. CECILIA's hair
fantails out across the surface of the water.⁷³
```

Similarly to the example from *Traffic*, the example from *Sideways* shows how the
extrafictional voice is used to indicate a character's focalisation.

Internal character focalisation (depth) occurs in screenplays when the reader visualises
what the character sees, when the character sees it, from the character's point in space, and
receives knowledge not only about how the character sees it but also about the character's
mental state. When Laura imagines herself drowning in *The Hours* is an example of this type
of focalisation:

```
Suddenly blackish water floods from underneath, washing up
over the sides of the bed. LAURA, in her imagination,
sinks under the water, strewn with weeds, and then
drowns.⁷⁴
```

In most cases where a character focalises another character, that character, in turn,
focalises the first character back. It is thus often a case of mirrored or reverse focalisations.
These are usually expressed in the finished film through the use of shot-reverse-shot camera
set-ups. Through characters focalising each other the writer is able to create more tension and
feeling between the characters and thus in the scene. This will become more apparent when
characterising the focalisations. Examples of reverse character focalisations exist in almost
every screenplay. Here are a couple of examples from *The Pianist* (written by Ronald
Harwood, directed by Roman Polanski, 2002) and *Love Actually*:

```
He [Szpilman] glances towards the glass booth and sees
Lednicki with the technicians. He smiles. Lednicki nods,
smiles back.⁷⁵
```

```
They drive along. He looks at her — her hair still wet.
She catches him looking at her. He looks away.⁷⁶
```

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[72] Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor, *Sideways: The Shooting Script* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2004), p. 56.
[73] Hampton, p. 12.
[74] Hare, p. 77.
[75] Ronald Harwood, 'The Pianist', in *The Pianist & Taking Sides*, by Ronald Harwood (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), pp. 1-115 (p. 114).
[76] Curtis, p. 283.

Through letting the characters focalise each other, a clearer connection is created, which gives
the reader more knowledge about the their relationship and it heightens the scene's emotional
tension.

7.6. Sound Focalisations

Screenplay texts do not only contain visual focalisations but also audio focalisations, which

the following examples from *Traffic, Cold Mountain,* and *The Hours* show:

```
Robert is in the hallway, at Caroline's door. He opens it
and we get BLASTED WITH MUSIC.[77]

His words of thanks leak through the window to Inman, who
watches, listening, willing Ada to notice him. And then
she does.[78]

Their conversation is left behind. Upstairs, on the first
floor, beyond the banisters of an open gallery, is the
room the DOCTOR has come out of.[79]
```

As the examples indicate, sound focalisations are in most cases related to a character
experiencing or hearing a sound but, as the last and the first example shows, that is not always
the case as the sound can be related to a 'we' and to a movement away from the sound. Since,
however, sound focalisations are rare in screenplay texts, dividing focalisations into Jost's and
Kühn's categories ocularisation and auricularsation is unnecessary. In the case of screenplay
texts, the term audio focalisation seems sufficient.

7.7. The focalised object

All the above examples of focalisations above show that the object of focalisation can be
almost anything: characters, actions, settings, close ups of details, and so on. In order to
examine the objects of focalisation more closely, Bal's categories of perceptible and
imperceptible objects of focalisations are useful, especially considering that Sternberg also
connects them to the screenplay text.

Perceptible focalisations indicate a focalised object that exists to all characters in the
fictional world. Imperceptible focalisations refer to instances where the object of focalisation
can only be seen by the character focalising it, what Sternberg refers to as a character's

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[77] Gaghan, p. 54.
[78] Minghella, p. 19.
[79] Hare, p. 5.

apperceptions. It is thus only characters, including the characterbound personal fictional

voice, whocan focalise imperceptible objects. All focalisations by the extrafictional voice, the

impersonal fictional voice, and the non-characterbound personal fictional voice are

perceptible for the simple reason that they focalise the fictional world how it actually is. That

said, there are instances where an imperceptible focalisation is difficult to relate to a

character. The following extract from *Love Actually* where Bernie's story is read out loud is a

good example of this:

```
She [Karen] starts to read — we hear her son's voiceover
and actually see the images he is describing.

[…]


                    BERNIE (V/O)
          You get to the end of a huge
          Christmas meal, and your
          grandmother lets rip — and, at
          last, for once, she can't blame the
          dog.

A small blue bubble rises up from the grandmother.⁸⁰
```

Bernie wrote the story that is being read aloud, and it is his voice-over that accompanies the

images. The actual images that we see (the focalisation of the story), however, are not as

clearly linked to Bernie. It is not absolutely certain that the images of the story are his chosen

images and not the impersonal fictional voice's chosen images or the images chosen by his

mother who is the person actually reading the story. Is it Bernie's choice to colour the farts

blue or is it the impersonal fictional voice's or Karen's? These instances where it is difficult

to determine the origin of an imperceptible focalisation are very rare and will therefore not be

discussed in greater detail.

It is useful to relate Branigan's catergories of character focalisations to a screenplay's

imperceptible and perceptible focalisations, since a screenplay's imperceptible focalisations

almost exclusively belong to characters. Branigan's categories of character reflection and

external character focalisation indicate a perceptible object of focalisation since the reader

does not receive any information about the character's mental state or how the object is seen.

The category of internal character focalisation (depth) indicates a case of an imperceptible

focalised object since the reader receives knowledge about the character's mental state as well

as how the object is seen. The cases of character projection and internal character focalisation

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⁸⁰ Curtis, p. 286.

(surface) can, on the other hand, be both perceptible and imperceptible depending on the circumstances. The examples of character projection and internal character focalisation (surface) discussed above show one instance of a perceptible focalisation and one instance of an imperceptible focalisation. The example from *28 Days Later* as well as the example from *Sideways* shows imperceptible objects of focalisation since it is Jim's memory of London and Mile's drunkenness that dictate how the scenes are focalised.

In cases of true character focalisations, that is, embedded narratives narrated through a character's flashbacks, the object of focalisation (the flashback) is in fact imperceptible since it is that character's vision of the past event. Within a character's imperceptible flashback, however, many other focalisations appear since each scene in a screenplay contains multiple focalisation points.

7.8. Characterising the focaliser and the focalised object

Characterising focalisations involve an examination of the relation between the focaliser and the focalised object. Rimmon-Kenan is able to characterise a focalisation through identifying its perceptual, psychological, and ideological facets. This allows her to ascertain when and where a focalisation takes place, the feelings of the focaliser towards the object of focalisation, and any ideological standpoints that the focaliser might possess.[81] Applying Rimmon-Kenan's facets to focalisations in screenplay texts thus allows for a more detailed examination of the focalisations. The two following examples are from *Little Children* and *28 Days Later*:

> LUCY — The child stands at the base of a street light
> staring up at the lamp, as if hypnotized.
> [...]
> Sarah raises her head up, and looks at her daughter. Her
> eyes unwavering, transfixed by the child's face, which
> greets her with unconditional trust. The two suspended
> together. Nothing else exists.[82]
>
> Some distance away, in the fields below, a group of three
> horses — two adults and a foal — are galloping over the
> fields as if wild. A majestic and surreal sight, and it
> somehow implies the way the world will change.[83]

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[81] Rimmon-Kenan, pp. 77-82.
[82] Field and Perrotta, pp. 108-09.
[83] Garland, *28 Days Later*, p. 58.

The perceptual facet of the focalisation in the first example, which is determined by space and time, is on a street late at night. In the second example the focalisation's perceptual facet can be determined as midday in the countryside. The first example contains a very clear psychological facet since it states how Sarah and her daughter look at each other. The importance of that look is also highlighted, which gives more weight to the focalisation. The second example is not as clear when it comes to the psychological since the focalisation belongs to the impersonal fictional voice. The focalisation is, however, described as 'a majestic and surreal sight', which gives information about how the scene is focalised and what feeling goes with it. The first example's focalisers do not show any specific ideologies but the focaliser in the second example does. It is possible to interpret the last statement in the second example, 'and it somehow implies the way the world will change', as an ideological standpoint that criticises how the world looks today and is reminiscent of the how the world used to look – and might look again if we do not take better care of it.[84]

Since all scenes in a screenplay have a scene heading that determines the place and time of the scene, all focalisations' perceptual facets are easily identified. This is not the case with the psychological and the ideological facet, but considering that it is through a focalisation's psychological and ideological facet that a connection is made between the focaliser and the focalised object, those facets are more interesting to identify and examine. It was already mentioned that it is through characters focalising each other that the writer is able to create more tension and deeper emotions in a scene, which is apparent in the example from *Little Children* above. What is especially interesting, and well worth noting, is that the psychological facet of a focalisation is given through so called 'unfilmable' information in the scene text, which screenwriting manuals advise against. Without giving information about how a character feels when looking at someone or something, however, a scene would not provide the reader with any emotions and the scene would loses much of its emotional tension. If the sentence 'which greets her with unconditional trusts' was taken away from the *Little Children* extract the emotional relationship between mother and daughter would not be the same and the scene would lose part of its purpose and value. Another good example is the following extract from *The Squid and the Whale*:

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[84] Garland, *28 Days Later*, p. 58.

