UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

CINEMATIC DIALOGUE, LITERARY DIALOGUE, AND THE ART OF ADAPTATION

Dialogue metamorphosis in the film adaptation of *The Green Mile*

A Pro Gradu Thesis in English

by

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Department of Languages
2004

For my parents
Virve and Jarmo Rauma

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA
KIELTEN LAITOS

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Pro gradu -tutkielma

Englannin kieli
Syyskuu 2004   140 sivua + liite

Tutkielman tarkoituksena on eritellä elokuvadialogin adaptaatiota ja selvittää samalla kirjallisen ja elokuvadialogin eroavaisuuksia. Tutkimus vastaa kysymyksiin: Miten adaptoija tekee elokuvadialogia? Mitä tämä kertoo kirjallisen ja elokuvadialogin eroavaisuuksista? Mitkä ovat tulosten valossa implikaatiot dialogin suoran siirtämisen suhteen näiden kahden median välillä? Alkusysäyksen tutkimukselle antoi näkemys, jonka mukaan kirjallinen dialogi olisi suoraan siirrettävissä elokuvaan. Näkemys jättää kuitenkin huomiotta medioiden erilaisuuden, lähinnä visuaalisen kontekstin mukanaan tuomat sisällölliset erot sekä elokuvadialogin konventiot. Tutkimus kuuluu adaptaatiotutkimuksen piiriin ja se vastaa tarpeeseen saada tutkimustietoa populaarikirjallisuuden pohjalta tehdyistä adaptaatioista.

Tutkielma käsittelee adaptaatiota prosessina siten kuin se on lopputuloksista pääteltävissä. Kyseessä on tapaustutkimus, joka koskee Stephen Kingin romaania *The Green Mile* ja Frank Darabontin samannimistä käsikirjoitusta ja elokuvaa. Adaptaatio on jaettu kahteen vaiheeseen: käsikirjoituksen tekeminen ja elokuvan kuvaaminen. Näin ollen esille nousevat konkreettisesti toisessa vaiheessa puhuttuun kieleen siirtymisestä seuraavat eroavaisuudet elokuvadialogissa. Samalla vältetään adaptaatiotutkimukselle tyypillinen orjallinen takertuminen lähtöteoksen sisältöön kun keskiössä on kirjallisen teoksen sijasta elokuvakäsikirjoitus.

Tutkimusmetodit ovat sekä kvantitatiivisia että kvalitatiivisia. Määrällisen analyysin pohjalta voidaan tehdä johtopäätöksiä adaptatiivisten transformaatioiden yleisyydestä. Laadullinen analyysi puolestaan paljastaa vuorosanojen ominaisuudet ja funktiot konteksteissaan ja antaa viitteitä motiiveista muutosten takana. Lähtö-kohtana toimii käsikirjoitus, jonka vuorosanojen alkuperä selvitetään vertaamalla sitä romaaniin. Toisen adaptaatiovaiheen dialogimuutokset eritellään vertaamalla puolestaan käsikirjoitusta elokuvaan. Näin saadaan esiin yksittäisen vuorosanan "elinkaari".

Tulokset osoittavat, että suora dialogitransferenssi on vähäistä. Ainoastaan 6,0 prosenttia elokuvan vuorosanoista on siirretty suoraan kirjallisesta lähteestä. Sitä vastoin erilaiset adaptatiiviset transformaation muodot ovat merkittävässä osassa adaptoijan työssä. Yleisimmät muodot ovat inventio, uudelleenmuotoilu, elaboraatio ja tiivistys. Tämä puolestaan tukee teoreettisen viitekehyksen pohjalta asetettuja olettamuksia, joiden perusteella elokuvadialogi ja kirjallinen dialogi ovat siinä määrin toisistaan poikkeavia, että transferenssin todennäköisyys on pieni. Näin ollen voidaan esittää, että elokuva-adaptaatio ei ole dialoginkaan osalta niin yksinkertainen toimitus kuin usein on oletettu. Lisäksi tulokset antavat viitteitä käytännön eroavai-suuksista kirjallisen ja elokuvadialogin välillä. Tämä kenttä puolestaan tarjoaa monipuolisia vaihtoehtoja muun muassa kielitieteelliselle jatkotutkimukselle.

Asiasanat: cultural studies. film adaptation. dialogue. popular literature. mainstream film. motion picture. screenplay. narration. audiovisual context. language. style.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The present thesis is both a quantitative and qualitative look at the dialogue in the adaptation process moving from the novel *The Green Mile* (1996) to the screenplay and the motion picture *The Green Mile* (1999). The goals of my study are to find out how screenwriter-director Frank Darabont reshaped the novel dialogue into cinematic dialogue when writing the screenplay and subsequently to examine the development of the screenplay dialogue during the process of filming the motion picture itself. In other words, the thesis aims to reveal the course of film adaptation in terms of dialogue. The emerging dialogue "arch", in turn, poses interesting questions on the differences between literary and film dialogue. To bring the dialogue arch into view and further examine its implications on dialogue transferability in film adaptation, I will conduct a comparative study between the novel, the published screenplay and the finished motion picture.

The field of study in question is that of adaptation studies. Novels have been adapted into films since the beginnings of sound cinema when closer to one hundred percent of all feature-length films were adaptations (The Writing Studio 2001-2004, n.p.). The contemporary tendency is that over fifty percent of feature-length films for both the screen and television are adaptations of novels, short stories, plays or non-fiction journalism (ibid.). Altogether, up to 25 percent of all feature films have been literary adaptations (ibid.). Furthermore, academic research on adaptations has been conducted for decades, mostly from the literary point of view. Conversely, Bluestone's pioneering work in 1957 began the theorising from the film studies viewpoint. In all, the studies have been largely conducted within a loose theoretical framework, the research much based on subjective assumptions and conjectures, with a varying degree of success and resulting insights. The theorising so far has included models of medium-specificity ("novels can/cannot do this, films can/cannot do that"), categories for adaptations based on how "faithful" they are to their source texts, and what elements found in novels are directly transferable to film and what require proper adaptation, or 'adaptation proper' to use McFarlane's (1996) term. Much of the theorising is based on a comparative approach (i.e. novel vs. film), in which it is rather easy to dismiss the unique properties of the adaptation and simply regard it as a 'version of the book'. In this context, it is notoriously easy to remain content with examining how well, or badly, the filmmakers are able to "reproduce"

the novel visually. As will be shown below, a forcefully pluralist approach to film adaptation has taken over the field since mid-1990s, and researchers have found an abundance of new ways of looking at film adaptation. Consequently, adaptation studies as a field appears to be expanding now more than ever.

As Cardwell (2002) and Naremore (2000), among others, have noted, the persistent view over the years has been that adaptation studies also works perfectly as a field of battle in addition to it being a field of study. That is to say, adaptation studies is a complex field with opposing views presented by scholars looking at the issue from the viewpoint of literature and, conversely, from the point of view of film. Sadly, film adaptation has been often perceived as challenging the authority of the "intellectual subject" promoted and maintained by the literary field in that it submits the literary work to the predatory forces of mass consumption and entertainment business. This notion, combined with the view of the superior status of the written word to the image, has led to seemingly incessant disputes over the fidelity issue: whether or not the film is faithful to its source and whether or not it desecrates the "original". Still today, a polarisation between the literary standpoint and film studies exists.

Around the mid-1990s, however, a potent wave of reform seemed to sweep over many of the researchers in adaptation studies. Consequently, they started to fully realise that there are certain factors hindering the development of research in the field. Of course, the problematics had existed for decades, and they had been by all means acknowledged, but in the 1990s several writers on the subject began to voice their opinions perhaps more loudly than before. McFarlane (1996), Cartmell et al. (1999), and Naremore (2000), among others, noted that the more or less compulsive adherence to the question of the fidelity of a film to its literary predecessor constricts views and prevents a more fruitful discussion on film adaptation. One of the points of attack was the fact that thus far adaptation studies had been – and still is – largely conducted from an "English lit." perspective, as Whelehan (1999:17) articulates it. According to Whelehan, this might be the main reason why the literary texts are still so vehemently privileged over their filmic adaptations. In addition, this perspective has led to rhetorics which explicitly state in the following vein that an adaptation is a 'reduction' or that it 'simplifies' the novel while it 'mauls' the 'original' by 'inevitable compromises'. The 'English lit.' view on film adaptation also often results in implying that adaptations seem necessarily to do "violence to the original"

(McFarlane 1996:71) and that the best a film can do is present the skeleton of a novel (Giddings 2000:38). This "awakening" of so many scholars to the realisation of the problems plaguing the field led to a fresh call of new ideas and consequently introduced a plethora of novel ways of looking at film adaptation. Since mid-1990s, then, the field has been further diversified by the introduction of cultural, sociohistorical and ideological traditions of criticism as well as, for example, theories on identity construction in adaptations by feminist and psychoanalytic criticism. In other words, adaptation studies today are a vastly pluralist field with seemingly endless possibilities for new viewpoints and interpretations.

With reference to the "battlefield" situation described above, the field of adaptation studies has traditionally been flooded with case studies examining the differences between a novel and a film, the final conclusion being that they are, indeed, different and usually the ultimate judgment being passed is that the book is somehow better. In addition, much of the research thus far has concerned film adaptations made of canonised works of literature by writers such as Shakespeare and Austen. Because the literary work is highly esteemed and respected, it has been easy for both academics and critics to demand "fidelity" and "respect" towards the "original" – after all, one would not want to commit sacrilege on the canonised work of art by adapting it carelessly to a comparatively young, visual medium characterised by mass consumption. The insistence that the literary predecessor is of unsurpassable value and that the film adaptation is automatically a simplified and reduced, inadequate version of the source text, a 'skeleton', if you will, has subsequently been deemed elitist and irrelevant, if not plain harmful, by several researchers. The persistent assigning of unquestionable value and authority to literature and classical authors over the film medium and its aesthetics and conventions, has prompted many theorists and researchers to call for different type of adaptation research. For example, Naremore (2000) and Cartmell et al. (1999) call for research conducted on popular novels instead of canonised works to gain a fresh perspective and new insights to the field of study. This is one of the calls the present thesis is indeed answering.

Another aspect to which I hope to contribute with my thesis is that of the screenwriter's input. So far, little attention has been paid to film adaptation from the

point of view of adaptation *process*[1] where the screenplay stage would be taken into account as well. Based on my observations, even the current research in the field ignores the screenplay and neglects the participation of the screenwriter in the adaptation process. Indeed, Kozloff (2000:14) maintains that "the importance of screenplays and screenwriters to the final film has been obscured". She is discussing film dialogue in general, however, not from the point of view of adaptation. Yet, her remark clearly suits the present field of study. Moreover, Stillinger (1991:167, 177) points out that the screenwriter is still today a "largely unrecognised contributor" within the filmmaking culture in which the director, as opposed to the principal writer, is identified as the author, unlike with stage dramas. In my view, the notion is perfectly analogous to the situation with film adaptations, in which the question of authorship (outside the legal prescriptions) is perhaps an issue even further complicated by the addition of the novelist or other writer to the equation. Undeniably, what is striking in the field of adaptation studies is that it, almost without exception, juggles itself between two poles: the novel and the film, perhaps a remnant of the auteuristic view which glorifies the author and attributes everything in a motion picture to the director's work. Whelehan (1999:3) points out that in adaptation studies in general, there has been much problematising on which is the "appropriate" amount of attention that researchers need to pay to each medium (here fiction and film) when studying adaptations. I agree that this is a highly relevant issue, since adaptation studies is a field somewhere between literary studies and film studies and the middle ground is indeed a grey area. However, in my view, there is something worth looking into there in the shades of grey: the screenplay. I believe that we should be considering the screenplay as well, and that, in this particular case, we might gain a deeper understanding of the art of adaptation through intricate analysis of the dialogue in all of the three modes: novel, screenplay and motion picture.

Moreover, what I have found particularly striking is the lack of research conducted on the very aspect that, more often than not, can be found in both literature and cinema: dialogue. In film studies in general, as Kozloff (2000) repeatedly acknowledges, dialogue has been considered peripheral. In her view, the

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[1] I am using the word 'process' as explicated by Cardwell (2002:10): "This does not mean that the focus is on the task of writing and producing a screen version of a novel" but that the examination "is necessarily concerned with 'what happens when one adapts' – that is, the process of adaptation as it can be perceived in its end-product."

reasons behind this practice are related to perceiving speech or dialogue as feminine (and excessive talk as trivial) and visuality and action as masculine and meaningful (Kozloff 2000:11, 14). Indeed, respected film theorists like Arnheim, Eisenstein and Kracauer openly disdained dialogue for reasons such as the apprehension that it would restrict montage and camera movement (Kozloff 2000:6-7). In addition, their fear was that dialogue would distract the camera from capturing the "natural world", make cinema into "canned theatre", and encourage "too much attention to character psychology" (ibid.). Furthermore, Lotman (1989:18) points out that words have been considered "bad", as vehicles of lies and betrayal, and historically they have often met with fierce antagonism, already in the antiquity. Moreover, even as recently as in 1991, David Mamet (as quoted by Kozloff 2000:8) voiced his opinion on film dialogue as follows: "Basically, the perfect movie doesn't have any dialogue. So you should always be striving to make a silent movie".

Similarly, signification in film has been studied for decades, but dialogue is hardly ever mentioned and in effect never quoted in the analysis (Kozloff 2000:90). The implication, then, is that the so-called cinematic grammar remains monolithic "regardless of the presence (or absence) of dialogue" (ibid.). Interestingly, also with adaptation studies, minute analysis conducted on dialogue is practically nonexistent as well. Customarily, we only encounter remarks on dialogue when the researcher has found 'much of it' to have been lifted straight out of the novel or, contrastingly, 'brutally butchered'. No one, however, has provided a detailed description of *what* exactly this dreaded butchering means, and considered the motivations behind it. In similar vein, no examples are provided to back up the assertion that the dialogue is, in fact, directly transferred. Consequently, we have no concrete proof that those lines *are* in the film truly exactly as they are in the novel. Perhaps we might find slight differences there, if we only bothered to take a closer look.

The present thesis, then, examines what goes on in dialogue in the process of adapting a novel into a motion picture, when we move from novelistic dialogue to the dialogue in a screenplay to the dialogue that exists in the finished film and is spoken by actors. My aim is to study dialogue adaptation in practice and examine its implications on dialogue transferral and ultimately on the specifics of cinematic dialogue as opposed to literary dialogue. What originally sparked off the present study, was a notion that there are two aspects in the novel that are directly transferable to film: plot structure and dialogue (Major 1997; Lahdelma 2003; see

also Lotman 1989:52).[2] In terms of dialogue transferral, having a background in linguistics, I suspected that this assertion is not only simplifying and somewhat mistreating the very concept of film adaptation itself but also inaccurate in that it utterly dismisses the explicit differences between literary dialogue and film dialogue. Dialogue in literature symbolises speech whereas film dialogue *is* speech (i.e. spoken), and further still, it is highly structured, constructed and stylised according to specific film dialogue conventions. As McKee (1997:389) plainly notes, when it comes to dialogue, film is not a novel. In addition, others, including Brady (1994) and Seger (1992) have pointed out that adapting a novel is not such a straightforward task in terms of dialogue.

As referred to above, the question of fidelity of film adaptations to their literary precedents has had a powerful impact on the development of adaptation studies. In fact, instead of development, we perhaps should be talking about *undevelopment*. The present study decisively leaves the question of textual fidelity aside insofar as one might see it as a merit to be sought after in film adaptation. Therefore, the main aim is to, if not refute then at least question the conception that literary dialogue would be transferable to the screen as such. As opposed to this, it seems to me that it is a highly simplistic view of adaptation to suggest that the adaptor could simply transfer the dialogue from a novel onto screen. This conception not only dismisses the inherent differences between literary dialogue and cinematic dialogue, but also discredits adaptation as an art form in itself, not to mention denies the adaptors their artistic enterprise and creative input. I believe there is a strong basis for treating literary dialogue and cinematic dialogue as distinct features and hence casting doubt upon the notion of simple dialogue transfer. This will become apparent below when I lay down the theoretical framework for the present study.

To say a few more words on the methodology at this point, the analysis will include aspects of both quantitative and qualitative study. First, I will be examining how Darabont has written the dialogue in the screenplay in relation to the novel. How exactly has he made use of the lines of literary dialogue? What happens to the dialogue as it is developed into cinematic dialogue? I suspect that, based on issues suggested by the theoretical views presented below, we might be able to detect

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[2] There is, however, a view according to which the *plot* is not transferable, but the *story* is (McFarlane 1996:23), and Hunter's view that a *story* can be told in any number of different *discourses* (quoted in Speidel 2000:133).

certain marked patterns in the process of adapting dialogue, such as shortening lines or reassigning lines to another character in the film. Moreover, I will be comparing the lines of dialogue in the screenplay to the finished motion picture, examining what kinds of developments the lines undergo in the last stage of film adaptation. In all, I hope to be able to draw conclusions on adapting dialogue in general and what this implies of the differences between literary dialogue and film dialogue in practice as well as the existence of simple dialogue transfer based on this particular case of film adaptation. Furthermore, I hope to underscore further the process nature of film adaptation by showing that there are, indeed, vast differences between the dialogues in the three modes and that much goes on in the text as the actors finally turn the written dialogue into speech. *The Green Mile* would indeed seem an ideal object of study since it is generally considered – whether one likes or agrees with it or not – to be a 'faithful adaptation' (e.g. Darabont 1999b:backcover). Hence, the implication is that the dialogue would echo this fidelity as well, and the adaptor would have made use of the direct transferral of lines from the novel to the screenplay and finally to the motion picture itself. Therefore, as shown above, the present thesis aims to contribute something to the ever-expanding field of adaptation studies in more than one way, hopefully opening up many interesting suggestions for further study along the way.

To lay down the structure of the thesis itself, I will first present the theoretical framework needed for the present study. It includes aspects of dramatic dialogue in general but also dialogue particular to literature, theatre and film, the emphasis being on cinematic dialogue as that is the one to which the adaptor is ultimately aspiring. In addition, I will touch on the subject of adaptation in practice as well as questions of mainstream cinema narration in relation to storytelling, and hence the properties of dialogue and its functions. This will be conducted under the heading 2.4 Views on Adapting Dialogue, which includes views from both sides of the coin: those doing the adaptation and those studying and evaluating it, that is, the researchers and critics. I will then proceed to describe the data and the analytic framework. That is to say, I will introduce the Stephen King novel, as well as the screenplay and the motion picture by Frank Darabont and say a few words on the methodology. I will then move on to the comparative analysis itself, first examining the differences in dialogue between the screenplay and the novel and subsequently those between the

screenplay and the finished film. Finally, the thesis closes with discussion on the findings and suggestions for further study.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

With my thesis examining film adaptation, I am looking for answers to the following questions: What goes on in the course of film adaptation in terms of dialogue? How do the lines develop into cinematic dialogue? What *is* this cinematic dialogue and how exactly does it differ from literary dialogue in practice? And finally, what are the implications on direct transferral of dialogue in film adaptation? The theoretical framework for the present study includes questions of dialogue in literature and film as separate entities. This is because in my view they should be considered as such, for they have significant differences (e.g. functional, conventional or aesthetical) between them, as will be explicated thoroughly below. In my handling of the dialogue modes, I will emphasise cinematic dialogue, as it is the format film adaptors have as their objective. The theoretical framework of the thesis aims to clarify the similarities of form, function and conventions of the two modes of dialogue, but also point out the vast differences that exist between them, mainly resulting from the visual subtext that cinematic dialogue carries with it. Furthermore, I shall touch on dialogue of drama to illustrate some aspects of cinematic dialogue and explicate on the differences between the two spoken forms of dialogue surrounded by a visual context. In addition, I will say a few words about some aspects of mainstream cinema narration, which, in turn, interact with film dialogue and its conventions. I have also included aspects of film adaptation in practice. That is to say, I will present the kinds of views and guidelines on dialogue adaptation certain textbooks offer to screenwriters wanting to adapt a literary work. I do this in order to present the different kind of stand that adaptors take (or are advised to take) to adapting dialogue. Indeed, some adaptation critics and theorists have expressed their own, often strikingly contrasting views on what adapted dialogue *should* be like. What the viewpoints of practical guides will show is that what adapted film dialogue seeks to be does not in general coincide with what many critics would want it to be. Consequently, the realities of filmic dialogue in terms of adaptation do not

necessarily reach the researchers and the academics who often view the situation from a literary perspective.

In the two first paragraphs of his short essay on some of the differences between novel and film, Major (1997, n.p.) points out that there are "apparent similarities between plot, characters, and dialogue", but that film and literature work differently in terms of their methods for creating subjectivity and guiding audience attention (a process he refers to as 'enunciation'). This leads to film inevitably presenting its source text differently. He notes that it is often tempting to look at "faithfulness" when comparing film adaptations to their source texts in terms of what he calls "duplication" of plot, characters and dialogue (ibid.). Moreover, according to Major (ibid.), while these elements are the most noticeable to be translated onto the screen, they are essentially insignificant in determining the differences between written and filmic presentations and the unique properties of each. He argues that like plot and characters, dialogue can be effortlessly reproduced on film, "for those three elements do not constitute the unique properties of literature" (ibid.). Major sees the preceding three elements as literary storytelling devices. According to him, film uses those same devices for the same purpose, thus making them shared conventions of the two media that are indeed transferable (ibid.).

Below, I will show that this, in fact, is not the case. While the two modes share the three above-mentioned elements which have roughly the same functions in each of them, profound differences do exist between cinematic and literary dialogue and to assume that they would be directly transferable, is to brush aside the unique properties of film dialogue, often at the expense of unnecessary aspiration to textual fidelity. I term the objective of textual fidelity as unnecessary and I do so partly to preserve the adaptor's right for personal artistic creativity. However, as we shall see, this is only one side of the complex issue: direct transferral of dialogue has often led to filmic failures and even commercial disasters, partly because the dialogue has ended up sounding 'literary' or 'bookish'. Yet other reasons exist for treating cinematic and literary dialogue as separate entities, and they will be tackled below.

2.1 Literary Dialogue

Leaving aside the screenplay for a while, the clear-cut difference between literary dialogue and film dialogue is that the former is written and the latter spoken. This distinction, however, dismisses the fact that both of them are highly stylised. As will

be shown below, neither of them is "conversation", or even attempts to be. Moreover, neither of them is any more "real" than the other. Yet they both, in their own distinct ways, try to lead the reader or viewer to perceive them as such: as non-stylised, non-scripted, real-life interaction between people.

Rimmon-Kenan (1983:54) asserts that a 'scene' in literature is a piece of text where story-duration and text-duration (i.e. the time it takes to read the text) are "conventionally considered identical", and that the purest scenic form in literature is dialogue. In addition, Rimmon-Kenan (1983:106), following along the lines of Socratic tradition, points out that dialogue in literature is mimetic (as opposed to diegetic), the writer trying to "create the illusion that it is not he who speaks". According to Rimmon-Kenan (ibid.), dialogue, monologue and direct speech are mimetic, whereas indirect speech is diegetic. Moreover, dialogue is a "rendering of language in language", that is, every word on the page seemingly standing for a word voiced in the story world (Rimmon-Kenan 1983:52). Therefore, dialogue in novels is generally direct discourse, a 'quotation' of a character's words. This creates the illusion of pure mimesis, but in reality, such speech representation is "always stylised in one way or another" (Rimmon-Kenan 1983:110). That is to say, we are always presented with the dialogue as mediated by the narrator who "arranges" the story for us to read. Here Rimmon-Kenan follows in the footsteps of Genette (as quoted by Rimmon-Kenan 1983:108), who asserts that no narrative text can imitate the action it conveys. This is because "all such texts are made of language and language signifies without imitating. Language can only imitate language, which is why the representation of speech comes closest to pure mimesis" (ibid.). Closely related to this, Palmgren (1986:218) suggests that dialogue and the stream of consciousness technique are narrative modes which imply the author's objectivity and are used by authors aiming to masque their very presence in the literary work (i.e. 'pure mimesis'). Yet, the narrator is ever-present and even dialogue and stream of consciousness technique in literature exist only as mediated by the narrator.

Palmgren (1986:205) defines literary dialogue as one of the basic modes of narrating, others being, for example, description, narration and the stream of consciousness technique. According to Palmgren (1986:213), dialogue never exists on its own in an epic text. She goes on to assert that this applies also to literature with exceptionally large amounts of dialogue (ibid.). Rather, dialogue is surrounded by the epic scene, which consists of narration, dialogue and description and it has

characters in a conflict with one another, thus creating an intense scene reminiscent of a scene in a play or a film (Palmgren 1986:210). Indeed, Bordwell (1985:158) says of a scene, referring to it as "the building block of classical Hollywood dramaturgy", that it is about character action and, furthermore, it is intrinsically constructed, including exposition, struggle, and it has a function of continuing or closing-off cause-effect developments while at least one line of action remains suspended in order to motivate the next scene. Palmgren (1986:399) echoes this, maintaining that also theatrical dialogue is bound to both situation and personae: dramatic dialogue presents the situation and leads to another one, but also creates situations. She goes on to say that a scene's function in literature as well is to move the plot forward by twists and climaxes of action, the dialogue most often being direct interaction between the characters, "not dialogue put forward by the narrator" (Palmgren 1986:210, 212). While one could argue that even though the narrator does not identify the speaker immediately by "said X", to which Palmgren seems to be referring here as narrator's mediation, the narrator is still present and "arranges" the lines of dialogue for the reader. Palmgren's point seems to be that the epic scene has a greater feeling of immediacy than novels usually do, since the narrator pulls back and puts the characters forward while "the speech and actions are usually in present tense" (ibid.).

As functions of literary dialogue, Palmgren (1986:213) lists the following: exchange of thoughts and information, characterisation (both in fiction and drama) involving laying out the character's disposition, thoughts, motives and attitudes towards life. Palmgren (ibid.), however, points out that dialogue in literature is only a part of characterisation since we learn much also from the narrator's commentary. It might be said here that the case is such in film as well: the mise-en-scène, the visual appearance of the actor, the quality of the voice and so forth are obvious components of characterisation in the motion picture context. In addition, according to Palmgren (1986:213), literary dialogue can be, by revealing information and character motives, "a means of advancing the plot or moving forward the narration towards the end climax". Moreover, it can carry the theme and reveal underlying symbolic contents (ibid.). The modern novel, however, instead of relying on dialogue and monologue, employs the stream of consciousness technique to present the thoughts and the inner world of a character (Palmgren 1986:214).

As will become apparent below, cinematic dialogue shares the functions of literary or dramatic dialogue. The audiovisual context, however, plays an important part in shaping the dialogue, and yet other medium-related factors originate additional dialogue functions. Moreover, there are significant differences between cinematic dialogue and dramatic dialogue, many of which result from the degree of realism in the two media.

2.2 The Dialogue in an Audiovisual Context

Novels do not give us photographic images of real people. Reading a book, we do not see bodily gestures, facial expressions, hear intonations or perceive the length of pauses. A narrator might suggest these to us, but we do not see or hear them. Therefore, the above assertion by Palmgren (1986:210) that an epic scene is reminiscent of a scene in drama or film is somewhat simplistic in that it conflates narrator description with concrete visual images perhaps too effortlessly. What has been often overlooked in the adaptation studies is this obvious difference resulting from a concrete visual context which cannot but affect the dialogue in cinema. Because of the omnipresent audiovisual context, the subtext of the film adaptation renders, amongst other things, some lines unnecessary.

In general, the conceptions of film dialogue[3] are flooded with simplifications and generalisations. One might say that the lines in a film are generally shorter than in, for example, a novel, but the reasons behind this convention are often left unscrutinised. Moreover, because we are accustomed to cinematic dialogue, it sounds perfectly natural to us and hence it is sometimes referred to as being 'conversational'. In addition, for example Lotman (1989:52) concludes that cinematic dialogue is equivalent to dialogue in novels or plays and thus an indistinctive property of the film medium. However, as I will explicate below, film dialogue is not conversation, nor can it be considered equivalent to literary dialogue or theatrical dialogue, as much as they have in common. It is a breed of its own, developed over the decades after the invention of sound cinema. My focus here will be on mainstream cinema dialogue, and one should not assume that the issues raised below apply as such to, for example, art cinema dialogue. This is simply because the

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[3] Throughout the present study, I am using 'cinematic dialogue' or simply 'dialogue' to denote dialogue in mainstream film. The so-called art cinema most likely differs from mainstream cinema in its dialogue conventions, and those issues remain outside the scope of this study.

art cinema does not share the storytelling conventions of mainstream film, and dialogue naturally plays an important part in the process of storytelling.

Whereas fiction is a verbal medium, the cinema is mainly a visual medium. While this might sound axiomatic, it is surprising how unclear this division is to many film adaptation critics and theorists, and how easy it seems to be to over-simplify the nature of this drawing of line. My choice of words above implies a view on these two media that not all of the critics share. I labelled fiction simply as a verbal medium, i.e. an art form that employs words to produce meanings. However, my view of the cinema is that it is 'mainly a visual medium'. This is to say, as well as images, film has words and sound (whether diegetic sound, music or dialogue) in its signifying gear. As Kozloff (2000:14) points out, we are not only viewers, but also listeners. However, it is not unheard of that some critics seem to suggest cinema should strive for 'ideal filmicness', which equals only images at the expense of sound and hence also dialogue, or that it consists of images only. Indeed, Kozloff (2000:7) refers to this view called "the specificity thesis" and explicates that the advocates of this perspective maintain that each artistic medium should remain "true to itself" and "capitalize upon its unique characteristics". In terms of cinema, this means championing visuals over sound, especially dialogue. Kozloff refutes the specificity thesis, but there are many researchers who seem to forget that sound even exists in the cinema. Giddings (2000:46), for example, puts it rather romantically, ignoring the fact that cinema uses words as well: "While it may be true that every picture tells a story, not all stories can be told in pictures". Moreover, Selby (2000:96) contends that the filmmaker's "language and grammar is of the descriptive and the visual" and that the adaptor's (here, the director) job is to "hold together the presentation of visual content and complexity of artistic form". As Cardwell (2002:37-38) has pointed out, the assumption that film's visual nature "determines its artistic possibilities" is rooted in the failure to recognise the importance of sound in cinema. This is to say also that the word is not specific to literature. In my view, then, film is not obliged to reject the literary or the words, on the contrary. As we shall see, dialogue in film has many functions which render it, if not indispensable, then at least a very useful means of storytelling. The audiovisual context, however, has an effect on the dialogue therefore negating the assumption that, since the cinema shares verbal communication with literature, the two dialogue forms would

necessarily share their properties (which are, furthermore, traditionally defined in literary terms).

2.2.1 Theatre

One of the main reasons behind the differences between cinematic and literary dialogue, then, is that cinema comprises of not just words but also images and sounds. In other words, motion picture dialogue has an audiovisual context that the novel lacks. However, theatre is also audiovisual. Surely, we are able to observe the actors on the stage like we are able to watch them on the screen. Yet, McKee (1997:389) nonchalantly notes that film is not a novel, nor is it theatre. Furthermore, according to Bluestone (1957:28), "the first sound films erred by imitating theatrical dialogue". It certainly would be easy to equate cinematic dialogue with theatrical dialogue. After all, one could say that a film is a play, in a way, only filmed and put on screen. This, indeed, would be a simple solution to a simple-sounding problem – except that this is not the case. I will use the next few pages to point out the differences (and similarities) between cinematic dialogue and theatrical dialogue, not forgetting the comparison with literary dialogue. This will both shed light on the idiosyncrasies of dialogue in an audiovisual context and illuminate cinematic dialogue's unique features compared to the other form of spoken dialogue. There are, after all, vast differences between the two types of audiovisual surroundings which, in turn, affect the dialogue, and those will be explicated below.

The differences between cinematic and theatrical dialogue grow out of, for one thing, the different emphasis the two artistic modes put on language. Indeed, Seger (1992:39) points out that language is the key element in theatre, "a means to explore ideas", whereas the key element in cinema is the image. Moreover, in mainstream film the dialogue focuses on storytelling, while theatrical dialogue concentrates on, for example, theme and perhaps even language itself. In short, theatre is thematic, idea-oriented and language-based, mainstream film story-centred and image as well as context-dependent (Seger 1992:39-40). While one can certainly say that also theatre is context-dependent, what can be deducted from Seger's reference above is that the photographic image in films is perhaps more clearly a defining element for the interpreting viewer than the symbolic quality of theatre expression, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Dialogue in an audiovisual context largely shares the functions of literary dialogue. According to Herman (1995:10), theatrical dialogue mediates character and plot as well as thematic issues. In similar vein, Asheim (1949:122) asserts that dialogue in cinema clarifies the plot and acts as a vehicle of characterisation. Moreover, Palmgren (1986:399) concludes that dialogue indeed is the principal means of characterisation in drama. As one of the differences between literature and drama (as well as film), however, Palmgren (1986:212) states that unlike in drama, in literature dialogue is "only one of the means of representing characters and action". While this view dismisses the importance of costumes and external appearance of stage actors, as well as ignores the intense visuality of film, it nevertheless suggests the varying emphasis the different modes place on dialogue. Yet, Palmgren (1986:212) suggests that the dialogue inside an epic scene in a novel holds roughly the same position as in a scene in a play or a film. The dialogue is the basic building block of plays, and unlike in literary fiction, it carries the drama (Palmgren 1986:396, 397).

As pointed out above, the two types of dialogue with an audiovisual context and literary dialogue largely share their functions. However, there is a dialogue function that theatrical and cinematic dialogue share but which is unnecessary in literature: providing situational information. Palmgren (1986:392) asserts that neither author nor narrator is present in drama where the viewer directly encounters the characters. Clearly, this applies to film as well. There is no function of narration in drama: the characters are "produced through dialogue" (Palmgren 1986:392). Therefore, one of the most important functions of theatrical dialogue is conveying information in the absence of a narrator who would provide the situational details (Herman 1995:29-30). In other words, theatrical dialogue has a different type of informational function which grows out of a profound difference in the two media. We have moved from a written mode governed by a narrator to a visual and aural *presentational* mode where the characters and events are presented to us without explanative and informative narratorial mediation. In drama, as opposed to literary fiction where the author assumes the roles of the narrator, the author disappears behind the characters, letting them act and speak (Palmgren 1986:188). This, in turn, affects the dialogue which has to carry more information and help to clarify to the audience what goes on in the symbolic story world of the stage.

Another feature of dramatic dialogue that does not exist in the literary sphere is the question of performance and interpretation, which is ultimately projected towards an audience (Herman 1995:29). Szondi (as quoted by Palmgren 1986:392), however, asserts that just as speech in drama is not its author's speech, it is not speech directed to the audience, either. What Szondi is perhaps implying by this is that whereas the audience is an *overhearer*, the characters do not tend to address the audience directly in most types of theatrical plays. Surely, one cannot dismiss the fact that a playwright should consider the audience, not only the characters' interaction when writing a play. Furthermore, Herman (1995:13) ascertains that dramatic discourse involves the aspect of interpretation by the actor. The very performance nature of theatre (and film, of course) requires that the text be "transformed into the dynamics of spoken speech, which involve more than the recitation of the lines" (ibid.). This highlights the differences between written and spoken language. A major effect of the introduction of spoken language is the inclusion of, for example, intonation and the effect of facial expressions to the way the utterance is voiced as well as to the context of the utterance. That is to say, the visual aspect, the very presence of an actor, becomes a vessel of the subtext, as Palmgren (1986:399) also asserts. Indeed, Herman (1995:28) defines dramatic dialogue as a representation of interaction with a context, i.e. a context other than that of produced by the literary narrator who continuously guides the reader and interprets the utterances for us. Carr (1988:79) asserts that talking makes up only circa one fourth of people's social interaction, the largest part of it being nonverbal communication. Both theatre and film, then, have the advantage of presenting a human being who speaks the lines.

Therefore, dialogue in theatre is a performance and an exchange between the audience and the actor (Seger 1992:35). Indeed, one of the most valuable properties of a theatrical experience is the interaction between the actors on the stage and the audience. This is clearly different in the filmic reality, where the viewers watch acting recorded several months, even decades ago. According to Kozloff (2000:17), the absence of actors from the space immediately surrounding the viewers affects their interpretations of the lines of dialogue. Moreover, cinematic dialogue differs from theatrical dialogue in that the camerawork, mise-en-scène etc. all emphasise, obscure, select, reveal and divert the attention from various aspects in the composition so that the viewer's interpretation is affected (Kozloff 2000:16).

Moreover, as implied above, the camera lets the viewer much closer to its subject than in theatre. Indeed, Sinyard (1986:159) perceives that whereas "[t]heatrical performance is in the voice; screen performance is in the eyes". Furthermore, McKee (1997:254) points out that good actors "will not step in front of a camera without their subtext", and film actors imply the subtext mainly through their facial expressions. This, naturally, is significant in adapting for the screen. Playwright-screenwriter Alfred Uhry (as quoted by Seger 1992:45) comments on his adaptation process of the play *Driving Miss Daisy* to the screen: "I cut any dialogue that I could show rather than tell about … I kept the dialogue at a minimum". Uhry (as quoted by Seger 1992:44) maintains also that when writing for stage "you have to tell people a lot of things, but in a movie you can show them everything. You can be much more subtle in a movie than in a play". Uhry goes on to say that "A good actor in a movie has to say about a third of what a good actor has to say on the stage. So much of what they say is subtext" (ibid.).