```
Joan is typing at the dining room table. Bernard stops in
the doorway and watches. He looks at her with silent
resentment.⁸⁵
```

If one were to take away the last sentence (where the focalisation is given its perceptual facet), the scene would lose its function completely, as it exists to show how far the married couple has drifted apart, as well as how Bernard's feelings for his wife have changed. Considering that Branigan, when examining films, uses categories of character focalisation that identify not only what is seen but also how something is seen, that is, the mental state of the character, it evidently is possible for an actor to show the emotions that are written in the screenplay. The question then becomes why explanative sentences, which create the same response in the reader that a future spectator of the film experiences, are not allowed by screenwriting manuals. The reason that the manuals give is that the screenplay should 'show not tell', but clearly it is possible for actors to show something that the screenplay's narration tells them.[86]

There are, however, examples of focalisations where the psychological standpoint of the focaliser is implied but not expressed, and where the emotional tension of a scene is accomplished without describing the feelings of the focaliser:

```
He looks at her — her hair still wet. She catches him
looking at her. He looks away.⁸⁷
```

In this example from *Love Actually,* the feelings behind the looks are relatively easy to identify even though they are not written out.

Depending on whether a focalisation's perceptual, psychological and ideological standpoints can be determined, a focalisation can be identified as being firm or weak. A firm focalisation is a focalisation where it is not only clear when and where it takes place but the reader also gains some insight to how the focaliser regards the object of focalisation. A weak focalisation, on the other hand, is a focalisation where only the bare minimum of information is given: that someone somewhere is focalising something.

Even though characterising focalisations according to Rimmon-Kenan's facets is beneficial, it is not enough to gain a complete picture of how a focalisation functions in the screenplay text. Considering that it is the reader's visualisation of the potential film that is the purpose of the screenplay text, focalisations also need to be examined and characterised from

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[85] Baumbach, p. 17.
[86] See for example Field (2005) p. 221, and McKee (1998) p. 396.
[87] Curtis, p. 283.

the perspective of the reader's visualisation, that is, how much the focalisations control the reader's visualisation.

One way of characterising the impact the focalisations have on the reader is through determining how strict a scene's focalisations are. Manfred Jahn uses a scale that ranges from zero focalisation, weak focalisation, ambient focalisation, to strict focalisation.[88] As to not confuse the two different characterising categories, the term 'variable' will substitute Jahn's term 'weak', and the two endpoints 'variable' and 'strict' seem sufficient. If a scene's focalisations are strict, the writer controls the reader's visualisation more than if a scene contains variable focalisations. Here are two examples from *Slumdog Millionaire* and *The Hours* that show strict focalisations:

```
The camera pulls up and up until Jamal is nothing but a
dot wandering the maze of lanes, railways and highways,
one among endless millions of people.[89]
```

```
LAURA, awake now, reaches for a book which is lying at the
side of her bed. As her hand reaches for it, the title is
clearly seen: Mrs Dalloway.[90]
```

Even though these two scenes use different focalisation techniques (the first example uses camera movement while the second uses description), both scenes display strict focalisations. There is not much room for the reader to visualise the scene in any other way than the writer directs. In the example from *Slumdog* a clear camera movement is indicated with Jamal disappearing amongst the millions, and the example from *The Hours* indicates a close-up shot of the book since the reader (and the viewer of the potential film) needs to see the title.

In the following examples from *The Kids are All Right* (written by Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg, directed by Lisa Cholodenko, 2011), *Cold Mountain*, and *Traffic*, the reader is more free to visualise the scene as he or she pleases:

```
Paul and Tanya sit at the bar, eating family meal.[91]
```

```
Inman swings down. He feels the other men staring, burning
a hole in his head.[92]
```

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[88] Jahn, 'More Aspects of Focalisation', pp. 88-89, 96-97.
[89] Beaufoy, p. 62.
[90] Hare, p. 6.
[91] Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg, *The Kids Are All Right* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2011), p. 24.
[92] Minghella, p. 8.

```
It's the bad part of urban Cincinnati in the daylight:
projects and blighted row houses. Seth and Caroline walk
with a slouched, alert air. In their mind's eye they are
prep-school gangsters following a familiar route.[93]
```

Despite the fact that these scenes display different degrees of strong and weak focalisations, as not all focalisations' different facets are identifiable, they all are examples of variable focalisations. The reader is not told exactly how to visualise these scenes. It is up to the reader to decide if s/he wants to focalise Paul and Tanya in a close-up shot or whether or not it is shown what they are eating. Similarly it is up to the reader to choose if Inman swinging down from the construction and Seth and Caroline walking will be seen from far away or in close-up shots. It is most likely that the reader will visualise the scene through different focalisation points, both close-ups and wide shots. The reader thereby imagines a series of shots edited together.

In the case of screenplay texts, it is thus how free the reader is to interpret and visualise a scene that identifies the focalisations as being weak, variable, strong or fixed. The more free the reader is in his or her interpretation and visualisation, the weaker and more variable the focalisations are.

Sound focalisations are generally more fixed since the specific sounds need to be identified and explained to the reader. What exactly the sound is, on the other hand, is not always specified. This was seen in the examples of sound focalisations given on p. 220 in this chapter. Smells have not been discussed in any detail but smell 'focalisations' are the only focalisations that are more fixed in the screenplay than in the potential film. It does not matter how fixed or strong a focalisation is in the screenplay when it comes to sound and vision, the film's focalisations will always be even stronger and more fixed since every shot is clearly defined and all sounds are clearly heard. Smells, however, will never be experienced by the viewer of the film, and are therefore stronger and more fixed for the reader of the screenplay text.

7.9. Conclusion

Mieke Bal argues that description 'is a privileged site of focalization, and as such it has great impact on the ideolgogical and aesthetic effect of the text.'[94] That both the aesthetic and ideological effects of a text are greatly influenced by focalisation choices has been seen

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[93] Gaghan, p. 71.
[94] Bal, p. 35.

through how focalisations control the reader's visualisation and through how focalisations display the psychological and ideological standpoint of the focaliser. That it is of great use to any researcher to examine a screenplay text's focalisations is therefore evident.

Focalisations in screenplays can be differentiated from the focalisations of the finished film through the fact that a screenplay lacks a definite frame. The space in a film always has a frame – the frame of the screen. In screenplays a definite frame cannot be as accurately indicated, despite using very fixed focalisation points. Even though a screenplay cannot give a definite frame it can indicate what the frame should contain through its focalisation points and objects of focalisation. In screenplays, the importance therefore does not lie in defining the frame but in determining what exists within the frame and what exists outside of it. Specific focalisation points, especially if they are fixed, lead the reader to construct the potential film's frame in his or her mind's eye, which enables the writer to more or less guide the reader through the film frame by frame even though these frames might not be as definite as the film's will be. It needs to be emphasised, however, that even without fixed focalisations a reader will continuously create the frame of the potential film in his or her mind's eye. A screenplay that contains extremely few fixed focalisations is *Before Sunset* (written by Richard Linklater, Ethan Hawke, and Julie Delpy, directed by Richard Linklater, 2004). Despite this, the screenplay still indicates a frame for the potential film through where the scenes take place, if the characters are walking or sitting in a café, and through dialogue turns that focus on either character, which imply close-up shots. Considering this, even in screenplays that do not contain any clear focalisations, the scenes are still focalised by the reader. Any focalisation that the screenplay text implies or expresses, independent of the focalising agent, will become the focalisation of the reader and later the spectator of the film.

What is specified to be outside of the frame, thus not focalised, is often as, or even more, important than what is focalised. Examples of this occur in *The Constant Gardener* and *Michael Clayton*, which were mentioned on p. 214 in this chapter. These occurrences are, however, not very common in screenplays.

Another effect that focalisations have is to indicate the potential film's style. Through describing different points of view and how something is seen, a style evolves that is usually transferred to the film. Even the lack of clear focalisation points indicate a certain style, as is the case with *Before Sunset* where the focus is not on any visual effects but the dialogue and the relationship between the two characters. In the screenplay *Hurt Locker*, on the other hand, the focalisation points quickly replace each other and move from long shots to close-ups, which indicates a fast-paced action. In *The Savages* it is a case of many characterised camera

positions, as for example '`agitated hand-held`', that indicates a realistic style with a moving hand held camera.[95]

Focalisations' most important effect is, however, how they help direct the reader's visualisation. The aim for the writer is to make his or her chosen focalisations work as visual and emotional guides for the reader.

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[95] Jenkins, p. 23.

Chapter 8: The reader and other addressees

8.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the addressees of the screenplay text and answers the questions 'who do the narrating voices address?', and 'how are they addressed?' The aim is to identify the different narrating voices' addressees, and how they function in relation to the spectator of the potential film.

In the first chapter a model that displays the communicating voices and their relation to the screenplay text was presented. The receiving end of the model, however, was not considered at the time.

WRITER

EXTRAFICTIONAL VOICE

IMPERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

PERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

TEXT

FICTION
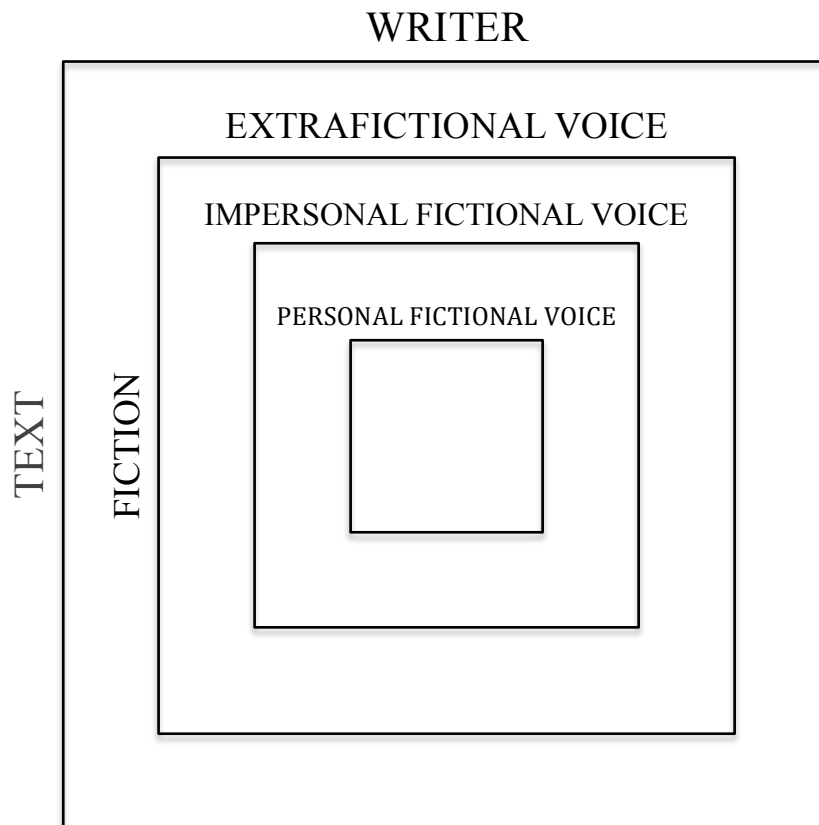
Figure 13. Communication model suited to the screenplay text.

In order to identify the terms that occupy the empty half of the model, that is, the terms that describe the possible addressees of a screenplay text, this chapter discusses terminology used by screenplay, film, and literary researchers.

In the previous chapters, one addressee has already been mentioned as it also gives information: 'we-formulations'. Not all screenplays contain 'we-formulations', however,

which shows the need to further investigate different addressees and how they function in the screenplay text.

8.2. Screenplay, film, and literature theory

When discussing research from literary theory, there needs to be a clear separation between narratological and rhetoric research since the two strands of research use different terminology for a narrative text's possible receivers. First, however, the chapter considers how screenplay researchers discuss the existence of possible addressees.

8.2.1. Screenplay research

Jean-Claude Carrière states:

> Of all writing, a screenplay is the one doomed to the smallest readership: at most, a hundred people. And each of those readers will consult it for his own particular, professional ends. Actors will often see in it only their own part (what is known as the "selfish reading"). Producers and distributors will look only for signs of its potential success. The production manager will count the number of extras, of night shoots. The sound engineer will be hearing the film as he turns the pages, while the head cameraman will be seeing the lighting, and so on. A whole series of special readings. It is an instrument, which is read, annotated, dissected – and discarded. I am well aware that some collectors keep them, and that sometimes they are even published, but that's only if the film works. Then they live on in its slipstream.[1]

As this argument by Carrière implies, the reading of screenplays is often related to its changing nature and status as a literary text, or lack thereof. Claudia Sternberg refers to screenplays' changing nature as 'literature in flux', and Steven Maras argues that the reading of screenplays is at the centre of arguments to do with the literary standing of the screenplays, despite the screenplay usually being classified as an 'unreadable' text.[2] Steven Price dismisses the argument that screenplays are unreadable:

> It was only later, as I became more familiar with film studies as a discipline, that I began to encounter the argument that because the screenplay is an industrial form, therefore it is peculiarly difficult or unrewarding to read. My experience of reading

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[1] Jean-Claude Carrière, *The Secret Language of Film* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994), p. 151.
[2] Claudia Sternberg, *Written for the Screen: The American Motion-Picture Screenplay as Text* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), p. 40.
Steven Maras, *Screenwriting: History, Theory and Practice* (London: Wallflower Press, 2009), p. 63.

unfilmed screenplays indicated that this was a non sequitur, and in that conviction lay

the seeds of the present book.[3]

Price does not, however, discuss the reader of a screenplay text further, but refers to Claudia

Sternberg's discussion of it. Sternberg carries out the most detailed and thorough discussion

of a screenplay text's different types of readers. Before examining Sternberg's readers,

however, it should be emphasised that a screenplay text, as Carrière states, is only published if

the film is successful or if the writer is known for other critically acclaimed works. This does

not mean that a screenplay lacks readers, only that the traditional reader, the reader who buys

the text in the bookstore, is not the screenplay text's main reader.

Sternberg argues that 'different types of readers are associated with the three

functional text stages: property, blueprint and reading material.'[4] The reader of the screenplay

when it is in its property stage is usually a potential buyer or investor in the screenplay, for

example a producer. A property stage reader is concerned with a screenplay's potential, its

saleability. Without a successful reading by a property stage reader the screenplay cannot

fulfil its purpose of becoming a film. Even though the reading by the property stage reader

determines the future of the screenplay, it is the blueprint reader's competence together with

the writer's competence that, according to Sternberg, determines the quality of the film to be.

This is due to the fact that the blueprint readers interact with the text and carry out the work

that transfers the screenplay text into a film. It is during its stage as a blueprint that Sternberg

identifies the screenplay text to be in its most 'varied and artistically creative phase of

reading.'[5] The least important reader of the screenplay is the reading material stage reader

since that reader neither decides the future of the screenplay nor interacts with the text.

Sternberg identifies the reading stage readers to include critics, scholars and the public.[6]

Sternberg's discussion and classification of screenplay readers is significant to

screenplay research but it is lacking in relation to possible addressees since it does not

mention any intratextual addressees – only the extratextual readers. Researchers within

narratology, rhetoric, and film theory identify, in addition to the extratextual readers,

intratextual addressees that are transferable to the screenplay text.

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[3] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. ix.
[4] Sternberg, p. 48.
[5] Sternberg, p. 50.
[6] Sternberg, p. 57.

8.2.2. Narratology

As was seen in chapter 1 of the present study, narratological communication models include both intratextual and extratextual addressees. Seymour Chatman, for example, identifies the real reader as an extratextual addressee and the narratee and the implied reader as intratextual addressees:
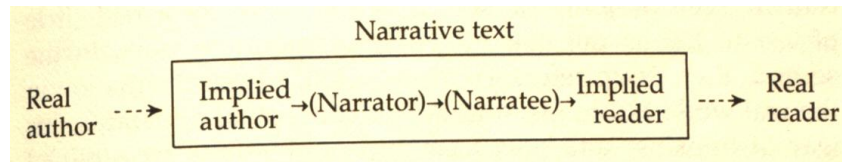

Figure 14. Seymour Chatman's narrative communication model.[7]