Furthermore, Rohmer (as quoted by Palmgren 1986) has proposed three dramatic dialogue dimensions. Rohmer (as quoted by Palmgren 1986:397-8) suggests that dialogue in stage drama not only is a vehicle of interpersonal information that the characters need to have a coherent interaction, but also a means for the viewer to come to conclusions about the situation in which the characters are. As suggested above, in literary fiction the narration achieves this whereas in cinema the required information is relayed visually. Moreover, according to Rohmer (ibid.), dramatic dialogue has to open up an associative space for the viewer. By this Rohmer means activating the viewer's imagination and allowing for the conception of free associations which are unique to all individuals based on their respective histories and ideologies. In drama (and, in my opinion, also in film), this associative space replaces the ponderings of the literary narrator (ibid.). The opening up of the associative space is made possible also by the fact that the dialogue is not written as solid, logical chain of lines, but a sequence of lines with gaps for the viewer to fill (Palmgren 1986:398). In my view, this principle applies to film as well, with the further addition of cuts and editing which render the narration even more 'gapping' than the already seemingly loose network of lines of dialogue.

Moreover, Rohmer (as quoted by Palmgren 1986:398) concludes that the art of drama is not based on what is written but on what is left unwritten. He suggests that a play is the more dramatic the more economic use of words the writer has adopted

(ibid.). Herman (1995:243) echoes these notions as well, asserting that inferences and those things left unsaid can create a rich subtext. Herman (ibid.) goes on to say that "[i]mplications left to be silently constructed can be as expressive as explicit modes of speech". That is, the viewers themselves "construct" much of what is not really in the play or film but exist only by implication. It seems, then, that both theatre and cinema employ the less-is-more notion of dialogue for the above-mentioned reasons of dramatic impact and associative space. Indeed, also McKee (1997:179) maintains that the gaps are the source of energy in the story. To sum, stage drama is generally considered more auditory than visual when compared to film (e.g. McKee 1997:389, Seger 1992:39), although they are undeniably both audiovisual. Moreover, the very visual context would suggest abridgement or compression of literary dialogue when a novel is adapted to screen, both as a result of the new (visual) subtext but also to achieve greater dramatic impact.

2.2.2 The Motion Picture

Cinematic dialogue shares to a striking extent the functional principles of literary and dramatic dialogue. Yet, there are differences. Seger (1992:107) points out that whereas theatre expresses ideas principally through dialogue, "a story which is communicated mainly through words will not be cinematic". Indeed, Lindgren (as quoted by Asheim 1949:123, original emphasis) points out that theatrical play is "an art of speech and dialogue, not <u>essentially</u> a visual art". Therefore, film largely utilises visual action in order to tell a story. Yet, dialogue plays an important part in cinematic storytelling and it cannot be severed from the rest of the film without affecting its meaning. The actors' interpretation of the line, the camera movements, editing and music all play a part in the decoding of cinematic dialogue (Kozloff 2000:90). In general, when one seeks to expose the way spoken words create meanings in a film, all of these preceding elements have to be taken into account (ibid.). In other words, dialogue is in continuous interaction with the other elements in film; it does not exist separate from the whole that is called the motion picture (Kozloff 2000:64).

    Bluestone (1957:viii) asserts that whereas dialogue and, for example, music in film reinforce the photographic image, they are nevertheless "subsidiary lines in the total film composition". In addition, McKee (1997:389) notes this, asserting that the members of the film audience are 80 percent viewers and 20 percent listeners (the

figures, in his view, being the other way around in theatre). According to McKee (1997:393, original emphasis), "[t]he best advice for writing film dialogue is *don't*". He advises the screenwriter to create a visual expression whenever possible rather than simply adhere to words (ibid.). In terms of adaptation, then, this view of an inherent visuality of film suggests abandoning strict duplication of literary dialogue on screen simply on the basis that it *can* or *should* be done in the name of, for example, textual fidelity. Motion pictures have their strength, according to the views conveyed above, in the very pictures that are in constant motion.

Furthermore, Bluestone (1957:58) notes that in the novel, "the line of dialogue stands naked and alone". By this he means that the film has the spatial image to go along with the spoken word. In addition, Sinyard (1986:5) remarks that sometimes a mere movement of camera can make a line of dialogue unnecessary. Moreover, there are other implications accompanying the photorealistic visual presentation. Whereas the novel has to alternate between dialogue and narrative description, film has the advantage of being able to present them simultaneously (Bluestone 1957:127). This, in turn, is to say that the viewers construct their understanding of the narrative not on words alone like with literature, but also the visual image and the "acting face", as Bluestone (1957:58) calls the actor's appearance and visual input. What we see guides our understanding of what is being said, and the audience generally sees more in a film than in a play because of the intimacy and close proximity the camera is able to provide.

Indeed, the facial expression combined with the words uttered can make a crucial difference in terms of decoding the meaning. Consider, for example, a line of dialogue such as this: "Tony saw him". There is much we are able to make out of the line depending on whether the speaker says it with downcast eyes or with raised eyebrows and wide-open eyes. The pitch or timber of the voice need not necessarily be any different in each of the cases, but the visual cues to which we have access guide our understanding of the message and its implications. Hence, we have cinematic dialogue, which has its 'text' and its 'subtext', the latter being made inferable by the visual cues. Bluestone (1957:30) goes on to state that dialogue (as well as other sound-related factors) is "ultimately determined by and therefore subservient to the demands of the visual image". In addition, Lotman (1989:47) echoes this. What is not usually stressed, however, is that this works the other way around as well.

Kozloff (2000:6) reminds that while film theorists have long discussed signification in film, they have neglected dialogue and focused on, for example, editing and shot framing. Therefore, unlike in stage dramas, dialogue in film has traditionally been considered much more peripheral by researchers and theorists. If dialogue is discussed at all, it has been given a subordinate position within the construct of film, as became apparent from, for example, Bluestone's remarks above. Kozloff (2000:14) argues that theorists have overestimated the viewers' capability to understand films based on visual cues and editing alone. According to her, also dialogue plays an important part in the signifying process in the cinema. She, in fact, quarrels with the view expressed by, for example Bluestone (1957:viii) and Chion (as quoted by Kozloff 2000:17) that dialogue should be considered 'subsidiary to' or 'supplementing' the visual aspects of film.

So far, it has seemed that dramatic dialogue and cinematic dialogue are very much alike. There are, however, some fundamental differences between them, and those stem from the varying degree of realism in the two art forms. In general, very often the visual context of cinema and drama speaks for itself in terms of providing information. As pointed out by Herman above, dramatic dialogue has to convey some information that could be articulated by the narrator in fiction. Film, however, is able to convey this information visually more readily than drama and does not have to rely on dialogue as heavily for this function. This is due to theatre being symbolic in its presentation rather than photorealistic. In other words, we might see a bench and an actor holding a wheel posing as a car being driven along a road on a stage, but the film shows us the car on the road. This, in turn, implies dialogue modifications in film adaptation.

Indeed, Sinyard (1986), in discussing film in relation to theatre, exposes the importance of visual information in film and observes that there are some unfortunate cases of "thoughtless fidelity to the text", as in the case of screenwriter Edward Anhalt and director Peter Grenville's adaptation of Jean Anouilh's stage play *Becket* (1964). Sinyard (1986:175) discloses that "After we have seen the suicide of the King's mistress, we most certainly do not need the King's explanatory line a minute later to Becket: 'She's dead. She's killed herself. There's blood'". The case above demonstrates the difference between the realist representation of film and the symbolic representation of a stage play. Dialogue, then, has to relay more information in drama: in a play, a character has to confirm the audience that the

previous acting on the stage symbolised a suicide, whereas in film we see the character "really killing herself". Hence, it seems self-evident to assume that sometimes omission and other kinds of changes to the dialogue certainly are needed when adapting a novel or a play. When the photorealistic visual context of film explains and gives information in itself, although by no means exhaustively, dialogue can concentrate on carrying other kinds of implications and meanings.

2.3 Cinematic Dialogue

Before moving on to the specifics of cinematic dialogue and its features and conventions, it is well justified to say a few words on what cinema *is* and how the viewer decodes it, since this tells something of the position of dialogue in the total composition. The word 'decode' is perhaps not the best word to be used here, but by using it, I stress the active nature of film viewing. Cinema is a demanding art form for the viewer – even mainstream cinema, which is so often scorned for being simplistic and intellectually unchallenging – largely due to its technical factors and storytelling devices.

Bordwell (1985) has drawn a constructive account of film viewing. According to him, film viewing is a process that stresses the viewers' perceptual capacity, memory and inferential processes while it relentlessly floods the viewers with a plethora of details from which they have to pick out the most important ones, cued by the director through camerawork and, for example, the editor's work (Bordwell 1985:30-34). The viewers have to arrange the material selectively to construct the story and, as the storytelling proceeds, sometimes *re*arrange it according to accumulating new information (ibid.). Hence, film viewing is a dynamic psychological and cognitive process and film manipulates a variety of factors, for example, people's seemingly inherent need for temporal ordering of events and need for implications of causality, as well as prior knowledge and experience (schemata derived from other works of art, from other films etc.) (ibid.). Bordwell (1985:32-33) suggests that "everything from understanding dialogue to comprehending the film's overall story utilizes previous knowledge". These schemata work in the general composition of film, also in that the viewers have certain expectations of what cinematic dialogue should be like. This will be discussed with more detail below in relation to some mainstream film dialogue conventions presented by Berliner (1999).

Therefore, cinematic dialogue certainly follows certain conventions and, most importantly, the viewers are acutely – although perhaps not consciously – aware of them.

2.3.1 Dialogue vs. Conversation

Asheim (1949:26) points out that at times literary dialogue is "so unlike ordinary speech as to make literal carryover on to the screen of dubious value". Countless other theorists and researchers refer to cinematic dialogue as 'ordinary language', 'everyday talk' or 'conversation' without examining the implications further. The fact of the matter seems to be that we are so used to cinematic dialogue that it appears to us as normal speech. Moreover, quotations from films find their way into people's general interaction and blur the line between cinematic dialogue and ordinary speech. It is, however, important to distinguish cinematic dialogue from conversation or what one might call 'real speech', simply because their similarity is a common misconception.

In discussing the awkward dialogue in screenwriter Andrew Davies and director Anthony Page's television miniseries *Middlemarch* (1994) of Eliot's novel, MacKillop and Pratt (2000:80) assume that the problem is "largely a temporal one". They regret that "[o]n the screen there is little time to move through the necessary phrases that belong to 'conversation'" (MacKillop and Pratt 2000:80). Given that MacKillop and Pratt have chosen to put the word 'conversation' between inverted commas, they still elected to use the term, which is not only incorrect but also vague, especially modified in such a way as it is. Furthermore, MacKillop and Pratt fail to give examples of such 'necessary phrases'. In addition, they overlook the fact that film dialogue, in fact, is not 'conversation' (as Kozloff 2000:18 and McKee 1997:388, amongst others, point out) and – most importantly – should not be. What is interesting, however, is that MacKillop and Pratt do not touch on the subject of literary dialogue also differing from conversation. It is as if 'conversation' has suddenly gained a status of the only believable example of speech, and that if something is said out loud (i.e. film or theatrical dialogue), it has to sound conversational in order to be credible. Yet, perhaps what MacKillop and Pratt were looking for here is a somewhat different effect. Perhaps the word they should have used is 'natural', which implies that its stylistics go unnoticed, as in conversation, and the speech does not draw any unnecessary attention to itself.

Clearly, neither film nor theatrical dialogue is what one might label 'conversational'. Laroche-Bouvy (1992) draws clear distinctions between dialogue and conversation. Although she is discussing theatrical dialogue, the same, elementary points can be said to apply also to cinematic dialogue. The most basic distinction she makes is that of conversation being oral and spontaneous and dialogue being a "literary construct" (Laroche-Bouvy 1992:89). It seems that Laroche-Bouvy appears to be looking at dialogue only as 'pre-oralised', in other words, as written and not yet performed on stage or on screen. Like in the distinction above, she appears to "forget" that also dialogue is oral in its final stage in addition to it being a literary construct. Moreover, she, for example, notes that in conversation intonation plays an important role (Laroche-Bouvy 1992:95), dismissing the fact that such is the case also in drama and film. She agrees, however, that dialogue is written "a priori for oralisation" and that this is not an indispensable fact (Laroche-Bouvy 1992:96).

Both film and dramatic dialogue are illusions of an authentic exchange (Laroche-Bouvy 1992:90). Indeed, also Kozloff (2000:18) maintains that dialogue in narrative cinema is never equal to spontaneous speech, despite the fact that it commonly strives to create an impression of real-life conversation. Film dialogue has been "scripted, written and rewritten, censored, polished, rehearsed and performed" (ibid.). Furthermore, Kozloff (2000:18) goes on to point out that even improvised lines have been uttered by "impersonators" and the lines have subsequently been "judged, approved, and allowed to remain". To illustrate further the constructed and artificial nature of cinematic dialogue, Kozloff (ibid.) lists a number of technical treatments that subsequently affect the way how the dialogue ends up sounding, starting from the recording itself and spanning to the lines being played through "stereophonic speakers with Dolby sound". Kozloff's point is that the dialogue is always a construction. It is designed for us, the viewers, and it is the viewers' job to collaborate with the fiction of the film in that they will ignore their knowledge of the dialogue being directed at them rather than it existing merely as a means of communication for the characters (Kozloff 2000:16).

The film dialogue itself, in turn, attempts to disguise the fact that the words are in reality aimed at an off-screen listener (Kozloff 2000:15-16). According to Chothia (as quoted by Kozloff 2000:16), cinematic dialogue is double-layered: on one hand, it appears natural, but on the other hand, the viewer knows that it is not. Chothia

(ibid., original emphasis) remarks that even if dialogue would sound natural, it is "*un*naturally" loaded with meaning and implications because the viewer has superior knowledge of the characters and events, indeed the whole context of the film, which the characters, in turn, do not possess. In other words, the viewer is aware of the fact that everything said in a film somehow *means* more than in a regular, everyday conversation. This, in turn, creates dramatic irony (Kozloff 2000:16). In addition, the interlocutor to whom the words are ostensibly directed (i.e. a character) does not construct the meaning, but the *eavesdropper* does, the viewer, who interprets both the utterance and the response/reaction it gets (ibid.). Therefore, dialogue operates by duplicity, that is, there are two ways of hearing: the interlocutor's and the audience's. The viewer is conscious of the gap that exists between the illusion of reality and the fact that the lines are artificial (ibid.). This, clearly, affects the interpretation of cinematic dialogue since the viewers know that the interpretation is different for the characters as opposed to the viewers themselves.

In addition, dialogue differs from conversation in other yet unmentioned respects. For example, Laroche-Bouvy (1992:90) stresses the importance of clarity in dialogue: it should be made certain that the viewer will not miss any crucial information due to, for example, overlapping speech. In other words, in terms of drama, a member of the audience cannot ask an actor to repeat the last sentence. Moreover, in general terms, dialogue lacks retroaction, that is the back and forward movement (e.g. in terms of topics and clarifications) typical in conversation, where the linear progression of dialogue, in turn, is rare (Laroche-Bouvy 1992:92).

Furthermore, Laroche-Bouvy (1992:95) points out some of the features of conversation that exist because everyday speech is not scripted. Those include, for example, hesitations and repetitions. Indeed, everyday interruptions, hesitations etc. are chiselled out from dialogue, as Kozloff (2000:18) remarks, and she goes on to say that if they do exist, they are deliberately included (to, for example, convey a particular character trait). Moreover, conversation involves more signals of attention from the interlocutor, letting the speaker know (e.g. by nodding) that the message is being received and understood and the speaker is encouraged to go on (Laroche-Bouvy 1992:94, Kozloff 2000:19). In addition, Kozloff (2000:19) maintains that film dialogue is used less to establish and maintain social contact, which are very important functions of real-life conversation. These notions, while they are all rather obvious and elementary, certainly reveal some of the basic differences that dialogue

stylisation brings into picture. Therefore, cinematic dialogue does not equal conversation, nor can it be termed 'everyday speech'. Rather, it is a special construct aimed at an eavesdropper.

2.3.2 The Realism of Cinematic Dialogue

It is an interesting paradox that we are so accustomed to film dialogue and we so effortlessly perceive it as "normal" speech that it is easy to forget that it is, indeed, far from being speech one might hear in a supermarket or a pub. Cinematic dialogue, however, is not something that might be termed 'real' or 'realistic'. As Berliner (1999:3) rather humorously points out, it is hard to believe that a thug, in the middle of a bank heist and at the arrival of the police, calmly calls out to his companions in crime "we got company". Nor has Berliner (ibid.) ever in his life had someone say to him: "I hope so, Todd. I hope so". Yet we often encounter this type of structure in films and it does not seem unusual at all in that specific context. In fact, there is a similar construction in *The Green Mile* as well: "Me too, John. Me too" (Darabont 1999:84, also in the motion picture).

Berliner (1999:3) notes that film dialogue "obeys its own customs" and we accept such dialogue not in terms of reality but in terms of the cinema. Berliner identifies certain stock lines that appear often in equivalent situations in films. He gives the following kinds of examples: stock lines such as "You're not going anywhere," or "It's so crazy it just might work" signal changes in character or turns in a scene; lines equivalent to "I do care ... more than you know" signal triumph or a winning situation for the characters; and losing lines such as "I am not crazy! You must believe me!" imply that the turn has just been for the worse (Berliner 1999:3). In addition, some lines predicate confrontation or commotion, "It's quiet. Too quiet", while others are used to end a scene because they have a musical rhythm or suggest closure, thus leading the scene to avoid a 'dramatic thud', for example a line such as this: "I got a feeling this is gonna be a lonnnnng night" (ibid.). According to Berliner (1999:3), like films, lines have genres as well, and they guide the viewers by letting them know "where we are and where we are going".

While the present study leaves the genres themselves aside, it is important to note them, if only for the sake of understanding how stylised exactly film dialogue is, and that it has some apparent conventions which, however, are often overlooked. While these dialogue genres may indeed have a basis in conventions and routines of

everyday talk (see Herman 1995), which also has certain predictable structures, they may also be a reflection of a wider context within the motion picture genres themselves. Kozloff (2000) has noted that dialogue also realises motion picture genre conventions. That is, the very genre of the film dictates much of what kind of dialogue is "proper" or expected dialogue for that particular story. She has examined dialogue in Westerns, screwball comedies, melodramas, and gangster films, concluding that investigating dialogue can bring us "to the core of each genre's dynamics" (Kozloff 2000:267). In other words, dialogue exists in a wide net of reference points, which create expectations on what the dialogue is supposed to be like and which, in turn, are reproduced by the films themselves.