Chatman's identification of the narratee, the implied reader and the real reader as addressees is representative for narratologists. Gèrard Genette uses the same terms but without placing them in a communication model, and even though Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan does not include the implied reader in a communication situation, she acknowledges its existence as a narrative text's addressee.[8] Chatman defines the implied reader as 'the audience presupposed by the narrative itself.'[9] Another way of defining the implied reader is to identify it as the implied author's addressee.

The narratee is identified as the narrator's addressee, which places the narratee firmly inside the fictional story world. As is the case with the narrator, the narratee can be more or less covert depending on if it is homodiegetic or heterodiegetic, and extradiegetic or intradiegetic. A homodiegetic narratee takes part in the story that it listens to whereas a heterodiegetic narratee does not, and an extradiegetic narratee is placed outside of the story world whereas an intradiegetic narratee is part of the story world. Genette emphasises that if the narratee is extradiegetic it is impossible to differentiate it from the implied reader since there exists no knowledge about the narratee's character.[10] In the case of the screenplay, however, there is always a clear difference between the narratee and the implied reader since the implied reader in screenplays is the addressee of the extrafictional voice. The implied reader of a screenplay thereby receives knowledge that concerns the real extrafictional world whereas the narratee receives knowledge about the fictional world.

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[7] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 151.
[8] See Genette (1980) pp. 259-60, and Rimmon-Kenan (1983), pp. 88-89, 119.
[9] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, p. 150.
[10] Gèrard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 260.

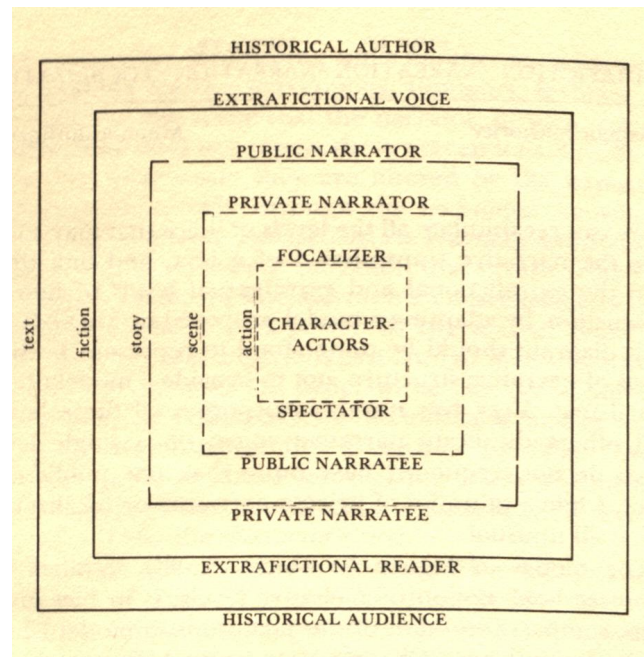Susan Lanser identifies slightly different addressees in her narrative communication model:

Figure 15. Susan Lanser's box model.[11]

Even though Lanser's terms differ from Genette, Chatman, and Rimmon-Kenan's , they can still be seen to refer to the same functions. The historical audience can be compared to the actual reader of the text, and the extrafictional reader to the implied reader – the presupposed reader that the extrafictional voice creates the fictional world for. The public narratee is placed outside of the story, thus making it extradiegetic, while the private narratee is placed inside the story, which makes it intradiegetic. In addition, Lanser also identifies a spectator that is most easily defined as the viewer of a shown event, which can be either a character or a narratee. Relating the spectator to the screenplay, the spectator can either be incorporated in the 'we-formulation' or be a character.

Despite the thorough discussions that narratologists carry out concerned with identifying the possible addressees of a narrative text, there is another set of terms available that is potentially better suited to the screenplay text: the terms suggested by rhetoric researchers.

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[11] Susan Lanser, *The Narrative Act: Point of View in Prose Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 144.

8.2.3. Rhetoric research

Rhetoricians focus on the reader's experience of a text instead of, as narratologists do, on the components of a text. Considering that it is the reader's experience of a screenplay that determines whether it will fulfil its purpose, screenplays are better suited to rhetoric examinations than other text-types.

Peter Rabinowitz distinguishes between four different audiences that a narrative text addresses: the actual audience, the authorial audience, the narrative audience, and the narratee. He defines the actual audience as the 'flesh-and-blood people who read the book', who all have independent ways of reading, which the writer cannot control.[12] Since writers cannot know their actual audience they address a 'hypothetical audience' that Rabinowitz calls the 'authorial audience', and he finds that a writer's artistic choices are based upon the assumptions that the writers make about the readers.[13] The authorial audience can be related to the narratological term implied reader, that is, the presupposed image the writer has of its intended reader. The authorial audience is thus the reader that the writer pictures when writing: the ideal reader for the text. Rabinowitz further argues that a reader will try to adopt the views that the authorial audience has in order to approach the text as the writer intended, and that to read as authorial audience therefore is 'to read in an impersonal way'.[14] The difference between the actual audience and the authorial audience is, according to Rabinowitz, either 'extrapersonal' or 'extracommunal'. 'Extrapersonal' refers to situations where the actual reader does not share in the authorial audience knowledge or beliefs (i.e. the writer assumes that the reader addressed by the text has knowledge and beliefs that the actual reader does not possess). 'Extracommunal', in turn, refers to situations where the authorial audience's knowledge and beliefs are not shared by a community.[15]

Relating Rabinowitz's authorial audience and how it can differ from the actual reader by being either extrapersonal or extracommunal (or both) to the screenplay text, it can be argued that the authorial audience (the hypothetical audience that the writer addresses) is part of a production team. If the actual reader, then, is not part of a production team, the authorial audience's knowledge and beliefs are extracommunal since the reader is not part of the film industry community. If the reader, on the other hand, does not know a reference the writer

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[12] Peter J. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 20.
[13] Rabinowitz, p. 21.
[14] Rabinowitz, p. 26.
[15] Rabinowitz, p. 26.

makes to another film or to an event, the gap between the authorial audience and the actual reader is extrapersonal.

Rabinowitz's third audience is the narrative audience. He defines it by its belief that the fictional world of the story and all characters and events within it are real. The narrative audience is the narrator's ideal audience, which in case of the screenplay text is the ideal audience of the impersonal or personal fictional voice. If the narrator has a specified audience, for example in the form of a listening character, Rabinowitz identifies that character as the narratee, that is, the receiver of the narrator's story.

Rabinowitz emphasises that readers want and try to pretend to be a part of both the authorial audience and the narrative audience in order to experience the narrative fully. The reader thus goes along with the terms set by the writer of how the text should be read and experienced. Rabinowitz further finds that for a text to be successful the distance between the actual audience and the authorial audience has to be as little as possible while the distance between the actual audience and the narrative audience can be as great as possible, but in the case of realistic fiction the narrative audience and the actual audience are fairly close.

James Phelan, in line with Rabinowitz, finds it necessary to identify different audiences and separate the intratextual audience from the extratextual audience. Phelan does not discuss the actual audience in any detail. He defines the authorial audience in his glossary but without mentioning it within the text. In the glossary, the authorial audience is defined as 'the ideal audience for whom the author constructs the text and who understands it perfectly.'[16] He finds that the authorial audience is separable from the narrative audience through its knowledge that the story with its characters and events are fictional constructs. It is the narrative audience that Phelan focuses on the most, and he finds it necessary to modify Rabinowitz's definition in order to put more emphasis on the reader. Phelan defines the narrative audience as the 'actual audience's projection of itself into the observer role within the fiction. In taking on that role, we will always become believers in the reality of the fictional world.'[17] Similar to Rabinowitz, Phelan highlights that the reader's emotional response is linked to how successful it is in merging with the narrative audience.[18] Phelan's emphasis on the reader is relevant to screenplay texts and its 'we-formulations', since 'we-

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[16] James Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric: Technique, Audiences, Ethics, Ideology* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1996), p. 215.
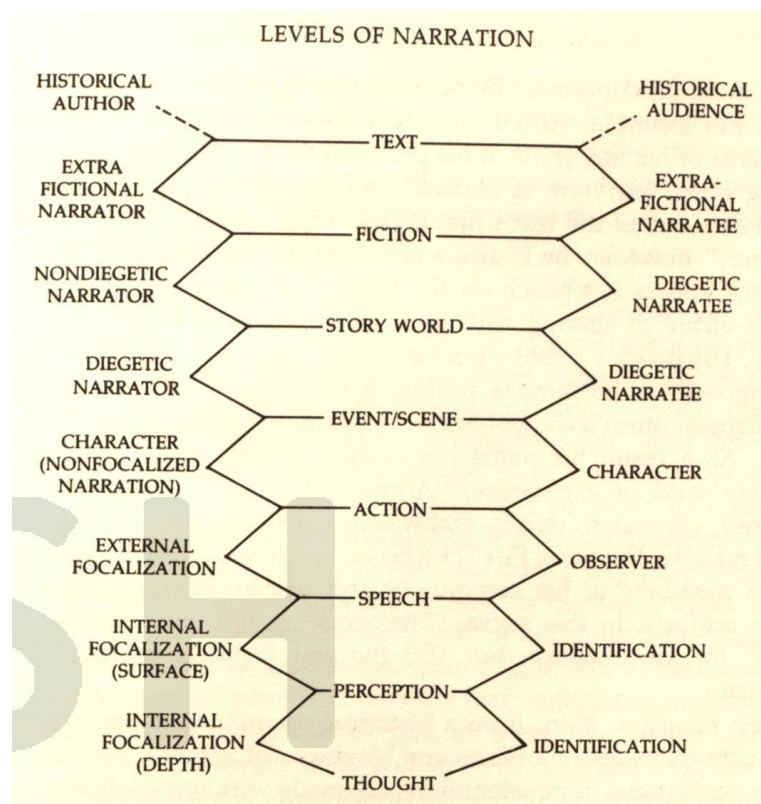[17] Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric*, p. 145.
[18] Phelan also uses the 'ideal narrative audience', coined by Rabinowitz, as a separate category that he defines as 'the audience for which the narrator wishes he were writing.' Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric*, p. 145.

formulations' purposefully combine the reader, the future spectator of the potential film, and the fictional narrating voice in one word, which accomplishes what Phelan refers to as the 'actual audience's projection of itself into the observer role within the fiction.'[19]

Phelan uses Gerald Prince's definition of the narratee, which states that the narratee is the 'audience addressed by the narrator'.[20] Phelan discusses the relation between the narrative audience and the narratee stating that the 'more fully the narratee is characterized, the greater the distance between narratee and narrative audience', but that in the case of direct addresses to the audience, the narratee and the narrative audience will coincide.[21] Again, this statement can be linked to 'we-formulations', which the chapter examines further on.

8.2.4. Film theory

Before identifying the possible addressees of a screenplay text, how the concept is discussed within film theory is briefly considered. As was seen in chapter 1 of the present study, Edward Branigan identifies the addressees in his model of the narrational levels to be the historical audience, the extrafictional narratee, the non-diegetic narratee, the diegetic narratee, the character, the observer, and identification:

[19] Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric*, p. 145.
[20] Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric*, p. 145.
[21] Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric*, p. 146.

Figure 16. Edward Branigan's levels of narration.[22]

Even though Branigan uses different terms than narratologists and rhetoricians, his terms fulfil the same functions. The historical audience can be linked to the actual/real reader or actual audience, the extrafictional narratee can be linked to the implied reader or authorial audience, the nondiegetic narratee to the extradiegetic narratee or narrative audience, and the diegetic narratee to the intradiegetic narratee. Within a scene, Branigan further finds that different characters can be the addressees of other characters, and if a scene is focalised externally the spectator of that focalisation is termed the observer. More interesting is Branigan's term 'identification' that he uses as the addressees of both internal focalisation (surface) and internal focalisation (depth). In the case of internal focalisations a character's memory, fantasy, or dream is shown in the film. The observer of the memory, fantasy, or dream thus needs to identify with the character to fully experience the focalisation. A screenplay can never show an internal focalisation as fully as a film, and a reader of a screenplay is not able to identify, and thus experience, an internal focalisation in the same way as a spectator. Extrafictional information always stands in the way of the reader of a screenplay whereas the spectator of the film experiences the focalisation directly through both images and sound effects that help their identification. Even though internal focalisations in films are just as controlled and superseded by higher levels of narrations as they are in screenplays, the spectator of a film will experience the focalisations more directly, thus the higher levels of narrations stay more covert.

Film theorists Eva Laass and Markus Kühn hold more classical narratological views. Laass identifies the audience, the implied narratee, the explicit narratee, and characters to be the addressees of a film. She highlights that the explicit narratee (as well as the explicit narrator) is optional. Her implied narratee is defined as an 'anticipation of the historical viewer in the future reception of the film.'[23] Laass's terms are relatable to the narratoloigcal terms narratee, implied reader, and real reader.

Kühn, similar to Laass, identifies the addressees to be the real spectator, the implied spectator, the extradiegetic narratee, characters as addressees and/or observers, and optional metadiegetic narratees:

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[22] Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 87.
[23] Eva Laass, *Broken Taboos, Subjective Truths: Forms and Functions of Unreliable Narration in Contemporary American Cinema* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2008), pp. 23-24.
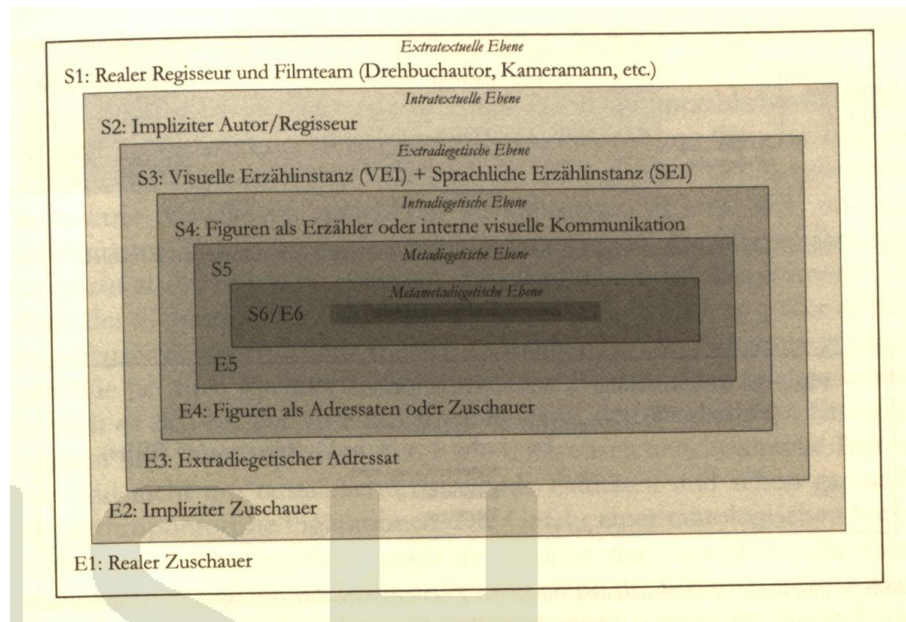
Figure 17. Markus Kühn's narrative communication model.[24]

The only difference between Kühn and Laass is that Kühn differentiates between the extradiegetic and the intradiegetic narratee as well as emphasising that a character can observe a focalisation.

8.3. Possible addressees in screenplay texts

Despite the fact that the different research strands use different terms, how the terms function in relation to the narrative text and the addressers are similar. The chosen terms for screenplay text addressees are shown in the completed communication model below:

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[24] Markus Kühn, *Filmnarratologie: Ein Erzähltheoretisches Analysemodell* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), p. 85.

WRITER

EXTRAFICTIONAL VOICE

IMPERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

PERSONAL FICTIONAL VOICE

TEXT

FICTION

SCENE

CHARACTERS

FICTIONAL AUDIENCE

FICTIONAL AUDIENCE

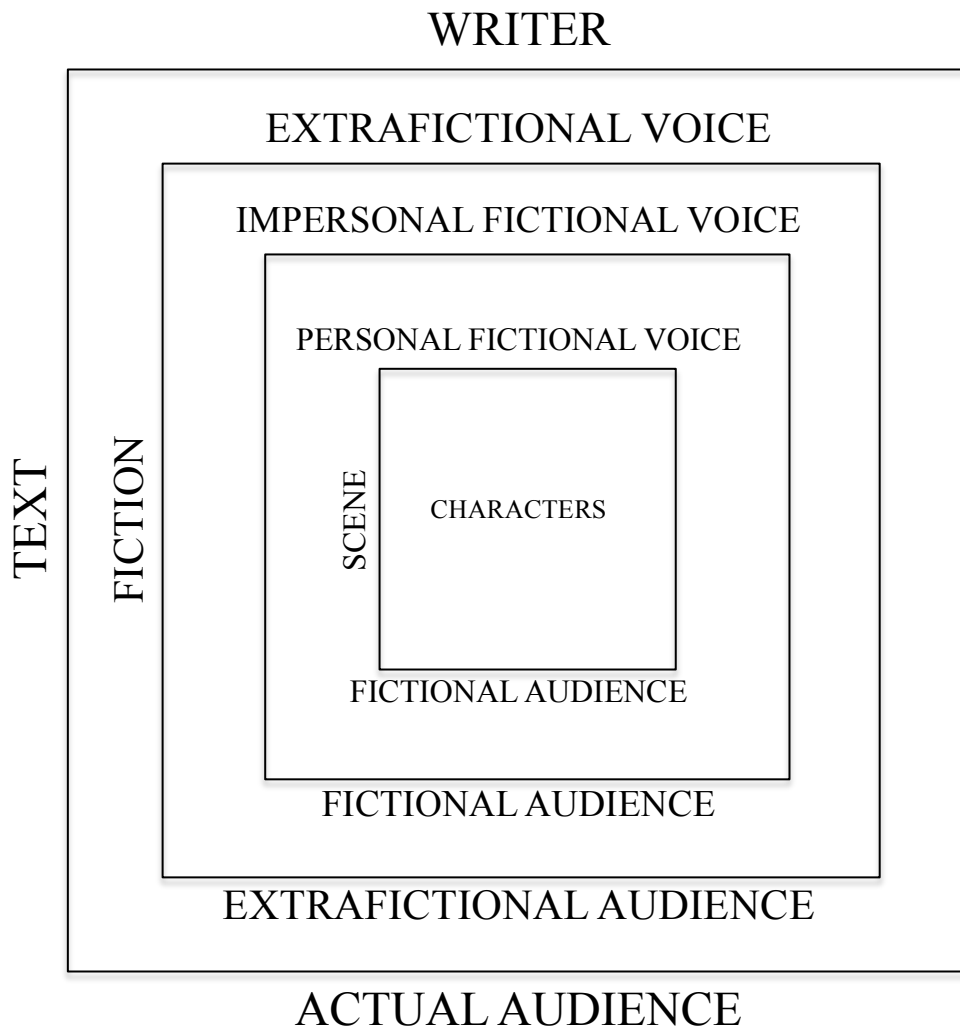EXTRAFICTIONAL AUDIENCE

ACTUAL AUDIENCE

Figure 18. Complete communication model suited to the screenplay text

As can be seen, all terms except actual audience and characters are specific to the screenplay text. The actual audience refers to the flesh and blood reader that reads the screenplay text. The extrafictional audience refers to the intended reader, that is, the reader that the writer has in mind when writing. The extrafictional audience can thus be defined as the rhetoricians' authorial audience: The extrafictional audience is the ideal audience for whom the writer constructs the text. The fictional audience relates to the rhetoric term narrative audience and the narratological term extradiegetic narratee. The fictional audience is identified through its belief that the fiction is real, and it is firmly located within the fiction. Phelan's argument that the narrative audience is the 'actual audience's projection of itself into the observer role within the fiction', also holds true for the screenplay. It is necessary for the actual reader of the screenplay to put her- or himself in the position of the fictional audience in order to experience the story more fully; if the reader does not believe in the fiction as real, the reader

will not be able to experience the story completely. The fictional audience is the preferred audience of the impersonal and personal fictional voices.

Screenplay texts very rarely contain a personified fictional addressee or audience in the form of a listening narratee. If there is a characterbound personal fictional voice the addressee of that voice is usually not defined. It is, for instance, unclear who Juno is addressing in her voice-overs in *Juno* (written by Diablo Cody, directed by Jason Reitman, 2007). If there is a clear addressee it is usually a character that addresses another character. This is the case in *Slumdog Millionaire* (written by Simon Beaufoy, directed by Danny Boyle, 2008) when Jamal tells his story to the Constable. Considering, however, that the audience receives information that Jamal does not possess, in the case of *Slumdog Millionaire* the impersonal fictional voice overrides the personal fictional voice, which leads to the conclusion that the fictional audience is the target addressee, not the Constable.

The changes to the terms are made to better relate the addressees to the addressers, the givers of the information. This is in order to make it clear who addresses whom and on what narrative level the addressees are situated. The extrafictional audience is clearly positioned inside the text but outside the fiction, whilst the fictional audience is situated inside the fiction as well as inside the text. Each of the addressees is examined in more detail below.

8.4. Actual audience

When discussing the actual audience of the screenplay text, Sternberg's three reader categories are very useful. As was stated earlier, the most important reader of the screenplay is the property reader as it is the property reader that determines whether or not the screenplay will be made into a film. Considering that it is relatively common that a writer signs away their rights to the screenplay when a producer buys it, the property stage of the screenplay is sometimes the only time a writer gets paid for his or her work, unless they have a percentage in the future film's revenues. Whereas films and novels depend on a wide audience and readership, the screenplay is in fact only dependent on one reader for its success and for the writer to get paid. It can even be undesirable for a screenplay during its property stage to be read by too many readers since the film industry usually wants a project to be kept secret as long as possible to avoid similar projects being developed.

Even though it might be the property stage that is the most important for a screenplay, many writers do care what happens to the screenplay after they have sold it to a producer, and it is also relatively common that a writer gets paid half of their fee when the screenplay is completed and the other half when the film is in production. The blueprint stage reader is

therefore also important to the writer. It is, after all, the blueprint stage reader that actually makes all the aesthetic choices, which determine how the potential film will appear on the screen – how the writer's words will come to life on the screen. If the film becomes a success, the writer will share in that success, even if not through receiving a percentage of the revenue. Writing a successful film will lead to more opportunities for the writer while an unsuccessful film is likely to impede the writer's future career. Considering that the number of successfully filmed screenplays rather than sold screenplays measure a writer's success, the blueprint stage of the screenplay critical to the writer.

The reading stage reader is, however, without a doubt the least important reader for the screenplay writer. This reader is usually in no position to further the writer's career, and since the rights to the screenplay often lie with the production company at this stage, the writer might not get a share in the profits of the sold published screenplay. It is also fairly common for a published screenplay to be a transcription of the film instead of the original work by the writer. This is for instance the case with the screenplay to *Atonement* (written by Christopher Hampton, directed by Joe Wright, 2007). In the foreword Christopher Hampton states:

> A word about the text itself: what you have in your hands is a transcription, made after the event, of the finished film. The dozens of scenes that fell by the wayside like exhausted soldiers on their way to Dunkirk had their place in the overall scheme of things, but to include any or all of them might seem like a criticism of the completed object: the film *Atonement*, of which this is the written record.[25]

That a highly acclaimed screenplay like *Atonement* is not published in its original state is unfortunate since it yet again implies that the screenplay text is worth less than the finished film and does not have any literary value in its own right. If the reader would have liked a record of the film, the film is widely available, but it is only the screenplay that could have shown how the film differs from the original text and what artistic choices were made by the director, producer, and other members of the production team.[26]

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[25] Christopher Hampton, 'Foreword' in *Atonement* by Christopher Hampton (New York: Newmarket Press, 2007), p. viii.
[26] This tesis includes quotes from the published screenplay *Atonement* despite it being a transcript of the film, since the quotes still show how a screenplay can indicate focalisation points.

8.3.2. Extrafictional audience

The extrafictional audience of a screenplay is defined as the ideal audience for whom the writer constructs the text. The screenplay is unique in that it has a very clear extrafictional audience, which is the same for all screenplays. Novels and films have different 'ideal readers' depending on their genre, the story, and so on. If it is a children's film or novel the extrafictional audience are children. Even though the potential film has different extrafictional audiences, screenplays always have the same ideal reader: the property reader that is in a position to produce the screenplay. When writing, however, the writer will not only write to the ideal reader of the screenplay but also with the ideal spectator of the potential film in mind, and the ideal spectator of the potential film differs greatly between screenplays. How the text is written is thus dependent on the extrafictional audience of the screenplay, but the story and characters are developed with the potential film's future spectator in mind. If there is not a clear 'ideal cinematic audience' indicated in the screenplay text, the property reader will most likely not produce the film since its cinematic success is uncertain. The writer thus has to write not only to the screenplay text's extrafictional audience but also to the potential film's extrafictional audience.

The extrafictional voice addresses the extrafictional audience, and the information communicated focuses on the visualisation of the potential film – how it should be produced. The special format of the screenplay can be explained through the extrafictional audience. The writer clearly writes to a person within the film industry that understands the screenplay's particular format. If the extrafictional audience were not a member of the film industry the screenplay format would not need to be that strict. It is, as Rabinowitz finds, the assumption made by the writer about the reader that determines the writer's artistic choices.[27] A screenplay writer therefore usually makes the assumption that the reader wants a screenplay in its typical strict format. In some cases, however, the writer writes to a specific reader, for example a producer or a director that they know, in which case the writer follows the format less rigidly. That this occurs is seen in low-budget film productions where screenplays often are written for a specific director or in collaboration with a director who wants to be more 'free' during the film production. Jill Nelmes find that 'the bigger the budget, the more tightly controlled the production process becomes because more money is at stake.'[28] J.J. Murphy similarly states that 'one of the most interesting trends in recent independent cinema has been

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[27] Rabinowitz, p. 21.
[28] Jill Nelmes, *Writing the Screenplay: The Expert Guide* (London: Robert Hale, 2012), p. 26.

for film-makers to avoid using traditional screenplays in making their films.'[29] Murphy
further concludes that '[l]argely because they have always expressed ambivalence towards
industrial conventions, independent film-makers owe no allegiance to the written page.'[30]

Even though the extrafictional audience is a member of the film industry in the case of
low-budget independent screenplays, the format can be considered to be more free since the
extrafictional audience in these cases differs slightly (in that it is more accepting of new and
different styles of writing) from the standard extrafictional audience.

Another interesting case where the extrafictional audience differs slightly from the
standard one is when a director writes his or her own screenplay. In that case the director is
addressing him- or herself. S/he is the ideal and intended reader, which means that the
extrafictional audience is the writer. It should be remembered, however, that if the screenplay
goes into production the other blueprint readers will also need to understand the screenplay.
The writer, even though writing for him- or herself, therefore needs to keep the standard
extrafictional audience in mind as well.

Independent of whether or not the actual reader is part of the film industry, in order to
understand the communication by the extrafictional voice the actual reader needs to become a
part of the extrafictional audience. Otherwise all the information that concerns the production
of the potential film is not received accurately, and the communication fails. In order for the
screenplay to fulfil its purpose the actual reader thus needs to successfully read as the
extrafictional audience and receive the clues about how to visualise the potential film in her or
his mind's eye.