Berliner (1999:5) notes that while films may not be any more real than other types of art, they are apt to feel more realistic. According to Nichols (as quoted by Berliner 1999:6), realistic art seems realistic because the very 'realism' "serves to make a plausible world seem real". Mainstream cinema dialogue seeks to appear natural or unobtrusive, much in the same vein with other components of mainstream film. Nichols (ibid.) argues that the realism in mainstream cinema grows out of the fact that the films aim to conceal their artificiality, for example by unobtrusive editing. Furthermore, Bordwell (1985:157) asserts that mainstream cinema relies on the classical narration mode that repeats most closely that so-called canonic story "which story-comprehension researchers posit as normal for our culture". What this means in practice is that there is a reliance upon character-centred causality and a definition of the action as the attempt to achieve a goal. Mainstream cinema, then, aims to be 'natural' and 'normal' and 'real' both in terms of its *entity* as such, a plausible world, and its storytelling, which aims to satisfy the seemingly inherent mythological schemata of stories within us. As Berliner suggests, all of the cinematic dialogue conventions tend to confine dialogue to the requirements of the plot. Like the self-effacing continuity editing, the principles of mainstream film dialogue help uphold "an unambiguous, efficient, purposeful, and uninterrupted flow of narrative information" (Berliner 1999:6).

Mainstream film dialogue does its best to veil the fact that is, in reality, a construction. Sometimes, however, we pay particular attention to dialogue because its deviance from ordinary conventions. Berliner (ibid.) gives examples of such film genres, listing comedy and film noir, in which "we are asked to admire the witty banter of the script". Yet, according to Berliner (1999:6), even in such deviant

genres, the dialogue asks us to pay attention not to the writing itself but to what the character interaction has achieved in the service of the plot. In sum, the outcome of mainstream film dialogue is that viewers are likely to feel comfortable when hearing it (ibid.). The viewers are used to the conventions and know what to expect and what to perceive as 'realistic'.

According to Herman (1995:6), who is discussing theatrical dialogue, "even the most naturalistic forms of dramatic speech do not quite reproduce the real life product". Kozloff (2000:19) agrees with this view in terms of cinema, quoting Page who maintains that even the most realistic form of dialogue in literature or drama can never be an accurate transcript of a real-life conversation. Dramatic dialogue parallels real life language by exploiting "underlying speech conventions, principles and 'rules' of use", these 'rules' being the resource for dramatists in their dialogue construction process (Herman 1995:6). In my view, these 'underlying speech conventions' also guide the viewers and their expectations. As accustomed to dialogue, whether it was cinematic, theatrical or literary, we somehow seem to know what it "should be like". Moreover, we expect the characters on the screen to react to other characters and their words as we might react in a similar situation in our real-life reality, not necessarily word for word but rather implication for implication, or perhaps speech-act for speech-act.

Furthermore, Herman (1995:11) suggests that dialogue should be seen as more of a device rather than as a reflector of reality in drama, its function being not world-mirroring but world-creating. This implies that real-life speech would not as such suit the worlds of drama or cinema, which are plausible rather than real worlds. Indeed, as shown above, there are extensive differences between what might be termed 'real conversation' and stylised dialogue. Laroche-Bouvy (1992:96) notes that if one would construct dialogue such a way that it exactly mirrors conversation (she even doubts this is possible), the dialogue would be "incomprehensible when read and, furthermore, impossible to oralise". Moreover, Berliner (1999:6) gives an example of a real-life conversation between two teenagers on the telephone and concludes that their speech "violates all of the rules of movie dialogue". The example Berliner uses shows that real-life conversation does not proceed linearly, it does not "advance the plot" or provide information, and there is "little direction at all (or drama)" (Berliner 1999:6-7). Moreover, there are incidental miscommunications and misconceptions and subsequent attempts at correct them (Laroche-Bouvy's 'retroaction'), and none

of the traits that could be labelled deviations from film dialogue, of course, "serve a direct narrative function […] in the absence of an overriding plot" (ibid.). Yet, as Berliner (1999:7) points out, if this conversation were presented in a film, it would seem artificial and alien since that is what tends to happen to real life when it is represented in art. Berliner (ibid.) states that "Hollywood movie dialogue guards against such alienation precisely through its unreal form of realistic speech".

2.3.3 Conventions and Functions of Film Dialogue

Berliner (1999) discusses five conventions that mainstream cinema follows. According to him, although most Hollywood cinema seems to go by these rules, not all film dialogue recognises them (Berliner 1999:4). Firstly, Berliner (ibid.) notes that dialogue in mainstream film "either advances the plot or supplies pertinent background information". This type of film dialogue is efficient in narrative terms, providing information and guiding the viewers' expectations. Secondly, mainstream dialogue "tends to move in a direct line, often toward one character's triumph and another's defeat" (Berliner 1999:4). This means that characters engage in a "competition" in a scene (i.e. conflict), where one ends up as a victor and the other one loses. Often, as Berliner notes, some of these lines are designed to present one character in a good light while the other is revealed to the viewer as 'bad'. Thirdly, communication between characters in mainstream cinema is efficient. According to Berliner (ibid.), conversation tends to stay on the subject and, "unlike real people, movie characters usually listen to one another and say what they mean". Moreover, Berliner also (1999:5) points out that because cinematic dialogue is so highly structured and carefully composed (which is reflected in the efficient communication of the characters), at the end of a scene there is often a sense of the characters having been all along working jointly towards whatever the outcome of the scene is. Fourthly, characters in films tend to speak flawlessly. Berliner refrains from giving any specific examples of this on the grounds of this feature being so pervasive in mainstream cinema. Instead, he gives an example of an exception, a line from *House of Games* (1987) scripted by David Mamet: "You see, in my trade, this is called, what you did, you cracked-out-of-turn" (Berliner 1999:5). Clearly, this stumbling line with its "stammering syntax" is out of accord with the kind of film dialogue we are used to, although it might come closer to real speech. The fifth and final convention of mainstream film dialogue is that it breaks the rules, but only to serve a

"direct narrative function" such as signalling characters' inability to understand each other or emphasising their extreme nervousness (ibid.). Additionally, breaking the "rules" might act as a joke or as an expression of a character quirk, or perhaps pose a problem for the character he has to overcome (as in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* with Billy Bibbit's stutter) (ibid.). In other words, when film dialogue breaks away from conventions, it means something: it invites the viewer to focus on the violation and seek the reasons behind it.

As Berliner above, also McKee (1997) stresses that film dialogue is all about compression and economy. This, however, does not mean short lines for the sake of short lines. Rather, there are significant reasons for preferring compact dialogue. One of the reasons for the shorter lines in film comes naturally from the desire to sound more 'conversational' as opposed to 'bookish'. After all, Oliver (2003:72), notes that compared to writing, people tend to use shorter sentences as well as choose other words when they talk. Moreover, Brady (1994:57) suggests that the adaptor shorten "any sentence that is long and keep all speeches as lean an as brief as possible". Like McKee above, then, Brady (1994:57-58) stresses the economy of dialogue, and he does it in the name of achieving "an illusion of everyday speech" in which there are incomplete sentences, people losing track of what they were saying etc. For Brady (1994:57), then, cinematic dialogue is an illusion of everyday speech, but with a clear direction and purpose. Moreover, he advises cutting excessive phrases and words as well as "speeches that go beyond dramatic need (that is, giving the play[4] meaning)" (Brady 1994:58). If a character is verbose, however, this should naturally show in the dialogue (ibid.). Furthermore, McKee (1997:389) maintains that as much as possible needs to be said in the smallest number of words. This means that short lines are not short of significance – on the contrary. The lines of dialogue are not "stumps"; they are not reductions but encompass a high concentration of narrative or other significance, much like poetry.

McKee (1997:390), however, explicates another, perhaps a more cinematic reason for the need of economy in film dialogue. He states that long speeches are antithetical with mainstream film aesthetics. If a line is a lengthy one, the camera dwells on the speaker's face and consequently the viewers' eyes get bored since they absorb all the visual essentials of the shot in ten to fifteen seconds – in other words,

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[4] Brady refers to the screenplay as 'play'.

the shot becomes "redundant" in visual terms (ibid.). Consequently, when the viewers' eyes leave the screen the film "loses" them. The solution to this would be to cut to other characters, objects or sceneries during the long line, but according to McKee, this does not work either. This is because offscreen speakers equal a disembodied voice, which in turn leads to the requirement of slower articulation from the part of the actor and, most importantly, a voice offscreen loses the visual subtext of the speaker (ibid.). Moreover, McKee (1997:393) maintains that the more there is dialogue, the less effect it has on the viewer. He contends that the writer should rather make the viewer "hungry" for dialogue since "[l]ean dialogue, in relief against what's primarily visual, has salience and power" (ibid.).

Furthermore, according to McKee (1997:389), film dialogue in general consists of short, simply constructed sentences, "generally, a movement from noun to verb to object or from noun to verb to complement in that order". McKee (ibid.) points out that this is so because the dialogue in film is "spoken and gone"; unlike in a novel, one cannot flip back the pages to check what was said before. Moreover, we do not have the possibility for retroaction as in real-life conversation, as pointed out above. Kozloff (2000:78) seems to agree that cinematic dialogue consists of shorter lines with simple syntax, but she points out that this is not an axiom. While complex subordination is atypical for films, it is present in, for example, *Citizen Kane* (1941): "As Charles Foster Kane, who owns eighty-two thousand, three hundred and sixty-four shares of Public Transit Preferred—you see, I do have a general idea of my holdings—I sympathise with you" (as quoted by Kozloff 2000:78). Therefore, as always, there seem to be exceptions to the "rule". Yet I doubt many people today would consider the above, only partially quoted line particularly motion picture-like: it draws attention to itself without aiming to fulfil a clear function, and appears unintentionally comical because of that. Perhaps motion pictures today employ short lines also because the viewers are used to them and long clauses with subordination would break the illusion by drawing attention to the constructed nature of dialogue. After all, we tend to avoid complex subordination in everyday conversation as well, which is the likely reason for film dialogue avoiding it also. Complex subordination works in literature, but in spoken language, whether scripted or not, it appears unnatural and unrealistic.

Moreover, as suggested by the complexity of film viewing and the cognitive and perceptual strain cinema poses for its audiences, it is easy to understand that

complicated dialogue with a complex syntax and long lines would perhaps not work in mainstream cinema which is known for its speedy progression in terms of plot and narration (see Bordwell 1985). The viewer's mental capacities are in extensive use already without the need for decoding unnecessarily complex linguistic messages, namely dialogue, which should not needlessly complicate the understanding of the film and affect negatively the overall pleasure of the viewing experience. After all, the viewers have to notice everything they need to notice the first time in order to reconstruct the story in their minds, since very often with films there will not be a second time.

In addition, McKee (1997) states, much in the same vein with Berliner (1999) above, that cinematic dialogue has clear direction and a purpose. It is the vehicle for characters' aspirations, the voicing of their motivations, needs and wants (McKee 1997:393). However, as Seger (1992:115) points out, it should not be treated as a vehicle for conveying large amounts of background story information, since this is not cinematic or dramatic enough. That is, the movement of the story slows down. As Asheim (1949:109-110) points out based on studies conducted, whereas slow progression is acceptable in literature and theatre, the same members of audience studied will not tolerate static scenes in films. Therefore, speed closer to real-life pace is too slow for cinema (Asheim 1949:109).

Kozloff (2000:67), however, points out that those long lines that are so frequently criticised do exist, whatever the genre of the film. According to her, they also have a function to fulfil. As an example, she gives a line from *Dr. Strangelove* (1962), in which the long, logical "sermon" by a character takes a surprising turn at the end, the logic suddenly breaking apart and this fact, in turn, revealing the character to be insane (Kozloff 2000:67-68). She calls this type of dialogue property 'end position emphasis'. McKee (1997:393) echoes this, suggesting a slightly differing variant of the end position emphasis, noting that often the meaning within a line – even a very short one – is "delayed until the very last word" so as not to lose the viewer's attention. He calls this 'the suspense sentence' (ibid.).

Cinematic dialogue, especially in terms of mainstream film, which is about storytelling, generally needs to serve the plot and do it in a way that advances the story. Clearly, it does so with the viewer in mind, aiming to produce the maximum effect in its efficiency. Herman (1995:123) draws attention to dramatists' sequencing strategies and the way they "enable the progress of the evolving inter-personal

dynamic to be charted in its smooth of conflictual course, given a turn's orientation to other turns". This explicates the importance of tension and rhythm in screenwriting, in which the scene is the most important unit. In addition, Kozloff (2000:87) points out (following the notions put forth by Fawell) the musical quality of the lines. The rhythmic patterning exists within lines themselves, but also in situations of interaction between characters as well as within the context of a whole scene (ibid.). Moreover, Beckerman (as quoted by Herman 1995:123) notes that "[t]he flow of interaction in a larger dramatic unit like a scene or an act must be organised into sub-rhythms of intensification and descrescence". These points above all highlight one feature: the reality that cinematic dialogue is a construction working to affect the viewer, despite its own attempts to conceal that fact.

To conclude this section, keeping in mind the issues dealt with above, I will now turn to considering the various views on adapting dialogue that exist among those people doing the adaptations, among adaptation theorists and critics as well as film critics and the audiences themselves.

2.4 Views on Adapting Dialogue

It seems that there is no reason to envy those who do film adaptations. They are doing their jobs as artists and creative writers, and yet they are under heavy crossfire, utterly regardless whether they succeed or fail in the attempt of adapting a novel to screen, simply because 'failure' and 'success' are measured in such different ways depending on who is doing the interpretation. Generally, film adaptors are being attacked from three sides: literary critics, film critics and the audience. The adaptation may be a good film, but "unfaithful" to the novel. It may reproduce the literary text wonderfully, but be a commercially or aesthetically disastrous film. One of the most noticeable stumbling blocks for adaptors is dialogue: as suggested by several writers above, the audience is accustomed to and is highly aware of cinematic dialogue conventions, although perhaps merely by intuition. When there is something wrong with the dialogue, the viewer is sure to catch it. Undoubtedly, this is when we hear comments such as "Nobody talks like that!" – cheerfully ignoring the fact that nobody 'talks like that' even when we are dealing with good film dialogue – "The dialogue sounded too 'written'", or simply the common layman criticism: "The movie sucked".

In terms of dialogue adaptation, there are further areas of critical tension. First, there is a great divide between high and popular culture in the field of adaptation criticism. As mentioned already in the Introduction, when studying film adaptations of canonised literary works or 'classics', the institutional foothold those novels have in the Western cultures appears to justify the requirement that the film be "faithful" to the "original". Consequently, problems follow. When most of the research is conducted on classic novels, the results are biased towards respecting the literary predecessor and the objective of textual fidelity remains unquestionable as far as the researchers are concerned. Moreover, when the researchers and critics more often than not seem to have a background in English Literature as Whelehan (1999:17) points out, the result is that the research lacks a deeper understanding of what cinema is about, thus privileging literary means of enunciation and narration over the cinematic ones. What this, in turn, means in a larger context of adaptation studies is that there is a tendency of 'prescriptiveness' implied by the research conducted on literary classics that is, in reality, incompatible with non-classic adaptations. Therefore, in the context of the present study, this implies that many of the prescriptive views on dialogue adaptation are ungrounded with regards to *The Green Mile*, which is a popular novel. In the Discussion section below, I will dig deeper into this question on the research problematics of popular versus classic novel adaptations, so I will limit the discussion here to a few more lines.

The institutional foothold issue, then, does not appear to be applicable to a popular novel such as Stephen King's *The Green Mile*. The problem is that while most of the film adaptations made today are indeed based on popular texts rather than classics, the research itself is conducted mainly on the academically respected literary works. Therefore, the academic views on dialogue adaptation below stem from research conducted on film adaptations of classic novels by researchers who value the source novels immensely and have put their canonised authors, if not in an ivory tower, then at least on a pedestal. Yet, they are views on dialogue adaptation most often found in the field of adaptation studies and will be presented as such, but one should not consider them as automatically applicable to adaptations of popular books. Popular novels do not have an institutional and/or ideological weight on them and their "unfaithful" adaptation is not an issue to the same extent as it appears to be with classic novel adaptations. The theoretical material in film adaptation in general, however, more or less lacks this popular novel slant. Hence, I have reviewed the

contents of the theoretical framework critically, keeping in mind first and foremost their applicability to popular novel adaptations.

Therefore, as will become apparent, there is a clear disparity between what theorists and adaptation critics say the relationship of literary and adapted cinematic dialogue should be, and what the adaptors themselves seem to think. The paradoxical point is that they are seemingly talking about the same issue – yet they are not. There are profound differences in the viewpoints, expectations and aesthetic conceptions of the researchers and critics as opposed to the filmmakers and adaptors. The new wave of adaptation studies calls for studies of film adaptations made of popular novels, and it does so for a good reason. The field of adaptation studies simply lacks comprehensive views on popular novel adaptations. It is important to keep this in mind while considering the following views on dialogue adaptation.

As implied above, many adaptation critics working on classic novel adaptations hope for faithful reproduction of the novel on screen and this naturally includes dialogue transferral as well. However, there are clear examples of close adherence to dialogue that have led to undesirable effects. Based on Asheim's (1949:74) dissertation, the 1940 film adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* has only 11% deviation from the novel, which means that it is indeed a 'faithful' adaptation (the highest deviation percentage in Asheim's sample being 62). Bluestone (1957:145) remarks, however, that despite the textual fidelity, the adaptation survived "neither as a box-office hit nor a *succès d'estime*". Bluestone (ibid.) assumes that the most central reason for this might reside "in one of the film's main virtues, its 'literate dialogue'". Moreover, Putman (2000) comments on the film adaptation of the Bret Easton Ellis novel *American Psycho* (2000) by screenwriter Guinevere Turner and director and co-writer Mary Harron by saying that "the dialogue comes off feeling stilted and annoying [*sic*] 'written'". This seems to suggest, that there is indeed something an adaptor has to do to the literary dialogue in order to turn it into successful film dialogue. Cinematic dialogue should not sound "written".

MacKillop and Pratt (2000) present a forcefully literary view on adaptation with, it seems to me, deficient understanding of filmic (or in this particular case, televisual) properties, their views sometimes seemingly contradicting themselves. They are, however, two of the few researchers who have touched upon the notion of dialogue in film adaptations, and therefore I will present their views below. In their article, MacKillop and Pratt consider the 1994 television serial adaptation of Eliot's

Middlemarch. In relation to dialogue adaptation, they consider voice-over (which *The Green Mile* also incorporates), narratorial speech and refer to some 'conversational' aspects of dialogue (already quoted above). I will present the conceptions below and point out certain problematic issues related to the notions while bringing in other supporting and contrasting views as well. Moreover, I will present some viewpoints into inventing and cutting dialogue in film adaptation and present other issues related to adapting dialogue, such as 'verbal embroidery'.

2.4.1 Voice-Over

The present study on dialogue adaptation touches upon voice-over as well, as it is present also in *The Green Mile*. Although Lotman (1989:45) implies that voice-over (he refers to it in literary terms, calling it 'inner monologue') is a form of spoken language in films not related to character speech, I consider voice-over a form of dialogue which, more often than not, indeed *is* associated with a character in the film in question. In my view, voice-over or telling narration is a dialogue-related device that exists outside the story world that the characters inhabit, but remains naturally within the film frame. It may encompass a character-narrator or it might consist of an unidentified narrator relating the history, the dreams, thoughts or fears of a character to the viewer. Asheim (1949:32) shares this view and concludes that the soundtrack narrator is cinema's "closest equivalent to the author's commentary".

MacKillop and Pratt (2000), discuss adapting literary narratorial commentary on the screen. They perceive that the most unforgettable lines in Eliot's *Middlemarch* are located in the authorial commentary. While appearing to insist on fidelity to the source text, they assert that "[a]ctual quotation of letterpress [for voice-over] on the screen belongs to avant-garde TV and travel programmes" (MacKillop and Pratt 2000:78). Moreover, while restricting the adaptor's work in a number of other ways (e.g. by criticising converting narratorial speech into character dialogue, as will be explicated below) they speak against voice-over on the grounds that it unavoidably "draws attention to the 'literariness' of the material" (ibid.). This seems to be certainly true, as several views below show. However, contrasting views exist here as well. McKee (1997:344), for instance, while generally condemning the use of voice-over, asserts that used as counterpoint narration, that is, if the visual narration stands on its own and the voice-over provides wit, irony or insights, it is a valuable device. Nonetheless, he advises the screenwriter to seek out other possible means of

conveying the juxtapositions before resorting to implementing voice-over narration (ibid.). In addition, some critics see voice-over as an underrated device that facilitates close adherence to the source text and eases the adaptation process itself.

For example, Inglis (2000) discusses the adaptation of Waugh's novel into television miniseries *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) by screenwriter John Mortimer and directors Michael Lindsay-Hogg and Charles Sturridge. In terms of voice-over, Inglis (2000:186) notes that Mortimer's decision to use actor Jeremy Irons' "slightly sleepy, pleasantly uninflected voice to read so much of Waugh's prose aloud" declares the writer's "commitment to fidelity to the text". However, the decision is not particularly cinematic, as Clive James (as quoted by Inglis 2000:185), who was reviewing the production at the time, implied by being compelled to ask why Mortimer had not simply had Irons "read the whole novel aloud on television and have done with it".

Mortimer uses the prose as a leitmotif, and this is, according to Inglis (2000:186), a "daring move, for the convention [voice-over] has been much disparaged". The reason why the convention is still 'disparaged', however, is that telling narration is widely considered to work against what cinema is. McKee (1997:334, original emphasis) even goes as far as saying that using voice-over throughout a film *'threatens the future of our art'*". He maintains that "[t]he art of cinema connects Image A via editing, camera, or lens movement with Image B, and the effect is meanings C, D, and E, *expressed without narration*" (McKee 1997:344-345, original emphasis). Inglis, however, does not share this view. According to him, "Irons-reading-Waugh-aloud is a simple and winning device to keep adaptor subservient to author" (Inglis 2000:186). Leaving aside the implication that the novelist should remain as the adaptation's author after the adaptor's 'perfectly camouflaged' mediation, Inglis asserts his view without succeeding to consider the issue of telling narration from the cinema's point of view while, I might add, erasing the adaptor as well as the art and craft of adaptation from the equation. Indeed, also Inglis (ibid.) notices the easy-way-out quality of voice-over, but does not see it as a negative aspect: "the device is damnably quick and easy to use; every time you get stuck for a transition, go back to what the chap actually wrote". Admittedly Inglis' expression is a light-hearted one, but McKee (1997:345) argues that the screenwriter (adaptor) should not "give in to laziness" but to understand that the 'show, don't tell' principle calls for artistry and discipline while it implies respecting the audience's

intelligence and sensitivity. McKee (ibid.) considers misused and overused voice-over not only as slack but also patronising, and warns that if "the trend toward it continues, cinema will degrade into adulterated novels". In sum, whereas some adaptation critics seem to praise voice-over for its capability of rendering the literary narrator's voice (or, as seemed to be the case with Inglis, the author's voice) "faithfully" on screen, the cinematic aesthetic ideology in general recommends refraining from its use. The general advice is to dramatise as much as possible and resort to telling narration only when other means fail or when voice-over is used as a distinct counterpoint to the visual image. This is to say, fidelity to the source text should not motivate the 'reading-prose-aloud' effect.

2.4.2 Adapting Narratorial Speech

In terms of adapting narratorial voice into character dialogue, once again very conflicting views exist. Bluestone (1957:184) asserts, without perceiving any problems associated with the notion, that narrative summary is often "translated" into film dialogue. In addition, Asheim (1949:94) asserts that narratorial commentary is made into dialogue, and that this is a "familiar theatrical device" through which a "character tells another some information which the audience must know" (see also Kozloff 2000:16). MacKillop and Pratt (2000:78) seem to agree that adapting narratorial speech is indeed possible, but not recommended for several reasons. Firstly, according to them, "[i]ntroducing the narratorial voice into that of a character inevitably alters that character" (MacKillop and Pratt 2000:80). This is indeed true if one perceives characters to consist of the narrator's description of them and the very words they utter in the novel. However, in my view, this view disregards the readers' activity and their input in the process of creating a particular character. I would argue that, for the reader, the character is both the character's speech and the description and comments or judgments presented by the narrator as well as the product of the reader's own imagination.

Moreover, the MacKillop-Pratt thesis falls short also in that they seem to forget that the mere presenting of a character on screen necessarily alters that particular character, which, even in the first place, does not exist as a definite entity or personality in the readers' individual imaginations. Presenting a literary character on screen inevitably assigns that character certain physical and psychological characteristics that do not necessarily exist at all in the novel. By this I mean the

obvious physical appearances of the actors in question, their voices and other characteristics, but also the connotations their personae carry with them. Surely, the viewer is to perceive a character, let us say a romantic male lead, differently according to who is playing him. As an example, there is a vast difference between the connotations, expectations and emotions associated with the romantic lead if he is being played by Hugh Grant with a background in romantic comedies as opposed to Sylvester Stallone whose background as an actor is heavily stilted towards action films. This is also pointed out by Palmgren (1986) in relation to stage plays. According to her, there is always a certain degree of polarisation between the character and the person playing that character (Palmgren 1986:400). Hence, the fact that the character changes if the narratorial voice merges with the character's own is of little significance in the whole context of adapting a novel into film.

Secondly, MacKillop and Pratt (2000:80) argue that the narrator's "sophisticated presentation" of a character's point of view must remain distinct from the character's own voice, and they articulate a fear that the insertion of narratorial speech could also "give a wrong impression of the novel" in the process. Cardwell (2002:28, 38) touches upon this issue, reminding that film adaptations are not extended advertisements for novels but separate works of art that should be interpreted and evaluated as such. Furthermore, if an adaptor were to follow along the lines of the MacKillop-Pratt assertion on narrator's language vs. character's speech, the restrictions on the adaptation process would become close to unbearable. Narrator's "voice" is everything in the novel. If the adaptor is denied the access to narratorial speech in terms of dialogue adaptation, some crucial pieces of information, valuable plot-related issues or thematic matters will most likely remain outside the adaptor's and consequently the viewer's scope and this, in turn, might be lethal to the whole film adaptation – entirely regardless whether the adaptation strives for a life of its own or strict textual fidelity.

Finally, MacKillop and Pratt (2000:80) argue that narrator's language, when inserted to dialogue simply does not work. According to them, it "makes [the dialogue] sound unduly bookish" (ibid.). The MacKillop-Pratt view states, referring to a scene in the television serial *Middlemarch*, that the scene fails because narratorial speech is inserted into character dialogue and the two are not compatible, thus the scene shifts with "the speech still hanging in the air – proving that there really can be no response on the part of a character to the words of the 'narrator' and

specifically not in a realist text" (ibid.). They refer to the dialogue adaptation of narrator's language as 'narratorial commentary infiltrating spoken language' and they state that in these instances "the dialogue appears embarrassed by itself" (MacKillop and Pratt 2000:80). They also note that "there is something even comic in the matter-of-factness with which certain of the more weighty scenes end on the screen, as if the characters cannot quite cope with the moral earnestness of Eliot's words" (MacKillop and Pratt 2000:80). However, in my view, their notions appear to dismiss the fact that we are – or at least should be – dealing with *adaptation* here, and not with a direct transposition of a novel's text onto screen. The narrator's language is adapted, *made* into dialogue. Moreover, on the screen even the narratorial commentary *becomes* spoken. It seems rather absurd to be talking about the narratorial comment 'infiltrating' spoken language, especially as in the novel also the character dialogue is mediated by the narrator who inserts it between inverted commas for the reader, if you like. Furthermore, I would argue that if dialogue in such cases 'appears embarrassed by itself', it is not due to sinful mixing of narratorial commentary and character dialogue, but a manifestation of the screenwriter's inadequate skills as a writer of cinematic dialogue, perhaps in this case, dictated by the need to remain faithful to the letter of the Eliot novel.

What the MacKillop-Pratt analysis then shows, although it does not intend to, is that what works in a novel does not automatically work on screen. There seem to be profound differences between literary and cinematic dialogue, and when one tries to adhere to the written word too closely, the result may indeed fail because it betrays the unique properties of film and its dialogue conventions.

Presented above are some of the views on dialogue adaptation that film adaptation theorists and critics hold. When we turn more firmly to those who are on the other side of the fence, the people who do the actual adaptation, we find very different and contrasting views. What differentiates these views from those of the critics above is that whereas for the critics the starting point is the novel, the adaptors seem to consider primarily what the film "wants".

2.4.3 Adapting for Film: The Textbook Advice

Brady (1994) points out that adapting dialogue is – or at least should be – a more complex process than just copy-pasting the lines from the novel into the screenplay. He warns against binding oneself too tightly to the "facts of the novel" (Brady

1994:56). According to him, this leads the adaptor to imagine rather than *feel* the scene and this, in turn, inevitably results to artificial dialogue (ibid.). Moreover, dialogue should not be used to the single purpose of advancing the plot, simply because it "is genuine only when it grows out of the emotions of the character" (ibid.). Therefore, in order to produce the best possible dialogue, the adaptor should write as a *screenwriter* 'feeling the scene'. Indeed, Bluestone (1957:130) argues that the "Huxley-Murfin additional dialogue [in the 1940 MGM *Pride and Prejudice*] bears an unusual ring of probability", that is, the invented lines are equivalent to what "Jane Austen might have said". Huxley's dialogue, however, was mocked in the 1990s for being "all-purpose Olde England quaint, abounding in cries of 'lawks a daisy' and 'ah, the polka mazurka'" (Bennett as quoted by North 1999:39). In other words, the adaptor's aim should not be to write like the author of the source novel but to make the characters sound like themselves in the adaptation's context, since that is what makes the cinematic dialogue, or *any* dialogue for that matter, sound 'real'.

Most importantly, Brady (1994:205) stresses, without further clarifying the underlying reasons, however, that "more often than not, dialogue lifted straight from the original story will not work in play form". It seems to me that there might be several reasons behind Brady's assertion. The literary dialogue might include, for example, irrelevant details, unnecessarily long speeches, or complex subordination. Moreover, literary dialogue not working as such in screenplay/film form might also have to do with the new story context of the adaptation. In the likely case that the story's plot undergoes alterations, this will susceptibly have an effect on the characters and the subtext, which, in turn, poses a further danger in terms of direct dialogue transferral. Furthermore, Brady (ibid.) goes on to say that "[e]ven less likely is the chance that the speeches from the original will contain all the elements that are required for good play dialogue". This, in turn, suggests the different functions of cinematic vs. literary dialogue, for example in terms of providing necessary information to the viewer and creating intensified drama. After all, as Asheim (1949:109-110) points out, cinema inherently seems to require more drama than literature. At the same time, Brady (ibid.) reminds that the adaptor should "judiciously avoid mangling a perfectly good speech in the story". That is to say, the adaptors should make use of what they can and then turn to creating dialogue that does not exist in the source novel.

Therefore, in the event of the novel either lacking dialogue (the story being conveyed through the narrative), or lacking *suitable* dialogue, the adaptor has to rely on inventing the dialogue for the screenplay. In such a case, Brady (1994:205) advises the adaptor to "translate the meaning by creating dialogue which contains the spirit and flavor that characterize the story". Seger (1992:143), in turn, suggests that the dialogue in a novel "sometimes" cannot be translated as such to film, but that the subtext can be used as a guideline for invented dialogue. Indeed, also McKee (1997:368) stresses that the adaptor simply has to be willing to reinvent, and not reinvent only dialogue but also scenes, characters and events. The added dialogue, however, has to fit in, both with the story world and with the character.

In addition to being "allowed" to add dialogue to the film adaptation, the adaptor is also authorised to cut dialogue, characters, scenes and other desired story elements. Bluestone (1957:140) divides deletions into two categories: minor characters and "scenes which are either too meditative or fail to advance the story line". These kinds of deletions naturally lead to deletion of dialogue as well. MacKillop and Pratt (2000:87), in turn, in discussing the adaptation of *Middlemarch*, state that "[s]ome elevated language has to be omitted, to avoid tiring a mass audience". While I do not see the cinema-going public as incapable of taking in 'elevated language' without getting bored, there are certain considerations that have to be taken into account when adapting dialogue. Asheim (1949:25-26) points out that the cinema audience being such a heterogeneous group of people, sometimes an unfamiliar word is changed into a more familiar one. In addition, some foreign words might be translated into (in this case) English, or, for example, ambiguous Victorian constructions rendered more relevant and understandable to a modern audience (ibid.).

Moreover, in my view there are cinematic reasons for dialogue (and other) omission as well. Indeed, Bluestone (1957:141) goes on to say that "dialogue and minor characters who are not immediately grounded in dramatic incident are dropped in the movie". Asheim (1949), Seger (1992) and Brady (1994), as well as McKee (1997) stress the importance of one main focus in a film, the question of 'what this story is about'. Giddings (2000), for example, laments the loss of the Bath sequences in screenwriter-director Noel Langley's 1952 adaptation of *The Pickwick Papers*. Giddings (2000:45) grieves over the fact that because of the omission we do not see the "splendid portrait of the spa in genteel decline". He, however, seems to dismiss

the fact that the film concentrates on the main character Mr. Pickwick and his journey, and it is not about the 'spa in genteel decline'. Motion pictures have a restricted duration, generally from 90 minutes to 180 minutes maximum, and this leads to plot/subplot constructions that are to the point. One of Giddings' other bewailings include the loss of "the superb saga of Tony Weller's marital complexities and the humbling of the Revd Stiggins" as well as some characters that do not make any appearance at all in the film (Giddings 2000:44). In cinema, and especially mainstream cinema, "characters not absolutely essential to the central conflicts are either dropped or relegated to the background" (Bluestone 1957:141). The same applies to dialogue and its omissions: as several writers above have stressed, cinematic dialogue demands compression and economy. Moreover, according to Bluestone (ibid.) and for example McKee (1997) above, generally in cinema conflicts are presented through sound and image rather than relayed through speech. This, as well, speaks for dialogue omission as the adaptor seeks to show visually rather than tell through dialogue or voice-over.

In McKee's (1997:390) view, the moment screenwriters think they have written something "that's particularly fine and literary" they should simply cut it. By this, he refers to cinematic dialogue being informal and spontaneous-sounding rather than formal. Moreover, McKee (ibid.) regards dialogue writing not as writing lines for their own sake, for the love of words. The dialogue exists for certain purposes that serve the storytelling and the plot. As Raymond Chandler (as quoted by Zurbrugg 1999:98) has put it, "A preoccupation with words for their own sake is fatal to good film making. It's not what films are for".

Kozloff (2000:51-52), however, argues that screenwriters do occasionally write dialogue simply to "exploit the resources of language", as she calls it. In Kozloff's (2000:52) view, so-called "verbal embroidery" does exist, and it fulfils a poetic function (a term originated by Jakobson). For example, David Mamet's (who was quoted above for saying writers should always aim for silent films which are, according to him, "perfect") scripts are famous for their heavily patterned rhythms in dialogue (ibid.). Kozloff (2000:56) gives examples of lines of dialogue which "defy the strictures against cinematic speech" by including poetic effects, irony, jokes and storytelling within the narrative. The lines may change the tempo of the story and offer character revelation, but those goals could also be reached through other means (ibid.), with language which is less poetic and more to the point, as usually is

required of film dialogue. In other words, the screenwriter/adaptor can make, by all means, a choice to play with language. To reproduce an example provided by Kozloff, here is a line from *Wizard of Oz* (1939) with some "unnecessary" verbal embroidery:

> Step forward, Tin Man. You dare to come to me for a heart, do you? You clinking, clanking, clattering collection of collagenous junk? … And you, Scarecrow, have the effrontery to ask for a brain, you billowing bale of bovine fodder? (as quoted by Kozloff 2000:52.)

Throughout her work, Kozloff's (2000) point is that cinematic dialogue is not as straightforward and simple as the screenwriting guides seem to suggest. According to her, there is more to dialogue than simply short lines that advance the plot, characterise the people in the story, and provide necessary information.

What has become apparent so far is that adaptors have received a mandate from many writers on the subject to make changes to dialogue, the plot, and characters and other story-related components in order to be able to write a successful screenplay for filming a quality motion picture. The writers have addressed such questions as film dialogue creating an illusion of everyday speech which is nonetheless not without "direction, purpose, and syntax" (Brady 1994:57). Moreover, the conclusion has been that dialogue should reveal the values and traits of the characters and advance the plot and that all this must be accomplished with the most economical choices of words. Moreover, we witnessed Kozloff above contesting this by saying that screenwriters include also some verbal embroidery in their scripts. Dialogue adaptation alone, then, seems to be a complicated and many-sided issue in itself, much in the same vein as adaptation studies as a field of study is.