If the actual reader does not understand the communication by the extrafictional voice,
there is a gap of knowledge that identifies the reader to be either extrapersonal or
extracommunal, that is, the reader does not possess the knowledge of the extrafictional
audience or the reader does not share in the extrafictional voice's community's knowledge
and beliefs. The most obvious gap of knowledge in the case of the screenplay's extrafictional
and actual audience has to do with the screenplay format and its many abbreviations (EXT,
INT, POV, and so on), which not all actual readers understand. These are not the only
instances however. The actual reader might also not agree with the extrafictional voice's
visualisations of the story or in its ethical message. The ideal reader of *The Hurt Locker*
(written by Mark Boal, directed by Kathryn Bigalow, 2009), for instance, is open to Mark

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[29] J.J. Murphy, 'No Room for the Fun Stuff: The Question of the Screenplay in American Indie
Cinema', *Journal of Screenwriting*, 1.1 (2010), pp. 175-95 (p. 176).
[30] Murphy, 'No Room for the Fun Stuff', p. 193.

Boal's view of the Iraq war, which might not be the case, especially if the actual reader has spent time in Iraq and has had a different experience of the war than the story of *The Hurt Locker* shows. The ideal reader of *Burn After Reading* (written and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen, 2008) and *Inglourious Basterds* (written and directed by Quentin Tarantino, 2009) appreciates the black humour and the violence that is portrayed throughout the screenplay texts, but there will be readers that do not share in that sense of humour nor enjoy how the violence is shown.

That the actual reader might choose to visualise the story in a different way than the extrafictional voice directs him/her to is clear considering how few point of view shots get filmed the way they are proposed. Michael Arndt states that 'Dwayne's view out the window is one of several POV shots I wrote into the script. None of them, I believe, were filmed. The lesson here is that you direct a film with a camera, not a typewriter.'[31] It is important to remember that even though the actual reader might not agree with the visualisations described by the extraficitonal voice, the visualisation cues are not in the screenplay to be followed to the letter but to make the reader picture the story in a filmic way. If, however, there are too many visualisation cues that the actual reader objects to, the reader is unable to successfully join the extrafictional audience, and it is likely that the screenplay will not fulfil its purpose of becoming a film. This is possibly the reason behind the instruction given by screenplay manuals that writers should avoid using too many camera positions and specific point of view shots, as this can disrupt the reader if the reader does not agree with the chosen viewpoints.

8.3.3. The fictional audience and the character

The impersonal and personal fictional voices address the fictional audience, which is identified through its belief that the fictional world is real. The fictional audience thereby receives all fictional information of the story. As was mentioned before, there are few explicit and personified narratees in screenplay texts that are not characters who are part of the story. There were no examples of a specified narratee in the present study's screenplay selection. The closest thing to a specified narratee is the 'we-formulation', the frequent usage of which is unique to the screenplay text format. Chapter 4 concluded that we-formulations can work as a substitute for the camera, as an editor, an invisible seeing, feeling, reacting, and thinking agent, as well as a spectator of the potential film. It was defined as the fictional narrator and the fictional narratee put together, viewing the potential film. It was emphasised that the

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[31] Michael Arndt, 'Scene Notes', in *Little Miss Sunshine*, by Michael Arndt (New York: Newmarket Press, 2006), pp. 111-17 (p. 114)

concept is not real since it does not refer to the real writer or to the real spectator. The reactions, thoughts, and feelings of the 'we' that are expressed in the text, are the reactions that the writer ideally wants the reader or spectator to have when reading the screenplay or viewing the potential film. The 'we' thus not only incorporates the fictional audience and the fictional narrating voice but also the extrafictional audience of the screenplay and the ideal audience of the potential film. In order for the reader to experience the text fully, or to successfully receive the information given, the reader needs to not only merge with the extrafictional audience and the fictional audience, but also with the ideal spectator of the potential film.

Asking the reader to merge with both the extrafictional and the fictional audience, however, leads to complications. When merging with the extrafictional voice, the reader is constantly reminded of the production of the film in the real world, but when the reader merges with the fictional audience the reader needs to forget the real world and believe in the fictional world. It is thus impossible to simultaneously merge with both the extrafictional audience and the fictional audience, yet this is exactly what is demanded of the screenplay reader. How the writer addresses the extrafictional and the fictional audience in the text is therefore of great importance since it either helps or hinders the reader merge with both the fictional and the extrafictional audience.

The 'we-formulation' might be the most clearly specified fictional audience in the screenplay text but it is not the only overt audience. How overt or covert the fictional audience is varies between screenplays. A voice's overtness can be determined through examining if the audience is referred to as an agent (as in the case of the 'we-formulations), and/or whether the audience is prescribed any specific reactions, thoughts, or feelings. The following example from *United 93* (written and directed by Paul Greengrass, 2006) shows an overt audience since the audience is referred to as an agent as well as having specific reactions:

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We begin to have an unnerving sense of their utter
disengagement from the polite rituals that attend
our 21st century lives.[32]
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A screenplay that on the other hand contains a very covert fictional audience is *Before Sunset* (written by Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke, directed by Richard Linklater,

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[32] Paul Greengrass, *United 93: Screenplay and Commentary* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2006) p. 13.

2005). The screenplay contains very few and very short action texts, which do not give any information about the fictional audience and how they might react.

Screenplay texts that contain reflective comments also display a more overt fictional audience as the comments often give some information that indicates how the audience should react, or what the audience should notice. This is seen in *Sideways* (written by Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor, directed by Alexander Payne, 2004):

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Maya searches through her purse for her keys while
Miles hovers directly behind her, staring at her
ear. Her ear?[33]
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The reaction to Miles staring at Maya's ear can be linked to both the impersonal fictional voice and to the fictional audience: the impersonal fictional voice wants the fictional audience to notice Miles's odd focus on Maya's ear.

The addressee also becomes more apparent through direct addresses, that is, when a character speaks directly into the camera. This study's screenplay selection does not contain an example of a direct camera address, but *Amèlie* (written by Guillaume Laurant and Jean-Pierre Jeunet, directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet, 2001) is an example of a screenplay where the main character continuously addresses the camera. More recently, the main character Francis Underwood in the American TV-series *House of Cards* (developed and produced by Beau Willimon, 2013) addresses the camera directly and gives the spectator inside information about himself and the political world. It is important to highlight that in the case of direct addresses in a screenplay text the addressee is not actually the reader, as can be the case in novels through 'dear reader' addresses, but rather the future spectator of the potential film. Direct camera addresses thereby function in a similar way to 'we-formulations' as it addresses the fictional audience as well as the future spectator of the film.

Any character can at any point become the teller of a story. The addressee is then usually another character. Dreams and hallucinations by characters, on the other hand, which are shown to the reader and the spectator of the potential film, do not have a clear addressee since they are not shown to another character. The only receiver of that information is the fictional audience.

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[33] Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor, *Sideways: The Shooting Script* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2004), p. 108.

8.4. Conclusion

Considering that it is the reader of a screenplay text that decides whether or not the screenplay will fulfil its purpose of becoming a film, examinations of that reader and possible intratextual addressees are important. This chapter presents a terminology for screenplay texts' addressees, which differs slightly from the terms used in film and literary theory. The addressees are the actual audience, the extrafictional audience, the fictional audience, and the characters.

The actual audience consists of three different kinds of readers: the property reader, the blueprint reader, and the reading stage reader. The three different types of readers read for their own purposes and in different ways depending on if the screenplay is in its property, blueprint, or reading stage. These three reading stages are not specific for the screenplay text-type but are the same, or at least very similar, in the case of novels. An author of a novel first sends the novel to a potential buyer (the publisher), the novel then goes through an editing stage where the text is rewritten and refined, before finally reaching the published stage where it is bought and read by the reading stage reader. What differentiates the screenplay from the novel, however, is that the reading stage reader for the screenwriter is the least important reader while the author of a novel depends on the reading stage reader's opinion.

The extrafictional audience is defined as the ideal audience for whom the writer constructs the text, which in the case of the screenplay text is a reader situated within the film industry who understands the specific format of the text. The main difference between a screenplay text's extrafictional audience in comparison to a novel's or a film's extrafictional audience is that the extrafictional audience is the same for all screenplays: a member of the film industry that can transfer the screenplay text into a film. A writer of a screenplay needs to not only write to the screenplay text's extrafictional audience, but also to the potential film's extrafictional (ideal) audience. A producer would not be likely to invest in the potential film without the film having a clear ideal audience that the film can be marketed towards. The writer can to a certain extent disregard both the blueprint stage reader and the reading stage reader, but a writer can never disregard the spectator of the potential film.

The fictional audience is always separable from the extrafictional audience through its belief that the fictional story world is real. The writer can indicate what feelings the fictional audience should experience while reading through reflective comments and prescribing the audience specific reactions. This is usually, but not necessarily, accomplished through the use of 'we-formulations'.

In order for a reader to experience the story fully s/he has to merge with both the extrafictional and the fictional audience: S/he has to merge with the extrafictional audience in order to successfully understand the format and the allusions to the potential film, and s/he has to merge with the fictional audience in order to fully experience the story on an emotional level. The actual reader being asked to merge with both these audiences involves a contradiction since the reader is reminded of the fact that the screenplay is situated in a production process while simultaneously being asked to believe in the fictional story world.