As a conclusion for the theoretical framework section, I will put forward a few words on issues related to my research questions on dialogue adaptation, implications on direct transferral of dialogue and the differences between cinematic and literary dialogue. First of all, film adaptation research thus far has mostly revolved around classic novel adaptations. Therefore, the theorising involves assumptions that most likely are not applicable to popular novel adaptations, which outnumber classic novel adaptations but continue to remain peripheral in the research field. The present thesis seeks to fill a void in this respect, offering to set a case that can be compared later on to other adaptations. Furthermore, as Kozloff (2000) has pointed out, dialogue in films has been neglected in academic film study. My personal experience seems to confirm this also in the field of adaptation studies. Yet,

Asheim's (1949) ample and largely unprejudiced dissertation includes remarks on dialogue, but as anyone is able to observe by comparing films from different decades, cinematic dialogue has changed tremendously in the last fifty years or so. Therefore, the present thesis might unearth something perhaps more relevant to today's film adaptation. Furthermore, Asheim's (1949:13), focus was, again, on literary classics or "adaptations of … 'higher quality novels'". Moreover, Asheim (1949:87) even contended that "the film artist is limited by the technology of the medium to telling his story through a series of visual images", again dismissing sound in cinema. Therefore, my thesis contributes to adaptation studies in a doubly interesting way: it examines a popular novel adaptation and it does this concentrating on dialogue as an integral part of cinematic narration.

Based on the theoretical and practical views into adapting dialogue presented above, what one might expect of direct dialogue transfer is that it would remain very scarce with popular novel adaptations in mainstream cinema. Instead of numerous instances of direct transferral, the observations above would suggest that adapting dialogue from novel to screen included compression or abridgements, rephrasing and deletion of lines to serve the plot and the storytelling, as well as invention of new lines. Moreover, one would expect to see narratorial speech made into character dialogue and lines being transferred from one character to another. Indeed, based on the differences between literary and cinematic dialogue, their differing functions and conventions, it would be rather surprising to find much direct transferral of dialogue between the two media. In the case study below, I will examine how exactly dialogue adaptation seems to function in practice. With my analysis of the dialogue in the Stephen King novel and the screenplay and the motion picture by Frank Darabont, I hope to uncover the most prominent properties of dialogue adaptation in the popular novel / mainstream film sphere. This, in turn, will hopefully demonstrate in practice some of the differences between literary and cinematic dialogue that have been kept under covers for so long due to one-sided film adaptation research that values and seems to promote direct transferral of dialogue.

After presenting the data and the analytic framework, I will proceed to examine how literary dialogue from a popular novel is adapted into cinematic dialogue in an example of mainstream cinema, the story that takes place on *The Green Mile*.

3. DATA AND ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

The present study divides film adaptation into two phases: writing the screenplay and shooting the motion picture. This is clearly an inadequate division in terms of the whole adaptation process itself, which includes reading and rereading the novel, analysing it, rearranging plotlines, deleting, combining and inventing characters, highlighting this and toning down that, and so forth. All this is done before writing the actual screenplay. Furthermore, following the scripting, the adaptation process includes rewrites after casting and meetings with producers and other filmmaking professionals, as well as improvisations and rewrites done by actors in collaboration with the director on the set.

The division into two phases is, however, perfectly adequate for the purposes of this study. Moreover, it is necessary, in my view, to include the screenplay in the equation in the first place. Unfortunately, it seems to be a basic assumption in adaptation studies that the only relevant factors in film adaptation are the novelist and the director. The researchers systematically erase the screenwriter and the screenplay from the equation. In my opinion, this leads to several problems. First and foremost, it simplifies the issue of film adaptation, especially when one is examining the dialogue. Making the novel and the motion picture as simple antipodes, the process nature of filmmaking is vanquished and subsequently it is deceptively easy to view film adaptation as simple 'transposing of a novel on screen' or 'duplicating the novel visually'. The worst-case result might be to end up viewing film adaptation as simply rolling the camera while the actors do what the director reads aloud from the novel. While this image is extreme, sometimes when reading some of the research conducted on film adaptations, one does get the sense that the researchers could have had an idea like this about adaptation in their heads. Often their view presents the adaptation process as greatly simplified and reduced into copying the novel using the camera and actors. With my view of adaptation in three modes, I hope to make manifest some of the complexities involved in film adaptation, namely those that have to do with the differences between written and spoken language and the introduction of a visual context.

Moreover, I have chosen to acknowledge the screenplay for another reason as well: that of the screenwriter's input. Film adaptation is an art form. Personally, I prefer to refer to screenwriters when I talk about adaptors, since generally they are

the ones that do the most massive amount of actual *adaptation*. What is highlighted in the screenplay, what aspects are downplayed, how the characters are developed, what scenes are included and what excluded, what events and lines of dialogue are invented, the overall structure of the film and many other major aspects are decided on before the screenplay is written. I would argue that the most changes and reworkings to the story and its components are done in the scripting phase as opposed to introducing them when finally filming the motion picture based on the screenplay. Such certainly seems to be the case with *The Green Mile* where the difference between the novel and the screenplay is more pervasive than the difference between the screenplay and the finished film. What the screenwriter works with is the novel. What the director works with is the screenplay and perhaps also the novel. As my dialogue analysis on *The Green Mile* clearly shows, the novel was being used while the shooting of the motion picture was on the way. Many lines were changed or invented on the set by the actors in collaboration with the director to match the equivalent scenes in the novel more closely. This, however, is not a universal practice, for we have examples of directors who have never even read the novel they are adapting (Bluestone 1957:62, 169).

Moreover, in the present film adaptation, the screenwriter and the director are the same person. Therefore, the present study is not able to present an interesting case of film adaptation where the views of the screenwriter might end up clashing with the director's, resulting perhaps in major changes in the story. However, the fact that the screenwriter and the director are the same person does not hinder or affect negatively the present examination on the differences between literary and cinematic dialogue. This is because cinematic dialogue is largely generic (see Kozloff 2000) and it follows mainstream narration conventions that do not generally hinge upon the filmmakers' personalities and artistic considerations. Certainly, this does not mean that all cinematic dialogue was uniform and no personal styles could be detected. Rather, within a broader outline, such as the present study where the writer's style is not under scrutiny but the overall differences between two modes of dialogue (cinematic and literary), conclusions can be drawn without having to suspect that certain features (such as line length) would be results of personal artistic consideration. More likely, we are dealing with generic traits.

To say that the division of film adaptation into two phases is adequate for the present study, then, implies that the version of the script I have included in the

analysis demonstrates how far the screenwriter as an adaptor has come from the novel. The second phase, filming the script, is a crucial turning point where the words on the paper finally become utterances expressed by actors. This phase, in turn, demonstrates what happens in terms of the dialogue when we move from written word into the realm of spoken dialogue. The lines are recited and interpreted by the actors, which means that, as suggested by some of the writers above, the lines of dialogue will go through changes. Moreover, the camera is rolling while the written word is turned into spoken lines and the gestures, body language and the general visual nature of film affect the lines of dialogue. In other words, some words may be rendered unnecessary because of we are able to see the people and the mise-en-scène as well as hear the text. Or perhaps an actor's naturalistic acting method adds some words to the line to make it sound more realistic. In the process of filming the motion picture, the characters and the dialogue ultimately take their proper shape and at the same time they are both chiselled and perfected into most efficient components of mainstream storytelling. The divisions written/spoken, read/acted, imagination/flesh-and-blood live in the dissection between the novel and screenplay and the screenplay and film stages. Literary dialogue goes through its metamorphosis into spoken cinematic dialogue, which is integrated in the ample net of visual, aural, verbal and non-verbal factors present in film.

To my knowledge, the differences between cinematic and literary dialogue have not been examined through film adaptation research before. Furthermore, adaptation studies generally concentrate on other aspects of adaptation than dialogue. If dialogue is dealt with, the assumption often seems to be that literary and cinematic dialogue are interchangeable, a shared storytelling convention in the two media. Moreover, the postulation appears to be that successful film adaptation does not require *adapting* dialogue and that direct transferral of dialogue is enough, even desired. The present case study opens up an investigation of the differences between the two dialogue modes as they can be perceived in the work of film adaptors.

Before moving on to the analysis itself, I will introduce the three stages of *The Green Mile*, the novel, the screenplay and the motion picture. Furthermore, I will elaborate on the course of analysis and the tools I will be using in tracing the dialogue arch and the development of individual lines of dialogue throughout the adaptation process. A closer inspection of dialogue and the emerging dialogue arch, in turn, will shed light on film adaptation in terms of dialogue and uncover the

essential differences between cinematic and literary dialogue that this thesis set out to examine.

3.1 The Novel

Stephen King (1947-) is a best-selling popular writer who has published some thirty novels since 1974. He has also written several collections of short stories, novellas, screenplays, and two works of non-fiction. During the past three decades he has gained a vast number of readers around the world and is nowadays guaranteed to hit number one on bestseller lists in several countries, whenever and whatever he publishes.

The Green Mile was published in 1996. Its publication was a literary event because King attempted at a serial novel more in tune with Dickensian times, each of the six instalments published one month apart from the previous one. After the publication of the last instalment, the six volumes were all up on the *New York Times* bestseller list simultaneously (King 1996:backcover). The novel has subsequently been published as single editions with no alterations made to the text in the preceding six instalments. The version used in the present study is that of the complete serial novel.

The novel is written in first person, the narrator being Paul Edgecombe (subsequently 'Edgecomb' in Darabont's screenplay) in a nursing home, writing down what happened at the Cold Mountain Penitentiary in the 1930s, where most of the novel is then set. In other words, the events at the prison E Block during the Great Depression are framed by the aged Paul's act of narration in the story present.

The main storyline of the novel involves the supervisor Paul Edgecombe and his fellow prison guards Brutus 'Brutal' Howell, Dean Stanton, Harry Terwilliger and Percy Wetmore who work at the death row of the penitentiary as guards who also carry out the executions. Percy, the new recruit and the governor's relative, is constantly stirring up trouble on the Mile. He is abusing his power on the inmates and refusing to follow the professional code and practices of the other guards, undermining Paul's authority along the way and appealing to his "connections" to the state governor. Moreover, a huge, black convict by the name of John Coffey is convicted of raping and murdering two little girls and sentenced to death. When he is brought to the Green Mile, Paul and his fellow guards find out that there is

something special about him. Coffey is a childlike man, seemingly incapable of having committed the kinds of horrendous crimes of which he has been convicted. The novel is an enchanted story of Paul and his friends encountering something miraculous in the form of John Coffey, a Christ-like figure with supernatural powers.

3.2 The Screenplay

Frank Darabont (1959-) is a filmmaker who has worked on relatively few productions during his career. Presently, he has completed sixteen films as a writer and five films as a director, according to the Internet Movie Database (see bibliography). A total of three of them have been Stephen King adaptations. Darabont's first King adaptation was a short film *The Woman in the Room* (1983) based on a short story. His second adaptation, *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994), was nominated for seven Academy Awards and, subsequently, *The Green Mile* received four nominations. The main storyline summarised above remains as such in the screenplay as well as in the motion picture. Like that of the novel, the screenplay (and the film) storyline is also framed by episodes in the nursing home, i.e. the story present where the aged Paul is relating the story to his friend Elaine (as opposed to writing about it as in the novel, where Elaine, however, eventually reads his writings).

Adapting King's work is not an easy or straightforward task, as the burden seems to weigh heavy on both the screenwriter and the director. Indeed, rarely do adaptations on King's stories succeed with critics or with audiences. Largely due to his books being still marketed as being by "the King of Horror" – much in the manner they were marketed in the 1970s – the public opinion of King seems to agree that he is a horror writer, that his books are filled with blood and gore, darkness and devilishness, not to mention easy and popular themes. More often than not, the public image of King's books promoted by marketing neglects to put forward the themes of humanity, friendship, loyalty, companionship, and self-sacrifice that label so many of his works, especially from the 1990s onwards. This one-sided view of King as a horror writer has led to a myriad of B-grade films filled with, indeed, blood and gore. Darabont, however, has chosen to highlight the humanity in King's work with both feature-length films *The Green Mile* and *The Shawshank Redemption*, and that is something few screenwriters or directors have done in the past. In fact, King himself has noted that few people who enjoy the film *The Shawshank Redemption*

know that it has anything to do with his work (Darabont 1999:x). The same perhaps goes with *The Green Mile*.

The screenplay of *The Green Mile* was published in January 2000; a month after the motion picture itself was released. There are several different versions of screenplays that are needed during the process of a story being developed into a motion picture. Cole and Haag (1999:ix) list as an example six different versions of a single script. According to them, the first version is the author's version which may encompass several rewrites. The second one is the one that is sold, and it may be the director or producer's version. It may include camera angles or, for example, deletions of expensive passages as it is budgeted. The third script may be the studio version which is used to package the script, i.e. to "place it with a star". Locations or dialogue may be changed to this version as well, perhaps of production reasons or to fit a star's personality. (Cole and Haag 1999:x)

Furthermore, the fourth type of screenplay is the set version which may include improvised scenes typed in by a secretary after they have been filmed. In other words, the fourth version is what Cole and Haag call a "correct historical log of the shooting" (ibid.). Version five is the legal screenplay typed up from the released film print, and it includes every bit of exact dialogue and every exact cut of the finished product. In the United States, a copy of the fifth version is deposited in the Library of Congress. Finally, version six, the one I am dealing with here, is the published screenplay. Very often this is not in the correct screenplay layout, rather it is "squashed into play format", as Cole and Haag put it (1999:x). *The Green Mile* screenplay, however, is not 'squashed into play format'. Rather it is in the standard script layout including even the original screenplay page numbers alongside with the actual page numbers of the book itself. When referring to the screenplay in the present study, I will use the book's page numbers at the bottom of the page as opposed to those of the original screenplay placed on the upper right hand corner of the book.

In terms of mainstream cinema, Darabont's screenplay is somewhat unorthodox in that it is slightly longer than Hollywood scripts in general. This is true of the finished motion picture as well: it is twice as long as an average mainstream film, in all just over three hours long. The published version of *The Green Mile* is the final shooting draft, in other words, the script that the film crew used when filming the motion picture. This version is ideal for the present study because it is the "finished

script". That is to say, stage one of adapting a novel is complete and the script has been written. It has gone through several revisions and is as such in its most finely polished state, ready to be filmed. However, as my study shows, much goes on in the process of filming as the actors put on their new skins and step in to take the places of the characters who thus far have existed only in print. Kozloff (2000:92) points out that virtually every actor changes the wordings of lines of dialogue. The changes are results of improvisations, cuts, repetitions, stammerings, swallowings, and paraphrasings (ibid.). As abstract characters constructed only of words become flesh and blood, the letters on the pages of the screenplay necessarily undergo a metamorphosis in the process as well. Written dialogue has to become personally spoken, stylised discourse.

In terms of the so-called technicalities of *The Green Mile* screenplay, it is a script with exactly 900 lines of dialogue. How they came into being with regards to the novel, and how they eventually changed in the process of shooting the motion picture, will be thoroughly dealt with below.

3.3 The Motion Picture

The film *The Green Mile*, a Darkwoods Production presented by Castle Rock Entertainment, was released in the United States on December 10, 1999. It was received well, and throughout the reviews it inspired, people seemed to be taken by the acting that was said to be astoundingly good, and the casting that was said to be tremendously strong, even perfect according to some. Stephen King himself has referred to *The Green Mile* as a film with a strong cast led by Tom Hanks (Darabont 1999:xi). It stars Hanks as Paul, Michael Clarke Duncan as Coffey, David Morse as Brutal, Barry Pepper as Dean, Jeffrey DeMunn as Harry, and Doug Hutchison as Percy. Duncan received an Academy Award nomination for his performance.

The Green Mile is generally considered to be "a faithful adaptation" (e.g. Darabont 1999:backcover; Thomas, no date; Nix 2000). A closer comparison with the novel, however, shows that the alleged "fidelity" of the motion picture to the novel is not such a straightforward case, and it perhaps works more as a marketing lure than as a sign of objective evaluation. As my analysis of the dialogue adaptation shows, there are in fact many differences between the two versions of the story (I am excluding the screenplay here). Yet they both have been very successful: whereas the

novel was a best-seller, the motion picture received four Academy Award nominations.

Darabont tells the same story as King did, but the film does incorporate differences, which, however, do not significantly affect the overall picture. To exemplify, in the novel Brutal is supervising the last execution, but in the motion picture the post is Paul's. Here the man supervising the last execution exhibits likeable qualities while facing the ultimate challenge. In my view, the reason behind this alteration might be that the novel is told in first person and the narrator (Paul) concentrates on his friends rather than on himself, which is more attractive to the reader as well, who would not perhaps appreciate the narrator's approach which would rather put himself on a pedestal instead of his friend. However, the main character in the film is Paul, who – according to the Aristotelian mainstream cinema conventions – has to be the most active character as well as the one who needs to play a significant part in the climax and the overall outcome of the film (see Asheim 1949, McKee 1997). Therefore, some of Brutal's actions are delegated to Paul in the film adaptation. That is to say, then, adapting a novel is not simply a question of transferring a book onto the screen. Adaptors make alterations and the basic assumption should be that no changes are introduced without a reason. Especially in the case of adapting a novel into a piece of mainstream cinema, it is clear that there are underlying storytelling conventions dating all the way back to Aristotle and Horatio that guide the storytelling in the film, but are less central to the novel (see Asheim 1949:128). As pointed out above, cinematic dialogue has certain conventions, even genres as Berliner (1999) suggests. *The Green Mile* is an example of mainstream cinema where conventions of mainstream narration are realised through altering the story so that it more fully takes in the viewer who is also naturally accustomed to mainstream narration. Delegating character functions to others and highlighting certain issues while toning down others plays an important part in this process. Furthermore, the dialogue is no less important here, as we shall see.

3.4 The Analysis

For my Bachelor's Degree, I wrote a paper titled *Power and Solidarity – Ending Conflicts in Frank Darabont's "The Green Mile"*. The paper is a pragmatic study of

conflict situations within the group of five guards in the screenplay: Paul Edgecomb, Brutus 'Brutal' Howell, Dean Stanton, Harry Terwilliger and Percy Wetmore. In order to carry out the qualitative study, I used aspects of politeness theory, group communication and the Gricean Maxims as the theoretical framework. I identified the conflicts in the screenplay and proceeded to examine how they were brought to an end, namely whether the characters resolved the conflicts using power or solidarity (or other means) to reinstate the equilibrium broken by the conflict.

The present study grows out of the *Power and Solidarity* paper. At the end of my previous paper on *The Green Mile*, I proposed some topics for further study, and one of them was the one I am looking at in the present thesis. The main question my previous paper raised was that of textual metamorphosis. I found it fascinating that the final version of the story that made it to the screen seemed to be linguistically quite different from the published screenplay. I wanted to examine this difference more closely and find out what exactly were those differences, what their functions are and how their effect can be seen in the character compositions and the relationships between the characters. My hypothesis was that many of the Face-Threatening Acts in the screenplay were left out or changed for the film version because Darabont perhaps wanted to highlight the solidarity even more in the final product (Rauma 2002:32). However, the pragmatic slant of the previous study I conducted on *The Green Mile* has turned into a view planted firmly in the field of adaptation studies, and instead of looking at the relationship between the screenplay and the finished film, I am now including the novel in the equation as well. Moreover, the present study looks at not only the language of the five guards, but of every character in the screenplay and the film. Obviously, there are differences between the three forms of the story called *The Green Mile*, and below I am examining what exactly they are in terms of dialogue. However, my centre of focus is not judging how the novel's dialogue is altered to the film, but tracing the development of dialogue from its literary form towards its cinematic form.