It is relatively common for characters to become narratees addressed by other characters, especially in the case of a story in a story, which is the case in *Slumdog Millionaire*. It is even more common, however, that a character's narratee remains unknown, especially in the case of a character's voice-over narration. It is never stated who the characters Charlie Kaufman and Susan Orlean address in *Adaptation* (written by Charlie Kaufman, directed by Spike Jonze, 2002), or who Joel's voice-over addresses in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (written by Charlie Kaufman, directed by Michael Gondry, 2004).

It is surprising that screenplay researchers have not carried out more examinations of the screenplay reader and possible addressees. Especially considering that it is the reader that determines whether or not a screenplay will fulfil its purpose of becoming a film.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to have a clear focus on the text since the text, in most cases, is the only way for the screenwriter to communicate the potential film to an investor. The future of most screenplays depends on the success of that text-based communication. Considering the aim of the thesis, the use of a communicational approach that enables a close examination of all the different communicating voices that exist in screenplay texts appeared to be the most suitable. Through proposing a communication model suited to the screenplay text-type, the different communicating voices could be placed on different hierarchical levels that show their relation to the text, the fiction, and the other voices. The use of a communication model also allowed for a very clear structure to the thesis where each voice, starting with the voice situated on the highest level of the communication model, was examined in turn, which further clarified the voices' position in relation to the text and the fiction.

Even though text-based screenplay research has been carried out before, the communication approach as well as the focus on the narrating agents, that is, the communicating voices, is unique for this thesis. In existing screenplay research, the concept of narration is often mentioned briefly but without identifying the source of that communication, that is, the voice responsible for the narration; or, as is the case with Claudia Sternberg's research, the argument is inconsistent.[1] This thesis thus offers an important contribution to the screenplay research field as it chooses to focus on concepts that are either not discussed (the implied author, focalisations, intratextual addressees) or not discussed in detail. Through introducing the communicational approach to the screenplay text-type, this thesis also presents a new research method that not only is applicable to screenplay text research but also to research that focuses on the screenwriting process during a film's development stage. Even though this thesis follows the strand of research that focuses on the text, the aspiration is that it can be a step towards bridging the gap between the two research strands.

The examination of each communicating voice sets out to fulfil two purposes: defining the communicating voice in relation to the screenplay text, and showing how it appears and functions in current screenplay texts. One of the most important arguments of this study, which not only provides a tool for identifying the different voices but which also is crucial in the examination of the voices, is that a screenplay text needs to communicate both the story as well as how the potential film should be visualised. This double purpose of the

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[1] See pp. 101-02 of the present study.

communication is argued to be one of the defining features of screenplay texts, which helps separate the screenplay from other text-types, such as novels and films, that only need to communicate the story.

The becoming of a film is the purpose of screenplay texts. The first chapter argues that a screenplay, in order to fulfil that purpose, needs to communicate the story as well as visualisation indications to a reader who is in a position to put the screenplay into production. In order to examine how this communication functions and appears in screenplay texts, a communicational approach applicable to the screenplay text is introduced. The review of existing communication models from literary and film theory leads to the presentation of a communication model suited to the screenplay text, which comprises the identified communicating voices that exist in screenplays. The voices are identified through their position in relation to the text and the fiction, and through the kind of information they provide the reader with. The identified voices are the writer, the extrafictional voice, the impersonal fictional voice, the personal fictional voice, and the characters. The writer is situated outside of the text and uses the text as a means of communication. The extrafictional voice is situated inside the text but outside of the fiction, it communicates extrafictional information (information concerned with the real world where the production of the film will take place), and it can communicate in scene headings and in the scene text. The impersonal fictional voice is situated inside the text as well as inside the fiction, it communicates fictional information (information about the action and the characters), and its communication only takes place in the scene text. The personal fictional voice is situated inside the text as well as inside the fiction, it communicates fictional information, it communicates through a voice-over that appears in the dialogue section of the screenplay, and its narration takes place at a different time and place to where it appears in the text. The characters are situated inside the story, the fiction, as well as the scene of the action, and they communicate through their dialogue, through shown embedded narratives, as well as through free indirect discourse in the scene text. Each of the chapters either focuses on defining a voice in relation to the screenplay or examining how the voice appears and functions in the screenplay text.

Chapter 2 focuses on defining the writer and the extrafictional voice. The term 'extrafictional voice' refers to the implied writer's textual representation, and the term 'implied writer' refers to the image of themselves that the real screenwriter(s) create, intentionally or unintentionally, which gives an indication of their attitudes and beliefs. The implied writer's main task is to communicate, through the extrafictional voice, how the potential film should be visualised. The concept of the implied writer is much debated and

discussed within both literary and film theory. The majority of film researchers oppose the concept. This thesis argues that the implied writer and its extrafictional voice is especially suited to the screenplay text. This is due to the fact that the writing situation of a screenplay often is complicated and unclear, since both collaborations between writers and uncredited rewrites by so-called ghost-writers are very common. The name on the cover of a published screenplay does therefore not always give a true representation of the writing situation. Even in cases where there is only one writer, members of the production team give their input during the film's development stage that lead to numerous rewrites of the screenplay text. In the case of published screenplay texts, these changes have usually been incorporated in the text, which leads to the conclusion that the created implied writer cannot be solely ascribed to the writer. Any examination of how the implied writer differs from the real writer's first draft of the screenplay to the shooting draft would thus show how the film's development process influences the image of the writer that exists in the text. Considering that the writer of a published screenplay is not the sole creator of the implied writer, the difference between the real writer and the implied writer is often greater in screenplays than in novels or stage plays. Because of this, the concept is more useful to screenplay researchers than researchers of other text-types. What also makes the implied writer of screenplays unique compared to other text-types is that, through the extrafictional voice, it can communicate directly to the reader throughout the text. This communication consists of direct indications of how the potential film should be visualised through references to the real extrafictional world – mainly through camera directions and production notes.

The extrafictional voice (chapter 3) carries out four functions that take place along four axes of communication: reporting the action along the axis of facts, characters, and events; interpreting the action along the axis of perception and understanding; evaluating the action along the axis of ethics and evaluation; and alluding to the potential film along the axis of indication and visualisation. The implied writer's alluding function is the easiest to discern since the allusions often are communicated directly while the other functions are communicated indirectly. In the chapter it is highlighted that the communication of the extrafictional voice takes place alongside, or on top of, the communication by the impersonal fictional voice. How these two voices exist simultaneously is another unique feature of screenplay texts. The chapter emphasises that a reader's construction of the implied writer is influenced by how much the reader knows about the real writer(s) of the screenplay as well as where in the production process the reader is placed.

This thesis presents a clear definition of the concept of the implied writer in relation to screenplays, but that is only the first step. The complicated writing situation of screenplays offers researchers a rare opportunity to examine exactly how the image of the implied writer changes between different drafts, how much the implied writer differs from the real writer, and what implications this has for the communication of the potential film.

Despite the fact that many literature and film researchers argue against the existence of an impersonal fictional narrator, chapter 4 argues that it is a valid concept in relation to screenplays. The impersonal fictional voice is the narrating voice that provides the reader with information about the fictional story world (actions, characters, and locations). It is the voice's specific purpose of communicating fictional information that makes the voice valid in relation to screenplays, since it thereby can be separated from the extrafictional voice that communicates extrafictional information. As already mentioned, the co-existence of the extrafictional and the impersonal fictional voice distinguishes the screenplay from other text-types. This makes their simultaneous communications the more interesting and important to examine. How the extrafictional and the impersonal fictional voice appear in the text leads to different distancing effects for the reader. If the screenplay text contains many direct allusions to the potential film by the extrafictional voice, that is, camera directions and production notes, the reader is placed further away from the story, as the direct communication by the extrafictional voice continuously reminds the reader of the fact that the story is fictional and intentionally created by a writer. If, however, the extrafictional voice remains more hidden and it is the impersonal fictional voice that carries out most allusions to the potential film through detailed descriptions, the reader is able to focus more easily on the fictional story and can experience it directly in his or her mind. If the extrafictional voice is more overt through giving numerous camera directions, the reader is instructed to visualise the potential film from a director's perspective. This can be compared to the impersonal fictional voice's use of 'we-formulations' that instruct the reader to visualise the potential film from a future spectator's perspective.

Chapter 4 defines the personal fictional voice as the voice that has a specific origin and communicates fictional information through a voice-over. The personal fictional voice is the only fictional narrating voice that will be heard in the potential film. The voice can either be bound to a character, thereby taking part in the story it tells, or it can be non-characterbound, thereby only existing as a narrating voice-over. The personal fictional voice is the most easily identified and recognised of the narrating voices, as it only communicates through its voice-over in the dialogue section of the screenplay text. It is also more

straightforward because it can be heard in the potential film and no other voices overlap with it. The information given by the personal fictional voice is often backed up by both the impersonal fictional voice's communication as well as the extrafictional voice's communication in the scene text.