I conducted the analysis using the screenplay as the centrepiece. That is to say, I first viewed the film with the screenplay at hand in order to pinpoint the alterations to dialogue between the two forms: the shooting script and the finished motion picture. At this stage, I identified over 500 dissimilarities between the two texts, ranging from single word omissions to additions of whole speech sequences. I then proceeded to examine the screenplay in relation to the novel. Instead of using the novel as a

starting point, I worked backwards, so to speak, and looked at where and how the lines in the screenplay had been derived from the novel. In my view, this way we are able to appreciate the art of adaptation itself, as we are not forced to concentrate on characters, events and lines of dialogue that are "brutally butchered" when the novel is adapted into a motion picture. It would be perhaps too easy to do this if the starting point of the study was the novel as it most often seems to be. Subsequently, I grouped my findings into appropriate categories according to how the lines of dialogue had been altered with respect to their prior counterparts, i.e. the literary dialogue or the screenplay dialogue. The result was categories such as Dramatisation, Rephrase and Invention, which will all be explicated below. The categories are not based on previous research, for while film adaptation theory and existing research do suggest what might happen to dialogue in the adaptation process, no fixed categorisation has been established so far. Rather, the categories in the present study were dictated, as it were, by the data. To be sure, the categories emerging from the data tell themselves about the differences between the modes of cinematic and literary dialogue, as will be elaborated on below.

The final stage of the data compilation phase included gathering the information on a single sheet of paper in terms of alterations to particular lines along the course of their "lifetime", movement from the novel to the screenplay and from the screenplay to the finished film. That is to say, I compiled a table which shows how, for example, line no. 847 does not exist in the novel, nor does it exist in the screenplay, but is subsequently invented in the process of filming the motion picture. Or how line no. 551 was narrator's speech in the novel and was made into character dialogue and reassigned to another character for the screenplay, but finally the line was dropped out completely from the motion picture. This way, I was able to trace every individual line throughout their existence. Once I had compiled the data and grouped the lines of dialogue according to the adaptation procedures (e.g. Rephrase or Abridgement), I conducted a qualitative analysis on the lines of dialogue, examining more closely what goes on in the lines of dialogue and what effect the adaptation process had on them. Consequently, I was able to make observations on what happens in the process of dialogue adaptation in terms of content, form and language used, and what this tells about the differences between literary and cinematic dialogue in practice.

The following section of the present thesis includes detailed descriptions of the categories of dialogue adaptation in *The Green Mile*. Moreover, each of the category descriptions will be accompanied by examples from the data with respective, elaborate analyses. Hence, in the next section I will first explicate what exactly happened to the dialogue that was incorporated in the screenplay in relation to the novel. Finally, in section 4.2, I will show further developments of the dialogue as it finds – or, in many cases, does not find – its way to the finished motion picture. These developmental features will suggest something on the (dis)similarities between the two modes of dialogue as well as tell us something of the dialogue adaptation process as it can be perceived in the end-product(s). Furthermore, a table showing the number of lines relevant to each of the adaptative categories (as well as their proportional percentages within the whole context of the adaptation) can be found at the end of the present thesis (the Appendix).

4. THE PRESENT STUDY: DIALOGUE ADAPTATION

One of the notions that motivated this study was the assumption that there are two elements that can be directly transferred from a novel to film: plot structure and dialogue. Indeed, it appears that the screenplay and the motion picture indeed follow closely the plot of the novel. The present thesis, however, examines the other entity only, leaving the question of possible plot transferral aside. My initial assumption was that there are differences between cinematic and literary dialogue that are notable to such an extent that direct transferral of dialogue from the novel would perhaps not be advisable if one seeks to write "good" mainstream cinema dialogue. I set out to examine what these differences might be and this resulted in the theoretical framework section above.

The theoretical background provided me with an ample selection of views, some of which were fiercely opposing. I am certain that those often prescriptive views on adaptation, which tend to condemn artistic freedom and insist on textual fidelity, cannot be expected to apply to film adaptations of popular novels. Popular novels do not have the continually reproduced institutional or ideological standing of literary classics. Therefore, the readers are perhaps less likely to be offended by the novel

possibilities of expression offered by cinema and the new interpretations of the story worlds by film adaptations. However, examining the work of a writer such as Stephen King is – although he is a popular writer – perhaps not the most telling example of popular novel adaptations. This is because he is an extremely widely read author, which might impose certain "expectations of textual fidelity" on the adaptation. Indeed, *The Green Mile* is marketed as 'a faithful adaptation of a Stephen King novel'. Yet, I believe that my study will yield important findings that contribute to the field of adaptation studies in more than one way.

First, I hope to be able to show that there are profound differences between cinematic and literary dialogue. This, in turn, will call into question the justification of insisting on textual fidelity. Second, as the analysis will demonstrate, even though the film is ostensibly faithful to the source novel, this does not mean that the dialogue would have been lifted straight out of the novel and inserted into the mouths of Tom Hanks and his fellow acting crew. Third, I seek to shed light on the practices of adapting dialogue. In other words, my analysis will demonstrate what the adaptor does to the lines he decides to utilise from the novel and turn into cinematic dialogue. Finally, I hope that my thesis will draw attention to some of the complexities involved in film adaptation. More often than not, film adaptation is seen as a simple act of transposing a novel to the screen. The dialogue analysis alone suggests that film adaptation is a complicated process of rewriting, rearranging, re-imagining and reinventing. When the adaptors start their work, what there is on the table or on the computer screen is a blank page, plain and simple. The work involved in doing a film adaptation is enormous and at the same time, it is enormously underestimated and under-appreciated. The basic assumption that the novelist has already done all the work could not be farther from the truth. Ultimately, the adaptors have to reinvent the story world in another medium and through their individual consciousnesses and hence, they must, in effect, start from scratch.

In terms of *The Green Mile*, Frank Darabont is a screenwriter with experience on directing, and at the same time he is a director with experience on screenwriting. In other words, he is not the most typical case. He presumably has a more accurate view on film dialogue and perhaps is able to write better film dialogue already in the script writing stage (because he knows what to anticipate when the actors step in to speak out the lines) when compared to a "pure screenwriter" with no experience on directing and working with actors and other filmmaking professionals. However, as

the analysis below will explicate, even in this particular case there are differences between the screenplay and the motion picture, thus suggesting also that the auteuristic view of filmmaking is perhaps not a very realistic one. When the director is also the screenwriter (*and* one of the producers as the case is with Darabont and *The Green Mile*), the chances for artistic dominance and expressive supremacy are much higher. The present case study seems to suggest, however, that the text is mouldable throughout the process and the screenwriter-director-producer's views of the story in the screenplay phase are certainly not salient. Filmmaking is an extreme case of multiple authorship, as Stillinger (1991) points out.

Now I will finally move on to the analysis itself. Section 4.1 demonstrates the kind of dialogue adaptation that exists between the screenplay and the novel. It consists of seven categories of dialogue adaptation types, i.e. actions performed to the lines that exist in the screenplay and have – or, in the case of Inventions, do not have – a basis in the novel. It is important to note here that the individual lines are very often overlapping in terms of categorisation. That is, many times a line may be rephrased but at the same time also reassigned while it perhaps includes an element of invention as well. That is, dialogue adaptation is not a clear-cut case of performing one single action on a line of literary dialogue to make it into successful cinematic dialogue. Moreover, in the examples below, I have <u>underlined</u> certain significant words which will be of special interest in the respective analyses. The <u>thicker underlining</u> in some of the lines of dialogue represents previously existing underlinings in the screenplay or the novel. Each of the categories is exemplified with analyses of lines of dialogue. With these examples, I hope to be able to present a basic picture of dialogue adaptation and its complexities. Furthermore, section 4.2 presents the further developments of cinematic dialogue as the screenplay turns into interpreted lines spoken by the actors when the motion picture is shot. First, however, we start from the beginning and take a look at the dialogue in the screenplay with respect to the novel.

4.1 From Novel to Screenplay

For obvious reasons, I have not included a category titled Deletion here. Whereas the screenplay has exactly 900 lines of dialogue, the novel incorporates a much greater number of lines. The screenplay is the centre to which I am comparing both the novel

and the motion picture. It might be said that it is the work of the adaptor that is under scrutiny here, but not evaluated as an ability to reproduce the novel in another medium, but to tell the story in cinematic terms. Therefore, the focus is necessarily not in what elements of the novel have ended up being excluded, but in those ingredients that the adaptor has been willing to utilise and how exactly he has adapted them to follow the storytelling principles of mainstream cinema. Hence, the categories below grow out of the types of lines present in the screenplay in relation to the novel. That is to say, the starting point for the categories are the lines in the screenplay and I have subsequently traced their origins and, based on my findings, formulated the categories presented below. In all, there are seven categories of dialogue adaptation at the first stage of film adaptation. The categories are Dramatisation, Abridgement, Elaboration, Reassignment, Rephrase, Transference, and Invention. They will all be explicated more thoroughly below. To clarify my definition for a line of dialogue in the novel, I must point out that I consider a line in a novel to be any sections spoken by the one and the same character in a paragraph. That is, in the following quote from the novel, I consider to be only one line of dialogue, which has been divided into two sections separated by narration:

> "I didn't know the sponge was supposed to wet," Percy said in his
> robot voice. "It's never wet in rehearsal." (p.306)

4.1.1 Dramatisation

Dramatisation simply refers to turning a section of narration into dialogue. There are 51 cases of dramatisation at this stage of adaptation. The five different types of dramatisation are: dialogue made out of plain narration (32 cases); the narrator reporting a character's words, including his own (16 cases); narrator voice merging with that of the character, i.e. free indirect discourse (one case); a combination of narration and reporting (one case); and the narration cueing only some words within the line which is otherwise an invention (one case). I will present examples of the two most prominent ones because they cover the category of dramatisation almost to the full and demonstrate clearly what dramatisation of dialogue in film adaptation means. Furthermore, as a third example in this category, I will also demonstrate a case in which narrator's speech is made into voice-over narration. This is a special case of dramatisation, as will be explicated below.

It is important to point out that dramatisation in the majority of cases involves rephrasing. However, there is one case in *The Green Mile* in which a stretch of

narratorial speech (two sentences) has been transferred as such, without modifying the language in the process of dramatisation. It is Percy hollering *Dead man walking! Dead man walking here!* (screenplay p.11), while in the novel the narrator reports his words to the reader: *It was Percy Wetmore who ushered John Coffey onto the block, with the supposedly traditional cry of "Dead man walking! Dead man walking here!"* (novel p.10). However, it is clear that this direct transferral equals only circa one third of the whole sentence in the novel and as such is subjected to heavy Abridgement. Indeed, it would be impossible to have direct transferral of narratorial speech without abridgement, since the whole novel is narrator's language. Consequently, this type of abridgement is inevitable. Furthermore, since the novel in question is narrated in first person by Paul Edgecombe, the basic assumption is that a dramatised line that is *not* reassigned is uttered by Paul in the screenplay and subsequently in the motion picture. Most of the lines, however, are indeed reassigned. Moreover, some of the dramatised lines of dialogue are simultaneously parts of lines that have extra-novelistic elements in them. That is to say, they include Invention as well. The invention element of such lines will be discussed in more detail below in the section 4.1.7.

There is, then, only one such case of direct transferral of narrator speech despite the fact that the narration in the novel is in first person, and thus would perhaps present in certain instances further possibilities of direct transferral. Such cases would include, for example, a character reporting his doings to other characters as in "I turned around so fast I almost fell down" (p.339 in the novel). Clearly, this stretch of narrator's speech would be perfectly suitable for direct transferral. Yet, as pointed out above, no such transferral exists in the adaptation of *The Green Mile* with the exception of one single instance. That, however, is not to say it would not exist in other film adaptations. Undoubtedly, transposing narratorial speech as such to screen would indeed be possible, whether it was in first person or not. Another issue is whether such dialogue would be 'cinematic' enough (e.g. if it was heavy with complex subordination, for example), but that would have to be considered individually with each such line.

The first example (Ex.1) illustrates a case in which plain narration is made into dialogue. The dramatisation is also reassigned. The example presents an instance where the narrator's own thoughts are spoken by another character in the screenplay. It shows a typical instance of dramatisation where plain narrator speech (as opposed

to the narrator for example reporting another character's words or merging with a character voice) is dramatised into dialogue. As pointed out above, there are 32 cases such as this in the screenplay, thus making this type of dramatisation the most prominent one. In the example below, Brutal is referring to one of the guards, Percy Wetmore, who has been causing trouble on the Mile since the very beginning.

(Ex.1) *He'll talk. Sooner or later.* (Brutal, screenplay p. 109)

(1a) *He might keep quiet for a day or a week, continuing to calculate the odds on various actions, but in the end two things—his belief in his connections and his inability to walk away from a situation where he saw himself as the loser—would combine. When that happened, he would spill his guts.* (Narrator, novel p.444-445)

Here a long passage of narrator's thoughts is greatly condensed into two short sentences of dialogue uttered by another character. The line of dialogue follows along the lines of general "rules" of brevity and efficiency associated with cinematic dialogue and spoken language in general. In a way, Brutal's line above is a summary of the narrator's thoughts. The film has a solid, organic structure, and nothing vital is left out of the line despite heavy condensation. That is, at this point in the film, which is near to the end, the viewers will know Percy well enough to inject their knowledge into Brutal's words. In other words, the viewer is apt to understand from these two short sentences uttered by Brutal that Percy will talk because of "his belief in his connections and his inability to walk away from a situation where he saw himself as the loser". All this is what the viewer has witnessed in Percy's behaviour so far. Moreover, interestingly, the brevity and suggestiveness of this particular line seems to imply also what Berliner (1999) called dialogue genres. Brutal's line above is the last line in the scene, and in its finality, it 'predicates commotion', as Berliner put it, suggesting what most likely will happen later.

The dramatised line above is also reassigned. Paul is in the scene as well and could have spoken the words himself, yet one reason for the reassignment would obviously be that of characterisation, since every line defines a character, and Darabont perhaps saw the line of dialogue simply to be "more Brutal than Paul". However, there might be other reasons. The scene at this stage involves only Paul and Brutal, out of whom Paul has been talking more previously in the scene. Therefore, the line might have been reassigned to avoid a silent "dummy" character, if you like, letting Brutal utter the final words. The decision to reassign the line would then have to do with balance between the characters and, perhaps most

importantly, within the scene. Furthermore, increasing the level of interaction on screen (rather than letting Paul have his monologue like in his role as the narrator in the novel) creates a more realistic effect imitating a more equal real-life interaction between two friends and co-workers.

To sum, the example above presents a typical instance of dramatisation in dialogue adaptation. What tends to happen with dramatisation is that the dramatised line of dialogue is commonly shorter than their equivalents in the novel. Generally, what are being abridged, are sections of unnecessary information, such as in the above example, in which the screenplay line of dialogue does not explain and refer to Percy's nature as the narrator does in the novel. Providing this information verbally on screen would be redundant because the viewer has learned it already through judging Percy's behaviour. While redundancy is not necessarily a negative aspect in literature, cinematic narration lags in pace very easily because of it. However, there are exceptions (a couple of them) in which the dramatisation is longer than the equivalent section in the novel by a few words. In addition, there are some lines which are not affected by the dramatisation in terms of word count. As the example above also shows, however, generally dramatisation tends to condense the line. Therefore, dramatisation in the case of *The Green Mile* appears to fulfil the expectations set for cinematic dialogue in that the lines are to the point and compressed.

The second example (Ex.2) presents a case from the category of dramatisation in which the narrator reports his own words or the words of another character, and this reported utterance, in turn, is dramatised into character dialogue. Concerning the example below, I define the line as not being reassigned because although the language itself is the narrator's (i.e. Paul's), he is reporting something that Percy is saying in the story world. Hence, I consider this instance as not being reassigned, since the narrator is relating an utterance that is supposedly spoken by Percy already in the novel's story world. Viewed only on the surface level of the novel, however, one can argue that the words are simply uttered by the narrator and it has nothing to do with Percy as a character. Nonetheless, I do not see this as an instance of reassignment, based on the sub-textual level of meaning in the novel.

(Ex.2) *I'M GONNA RIP YOUR DISEASED HEAD OFF, YOU LITTLE PIECE OF SHIT!* (Percy, screenplay p.29)

(2a) *Percy <u>was vowing</u> he'd <u>catch the goddam mouse and tear its diseased little head right off</u>.* (Narrator, novel p.68)

In the novel the narrator relates to the reader Percy's words (i.e. indirect discourse in literary terms), which are subsequently presented in the screenplay as non-mediated, that is, uttered by Percy himself. This type of dramatisation creates a greater feel of immediacy, which makes a tremendous difference on screen while the level of immediacy in a novel remains the same regardless of whether the action was presented directly or related by the narrator (see Asheim 1949:110). Moreover, the example exhibits some rephrasing, since the narrator's *goddam mouse* is turned into Percy's *you little piece of shit*. The core meanings of the expressions are equal (i.e. Percy sees the rodent as disgusting and despicable), yet they are expressed through different wordings. This is perhaps because a line of dialogue following the novel's wording more closely would sound somewhat unnatural, not to mention redundant in a visual context where the viewer is actually able to see the mouse. Consider an alternative such as this: "I'm gonna rip your diseased head right off! You goddam mouse!" It is also worth noting that simply because the narrator refers to the object of the head-ripping action as a 'goddam mouse' does not mean that Percy in the novel's world would have referred to it as one. After all, we are dealing with the narrator's interpretation and presentation here.

The line in the screenplay lacks the reference to actually catching the mouse, which is implied already in the *I'm gonna rip*, which he can do only if he has caught the mouse first. There is no reason why the reference to the catching could not have been included, but the condensed line (Ex.2) as such is perhaps more effective than if it included the catching reference: *I'm gonna catch you and rip your diseased head off*. Furthermore, we are dealing with a scene full of anger and action here, and the tempo of the scene might be compromised if the line was longer. By condensing the unnecessary element from the line above, the line is shorter and hence more in tune with the scene's fast pace. Moreover, the rephrasing of *goddam mouse* into *you little piece of shit* changes the tone of the line to a more aggressive one, which reflects Percy's anger.