It is through examining how the impersonal and the personal fictional voices communicate along the four axes of communication, and especially how they use explanatory, interpretative, evaluative, and reflective comments, that they can be characterised (chapter 5). The more the fictional voice comments on the action and the characters, the more perceptible, communicative, and self-conscious it becomes, which makes it easier to identify and characterise. According to the rules, or guidelines, set out by screenwriting manuals, the impersonal fictional voice should not use any kind of comment as the comments mainly consist of so-called unfilmable information. The impersonal fictional voice should only report the actions and give brief descriptions of the characters and the locations. It should also only allude to the potential film through specific and brief descriptions of actions and details. Anything that draws attention to the impersonal fictional voice is regarded as superfluous and unwanted by the manuals, as it both draws the attention away from the story as well as communicating unfilmable information. This thesis argues that established writers do not follow these guidelines and rules, which is shown through numerous examples from recent screenplay texts. The writers do not adhere to the manuals' rules for one main reason: to ensure that their vision of the story and the potential film is successfully communicated. The writers' priority is to ensure that the reader understands their communication, and therefore the writer will do everything s/he can to guarantee that the communication reaches the reader – including the use of comments, direct allusions to the potential film, and detailed character descriptions. Steven Price's emphasis that 'even if the script contains material that cannot be filmed, it can still be read' is important to keep in mind, since it highlights that certain information can be used when the screenplay text is transformed into the film even though it cannot be filmed.[2] Character descriptions are good examples of this as they provide the actors with information that help them understand the character they are portraying. Explanatory comments that reveal why a character is acting a certain way can also help the actor understand the character. Allusions that indicate how the potential film should be visualised can help the reader picture the potential film, as well as understand the writer's vision of the film. Through the numerous examples shown of instances where writers 'break the rules' of

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[2] Steven Price, *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 126.

the manuals, it is evident that a writer priorities a successful and clear communication of the story over the advice given by the manuals. Writers thus use all the means available to them that can help them communicate the potential film.

Chapter 6 discusses characters as narrators rather than speakers. Even though characters mostly narrate through their dialogue turns, there are two other ways for the characters to communicate: through free indirect discourse in the scene text and through a shown embedded narrative where the character can be seen as being responsible for the scene text. It is through using free indirect discourse that a character's thoughts are communicated to the reader without having to resort to the use of a voice-over. Manuals, however, advise against any thought descriptions in the scene text as they consist of unfilmable information. As with the use of comments, the majority of professional writers do not adhere to the manuals' advice as giving a character's thoughts can highlight an event and clarify what it means to the character. Shown embedded narratives, on the other hand, are not only accepted by the manuals but encouraged, since a shown embedded narrative uses the filmic media and does not contain any unfilmable information. Shown embedded narratives are either brief or long, but even though they appear to be solely told by a character, that is, through a character's perspective, the embedded narratives often contain information that the character cannot possibly possess. The embedded narrative should then be attributed to the impersonal fictional voice instead of the character. The chapter also emphasises that where a character narrates his or her thoughts through a voice-over, that voice-over needs to be clearly separated from the voice-over by a characterbound fictional voice. This can be achieved through the fact that a character's voice-over narration stems from the character when that character appears in the scene, while a characterbound personal fictional voice's voice-over stems from a different time and place. It is thus the immediacy of the character's narrations that defines it and separates it from the characterbound personal fictional voice.

That the term focalisation has been so rarely mentioned within screenplay research is surprising considering the importance of the reader's visualisation of the potential film, which is often provided through the use of different focalisation points. Examining how the different narrating voices focalise the story makes it possible to analyse not only how they influence the readers' visualisations of the story but also the readers' visualisations of the potential film. Chapter 7 argues that all narrating voices except the personal fictional voice can focalise the events of the story. Focalisations by the extrafictional voice most often take the form of direct camera directions. The impersonal fictional voice focalises through both 'we-formulations' and descriptions, and even though characters can focalise, their focalisations are described by

the impersonal fictional voice or the extrafictonal voice in the scene text (e.g. he looks at her, David's POV, etc.). It is mainly through how a character focalises another character or an object that an emotional connection between the focaliser (the character) and the focalised object can be created, which in turns leads to a stronger emotional reaction in the reader. Character focalisations that indicate an emotion, however, often depend on a comment by the impersonal fictional voice that explains how the character focalises the other character or object. As already mentioned, manuals advise against the use of explanatory comments as they contain unfilmable information. Since film theorists examine how a character focalises, it evidently is possible for an actor to show how something is focalised, which indicates that an actor can read how something should be focalised in the screenplay text and then act it on camera. A screenplay should be able to explain a focalisation as this increases the reader's emotional response to the story, thus giving the reader a response that is closer to the future spectator's response to the potential film. Through using more or less strict focalisations, the reader's visualisation of the potential film is more or less controlled by the screenplay text, but a screenplay can never be as strictly focalised as the film, since the finished film always has a definite frame. The importance of the reader's visualisation of the potential film cannot be stressed enough, especially considering that some of the readers will actually need to create the film, and for them the focalisations can function as a visual guide through the story.

The last chapter of the thesis, chapter 8, focuses on the receivers of the communications by the narrating voices. Each voice's addressee is identified and defined in relation to the screenplay. The writer's addressee is the actual audience, that is, the real reader that reads the screenplay text. In the case of a screenplay's actual audience, the readers can be separated into three categories depending on when they read the screenplay: the property stage reader is a potential buyer or investor of the screenplay that reads the screenplay before it goes into production; the blueprint stage reader is a member of the potential film's production team and will be one of the readers that transform the text into the film during its production; the last reader is the reading stage reader that reads the screenplay after it has been produced.[3] For most text-types, such as films and novels, it is the final reader, the reading stage reader, who is the most important, as the success of films and novels depend on a large audience. In the case of the screenplay, however, the reading stage reader is the least important, since the success of the screenplay instead depends on the property stage reader

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[3] The terms are taken from Sternberg (1997), p. 47.

who buys the screenplay and moves it into production, as well as on the blueprint stage reader who transforms the text into the film.

The extrafictional voice's addressee is identified as the extrafictional audience, that is, the ideal audience for whom the writer constructs the text. The screenplay as text-type is unique in that it has a very clear extrafictional audience that is the same for all screenplays: the property reader that understands the specific format of the text and has the power to move the screenplay into production. The thesis argues that the writer not only needs to write to the ideal audience of the screenplay but also to the ideal audience of the potential film, since without the existence of a clear ideal spectator the property stage reader will probably not invest in the screenplay as it then lacks a clear audience. The examination of how the screenplay text's extrafictional audience differs from the potential film's extrafictional audience, and how the writer is forced to handle that difference, is a unique aspect of the screenplay text, which needs to be further researched as it can shed light on why a writer chooses a specific writing style or focuses on a specific aspect of the story.

The fictional voices' addressee is the fictional audience who is the receiver of all fictional information. In order for the real reader (the actual audience) to experience the story completely and thereby regard it as real, the reader needs to merge with the fictional audience, that is, to put him- or herself in the position of the fictional audience. For the reader to understand the specific format of the screenplay text-type, however, the reader must also merge with the authorial audience, and in order to visualise and receive the story the way it is meant to be received, the reader needs to merge with the ideal spectator of the potential film. It is impossible for the reader to merge with the extrafictional audience, the fictional audience, as well as the ideal spectator of the potential film, considering that the reader in order to merge with the fictional audience has to forget the real world where both the extrafictional audience and the ideal spectator is placed. It is exactly this impossible position that the reader is put in that makes the screenplay text's addressees and their relation to each other and the communicating voices interesting and significant concepts to examine. This thesis takes the first step towards a complete examination of the possible addressees of screenplays, but further examinations are needed.

The next step

The clearly defined terminology and communication approach proposed in this thesis can be used for future screenplay research. If the approach is applied to different versions of a screenplay text as it goes through the development process, the analyst is able to discern how

and why the narrating voices and their communications change. Applying the approach to the development process would also unite the two strands of screenplay research, that is, the strand that researches the screenwriting process and the strand that researches the screenplay text, since the discernable changes can be linked to how members of the production team give their feedback on the screenplay and require certain rewrites.

The approach can also be used within adaptation studies to examine how the narrating voices' communications change from the source text (e.g. a novel, short story, etc.) to the screenplay text, and on to the film. This would allow the analyst to discuss the different text-types' specific demands on the narrating voices and how that changes the communication of the story.

Other possible ways in which the approach can be used to study screenplay texts are to compare how different writers use the narrating voices, how the voices appear in different genres, and how the voices differ between independent screenplays and blockbusters. Using the approach when looking at screenplay texts through a historical perspective, it is possible to perceive how the screenplay text has changed in its communication of the story and the potential film. The possibilities of the approach used in this thesis are infinite, and this thesis is the first step of research that focuses on the communication aspect of screenplay texts.

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