Finally, I will put forward a special example of 'narration into dialogue' with an instance where the narrator's speech is made into voice-over narration in the screenplay (Ex.3). There are some lines of voice-over narration in *The Green Mile*. Paul narrates the story in the novel and the film voice-over belongs to him as well. The few cases of voice-over narration that are included in the motion picture remind the viewer that the events of the film "exist" because the elderly Paul is relating them

to his friend Elaine in the nursing home, which comprises the frame story for the events on the prison E Block. As became apparent in the theoretical framework above, the voice-over or telling narration is cinema's version of a narrator[5]. Furthermore, when the novel is told in first person and the voice-over in the screenplay (and the film) belongs to the same character, who is also the novel's narrator, we are approaching possibilities of direct transferral of dialogue. Indeed, the last example (Ex.3) shows an instance where a passage of narration is dramatised into dialogue (voice-over narration) very closely.

(Ex.3) *We each owe a death, there are no exceptions...but sometimes, oh God, the Green Mile <u>seems</u> so long...* (Paul, voice-over, screenplay p.128)

(3a) *We each owe a death, there are no exceptions, <u>I know that</u>, but sometimes, oh God, the Green Mile <u>is</u> so long.* (Narrator, novel p. 536)

Paul relates the words in both novel and the screenplay and in the latter the line of dialogue includes merely a deletion of three words (*I know that*, which are, again, unnecessary in the context) and a rephrasing of one (*is* becomes *seems*). We are, therefore, very close to direct transferral. We are so also in the sense that these words are the closing lines for both the novel and the screenplay (and subsequently also the motion picture). In all, there are nine lines of voice-over narration in the screenplay. However, only seven of them can be termed 'narration', for the other two do not serve narrative functions. Rather, one of them (uttered by Coffey) is what Lotman (1989) calls 'inner monologue': it presents Coffey's thoughts or perhaps Paul's memory of Coffey's previous words *or*, in this particular case, perhaps Coffey's words might actually be heard by Paul (to whom they are directed) because of Coffey's supernatural powers. In this case, the audience would actually have a brief access into Paul's head. Whichever is the intended effect of the line, the point is that it is not narration as such. Nor is the second voice-over line, uttered by at that point still unidentified person whose identity is revealed at the end of the film. The seven other lines of voice-over narration, however, are spoken by the elderly Paul. One of them functions as a bridge between the past, the 1930s events on the E Block and the story present in the nursing home. The rest of them are uttered by Paul in the story present while in the visual images move from story present to the future and to Elaine's funeral, to the 1930s Green Mile and to the present again.

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[5] See Kozloff 1988:17ff for important distinctions between literary and cinematic voice-over narrators.

The voice-over anchors the time to the story present on one level while the visual images move back and forth in time. In terms of the voice-over dramatisations differing from other lines, one is able to detect some "literary" effects not present elsewhere in the screenplay dialogue. For example, the second last line in the film repeats the words *I think* as in the novel. The result is indeed more literary-sounding than cinematic dialogue generally is:

> I think about all the people I've loved, now long gone. I think about my beautiful Jan, and how I lost her so many years ago. I think about all of us walking our own Green Mile, each in our own time. But one thought, more than any other, keeps me awake most nights… (beat) …if he could make a mouse live so long, how much longer do I have? (Paul, voice-over, screenplay p.128)

The line is quite heavily rephrased when one compares it to the equivalent passage in the novel, and it is also greatly condensed. The passage in the novel takes up almost a whole page. Yet, compared to most of the lines in the screenplay, this is an exceptionally long one. In addition to the repeated pattern of *I think*, there are poetic expressions in the line (*I think about all of us walking our own Green Mile, each in our own time*), which are unusually philosophic. Moreover, the sentences are longer than usual and there is even subordination at the level of syntax. Indeed, the most striking difference is the length of sentences. In effect, compared to basically any other line in the screenplay with the exception of few, the sentence-length here is unsurpassable. This suggests that voice-over narration differs from regular dialogue and it is, indeed, *allowed* to sound "literary". Perhaps this is because voice-over exists outside the main story frame, on a different discourse level (see Kozloff 1988), and is spoken by a disembodied, "god-like", seemingly omnipotent voice and thus the demand for realistic spoken language is perhaps lesser. As I pointed out, the line above is heavily rephrased and condensed already as such, which means that Darabont might have also rendered the line to be more in line with conventional film dialogue. However, he chose not to. Voice-over narration is the "narrator in the cinema" and, consequently, it sounds more like its literary counterpart. In all, out of the seven voice-over lines of the elderly Paul, five are dramatisations and two inventions. One of the invented voice-over lines exhibits longer sentences as well. Therefore, voice-over lines of dialogue seem to be a breed of their own compared to cinematic dialogue in general, and this would certainly warrant some closer examination and theorising also in the field of adaptation studies.

To sum up, it seems that dramatisation tends to affect the lines by shortening and compressing them with regards to their narrator speech counterparts in the novel.

Moreover, as (Ex.1) clearly shows, the effect on sentence-length is notable. With that said, this does not seem to apply to such an extent to dramatisations for voice-over, which seems to lead a life of its own. In terms of the whole context of dialogue adaptation, dramatisation does play a role (there are 51 of such cases), but a rather small one. That is to say, approximately 5.7% of the lines in the screenplay were derived from the narration in the novel. More often than not, these instances included rephrasing and/or reassignment. Therefore, while the percentage remains rather low, dramatisation serves an important function of creating a greater feel of immediacy by converting static narration into dialogue accompanied by action.

4.1.2 Abridgement

What I have chosen to call Abridgement includes omissions of words or sentences, in other words they are deflations, condensations or summaries of a kind. Of all the lines adapted from the novel, 96 can be termed abridgements, that is, 10.7% of the lines in the screenplay. In all, 59 of these abridgements are what I have labelled Cut Transferences (CT), which means that *parts* of lines have been lifted out from the novel intact (as opposed to those I have termed Direct Transferrals or DTs, which are complete lines). These are cases in which some words or sentences before or after a line of dialogue in the novel have been cut. They do not include lines that have deletions of words within the lines themselves, for those are labelled regular abridgements. In this section, I will present a few examples demonstrating both the general type of abridgement and the cut transference type.

First, a few words on Cut Transferences in general. I have chosen to separate CTs from regular abridged lines on the grounds that the CTs approach Direct Transferral. Indeed, the subject of direct transferral of dialogue, as well as the "usability" of literary dialogue as cinematic dialogue in general, was one of the questions that sparked off the present study. Interestingly, a proportionally large number of abridged lines are, indeed CTs. The existence of CTs perhaps testifies of the adaptor's desire to retain dialogue from the source text as such, even if only partly. Conversely, it may also be telling of the source text's dialogue which perhaps incorporates elements that can be considered "cinematic"[6] or which is otherwise unforgettable or interesting and hence "worth" transferring as such (see Ex.4 and

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[6] What this "cinematic dialogue" in literature might mean in reality is yet to be investigated, although it is often referred to by film adaptation researchers.

Ex.66 below). Furthermore, possible motivations for CTs include characterisation and humour as well as the new context of the screenplay – that is, sections of a literary line of dialogue will of course not be utilised if they do not fit into the screenplay context. Therefore, whereas in the context of film adaptation per se, CTs might not differ from regular abridgements in terms of functions or signification, their existence gives evidence of the adaptor's aspiration to seek equivalence between the source text and the adaptation.

The first example (Ex.4) presents an instance of cut transference, i.e. a part of a line having been "lifted out" of the novel intact and included in the screenplay.

(Ex.4)   *Li'l Black Sambo, yassuh, boss, yassuh, how<u>doo</u> you do?* (Billy, screenplay p.64)

(4a)   *"Li'l Black Sambo, yassuh, boss, yassuh, how*doo *you do?" Wharton held his belly and howled. "Gosh, if it had only been ka-ka! I wish it had been! If I'd had me some of that—"* (Billy, novel p.217)

The most prominent property of CTs, as well as regular abridgements, is that they make use of what is considered important in the line of dialogue and discard the rest. Occasionally, then, a potential direct transferral (DT) stops at the level of cut transference, as in the example above. Therefore, a DT is not sought after simply for the sake of direct transferral itself. In (Ex.4) above, however, the cutting of the line was most likely motivated by characterisation and the pace of the scene. Although Billy is a funny character in both the novel and the screenplay, he is less evil and cruel in the screenplay. The line(s) above are a part of a scene in which Billy has just spat a sludge of liquefied chocolate cookie on Brutal's face and he is further making fun of the guard. The scene is short and very compact, everything in it bursting to the fore much like Billy's degrading action on Brutal's face. To include the whole line from the novel would slow down the pace and allow perhaps too much time for Billy's glee at the expense of Brutal's professional reaction to the unexpected event that challenges his authority over the inmate. (His response is to say calmly *Hope your bags are packed* after which we soon have a timecut to Billy being dragged to the restraint room by Paul and Brutal.) Therefore, the characterisation aspect works both ways: by excluding the rest of the line, the screenplay is able to keep Billy perhaps more sympathetic in the eyes of the viewer (generally, people perceive negatively a person who would be prepared to use his own excrement as a part of a joke), and Brutal is able to demonstrate his professionalism by responding to the challenge swiftly.

The last two examples in the category present cases of the so-called regular abridgement. That is, abridgements that have the omissions *within* the stretches of lines and thus "break up" the literary dialogue. I will present both of the examples first and discuss them together below. The omitted words are underlined for clarity.

(Ex.5)   *Still prayin', prayin', gettin' right with Jesus...* (Toot, screenplay p.34)

(5a)   *"Still prayin, <u>still</u> prayin, <u>still</u> getting right with Jesus," Toot overrode me.* (Toot, novel p.103)

(Ex.6)   *Don't you call me that! Wild Bill Hickok wasn't no range rider! He was just a bushwhackin' John Law! Dumb sonofabitch sat with his back to the door and kilt by a drunk!* (Billy, screenplay p.62)

(6a)   *"Don't you call me that!" Wharton screamed shrilly, and I think that for the first time we were seeing real feelings, and not just a clever animal's camouflage spots. "Wild Bill Hickok wasn't no range-rider! <u>He never fought him no bear with a Bowie knife, either!</u> He was just a<u>nother</u> bushwhackin John Law! Dumb sonofabitch sat with his back to the door and <u>got</u> kilt by a drunk!"* (Billy, novel p.212-213)

In both of the cases above, the lines are naturally shortened by the exclusion of selected words. In terms of (Ex.5), the omission concerns only the word *still*, which is retained in the beginning, but dropped out from the rest of the line. The word itself is an "empty" one in that it does not carry any new pieces of information or equivalent meanings. Rather, through repetition, it merely creates the pattern of *still <word>, still <word>...* In the literary source, this creates a sense of droning speech, which can be effectively conveyed through intonation and tone of voice in the subsequent motion picture. Therefore, the actor's interpretation of the abridged line can achieve the effect the repetition in the source text achieves through the staccato-effect of the word *still*. Consequently, the adaptor is able to cut the "unnecessary" words for the screenplay and lose nothing in the process.

Furthermore, while the line above in (Ex.6) cut down, it is not shortened to match the "conventional cinematic dialogue length". Consequently, Brutal in the following line, in fact, acknowledges this by his *Oh, my suds and body! A <u>history lesson!</u>* (a CT of an equivalent line in the novel). In the above example, Billy's reference to Hickok never fighting a bear with a Bowie knife in the novel is cut – presumably because it does not, again, carry any indispensable elements – yet the central message of the line is retained (Billy is vehemently upset that he has been likened to Wild Bill Hickok), and the line remains suitably long to provoke Brutal's amused response.

What the abridgement does to the line, then, is to prune out excessive words without affecting the overall effect of the line within the context of the scene or the whole story. This, indeed, seems to be the most important factor in abridgements: they cut down the length of the line, but do so by removing semantically disposable words such as *still*, *and*, *no*, *I*, *that's*, and the articles. As linguists have shown, people tend not to speak in complete sentences. Presumably, this is the chief motivation behind abridgement in film adaptation: to render the lines less complete and more like natural speech. Therefore, the existence of abridgement suggests that the adaptor anticipates the actors' stepping in and interpreting the characters' words. Moreover, the analysis implies that the realities and the *awareness* of spoken dialogue and its conventions affect the screenwriter more than they affect the novelist.

4.1.3 Elaboration

Elaboration means that something is said using more words, in a more verbose manner. It also includes single word additions such as names of characters and words like *just*, *hey*, *though*, *and*, *that*, etc. Moreover, repetition of words is included here as well. In this first phase of the adaptation, we have 16 instances of elaboration. That is, elaboration affects 1.8% of the lines in the screenplay.

With elaboration, we are often dealing with what Kozloff (2000) called 'verbal embroidery' – and with dialogue many other writers might condemn as long lines that might not be to the point. Kozloff, however, insists that this verbal embroidery does exist in screenplays and that sometimes screenwriters do write words for their own sake, not just to carry a narrative function. Based on my findings, the dialogue in *The Green Mile* seems to support this notion, although in the whole context of the screenplay (or the film adaptation as a whole), the number of such embellishments is quite small. Moreover, the elaborations tend to concentrate to the end of the film and to the voice-over narration. An example of a such "embroidered" part of a line would be such: in the novel (p.167) the narrator says that the reason the penitentiary block was called the Green Mile was *because of the linoleum on the floor* while the equivalent expression in the screenplay (p.8) is more poetic: *because the floor was the color of faded limes*. The stretch of line is only slightly longer, but the added words bring some poetry to the line while adding a touch of "nobility" to the character (i.e. the aged Paul) uttering the words.

In example (Ex.7) below, the elaboration serves the purpose of highlighting the comical aspect of the corresponding line in the novel. Here, the guards are rehearsing the upcoming execution of Bitterbuck, and because of the 'verbal embroidery', the already slightly comical mood of the scene is enhanced:

(Ex.7) *Paul, we're not gonna have some Cherokee medicine man in here whoopin' and hollerin' and shaking his dick, are we?* (Harry, screenplay p.33)

(7a) *"Who's Bitterbuck got?" Harry asked. "We're not going to have some Cherokee medicine man in here shaking his dick, are we?"* (Harry, novel p.103)

The elaboration itself consists of an addition of five words: *Paul* [...] *whoopin' and hollerin' and*. Prior to this, however, the line underwent some cutting (*Who's Bitterbuck got?*) and rephrasing (*going to → gonna*). The effect of adding *whoopin' and hollerin' and* to the line makes Harry's expression more extravagant and thus more comical. Like every line in a film, the elaboration part here also serves as a vehicle of characterisation. There are, however, many instances of elaboration which serve a different, perhaps a less noticeable function: that of a naturalistic effect. In such cases we are dealing with single word additions or additions of two words such as *and* or *I*. The small additions render the line of dialogue more natural, more like the spoken language in everyday interaction situations. The example I will put forward to demonstrate this kind of elaboration is, in fact, Paul's reply to the question Harry posed above in (Ex.7):

(Ex.8) *Well, actually*—(Paul, screenplay p.)

(8a) *"Actually—"* (Paul, novel p. 103)

The motivation for the one-word addition above is perhaps that the adaptor simply feels more comfortable with the two-word solution in the line. In other words, we might be dealing with a simple "gut feeling" from the adaptor's part. Another possible motivation might be that in the adaptor's view, *well, actually* is a more "realistic" way of responding to (or negating) a previous utterance when we are dealing with spoken language. As mundane as the possibility sounds, screenwriters are almost without exceptions encouraged to speak out loud every line of dialogue as they (re)write them simply to hear how they would sound spoken. Starting the "counterargument" with W*ell, actually* is a "softer" way of proceeding to negate a person's view that Cherokee medicine men whoop, holler and shake their dicks, as Harry put it. And this is what Paul indeed does in the next line. There is nothing to say the line from the novel – which is quoted in its entirety above – would not have

been easily transferred as such. Perhaps Darabont, however, simply chose to select a way that he perceived to suit the character and the situation slightly better, thus making the simple line somewhat 'softer' – in linguistic terms, conceivably less face-threatening – by adding just one word: *well.*

Therefore, in the present case study, elaboration seems to serve at least two functions related to 'verbal embroidery': poetic and comic. Moreover, that elaborations occur when the adaptor uses language in his own way, using words of his own and the words that he imagines his character (as opposed to the novelist's) would say in this particular situation. In other words, the lines of dialogue are filtered through the adaptor's consciousness. Furthermore, as Berliner (1999:2) notes, he has hardly ever heard people use his name in a conversation. Yet, this feature is very common in cinematic dialogue. Perhaps it is even more prevalent in cinematic dialogue than literary dialogue, since the elaborations include many additions of addressees as well. Generally, however, the main effect of elaboration is the addition of a word or two to achieve a more naturalistic feel with the dialogue, which is, for the first time, written in order to be spoken out loud.

4.1.4 Reassignment

Reassignment means simply that a line is spoken by a different character in the screenplay than in the novel. One of the possible reasons for reassignment is characterisation. In other words, the adaptor's interpretation of a character differs from the novelist's interpretation, which consequently leads to reassigning a line to another character to whom it perhaps suits better in the adaptor's view. In addition, the screenplay's structure might motivate the reassignment. I believe that sometimes a reassignment exists because a certain line needs to be said, but in order to maintain a balance between the characters in the scene, it needs to be delegated to another character. This, however, would perhaps presuppose that the line reassigned would not be heavily characterisational, for example, and thus easily reassignable to another character who "needs" more lines in the scene. (I might argue that characterisation is, in the end, more important than the structure of the scene in terms of who talks the most etc., and would override purely structurally motivated reassignments.) Related to this, a third possible issue that affects reassignment of lines would be the mainstream film overall structure. As stated in the theoretical framework, McKee (1997:136ff) points out that mainstream films tend to have one main protagonist who

is the most active of all the characters and around whom the action revolves (see also Asheim 1949:46). It would only make sense for this character's centrality to show also on the level of dialogue. As my analysis below reveals, this, indeed, appears to be the case also in *The Green Mile*. Moreover, according to Kozloff (2000:23), the star system in the motion picture business affects dialogue. She maintains that lines of dialogue are "being shifted to (or from) the star to enhance his or her stature" (ibid., see also Asheim 1949:226ff). In my view, however, this is related to the fact that usually the biggest star in the motion picture indeed plays the main character. Therefore, the motivation behind the dialogue reassignment might not be simply the star's stature in itself, but the more structure-related fact that the star is playing a lead role that is the focus in the story, thus "earning" him or her more lines of dialogue. I would suggest that this is the case with many of the reassignments in *The Green Mile*.

In all, there are 97 instances of dialogue reassignment in the screenplay. That is, approximately 10.8% of the lines in the screenplay have been reassigned. Out of these, 85 result from regular dialogue reassignment and nine from assigning narrator speech (plain narration or reported speech) to another character. Moreover, there are three instances where the dialogue of two characters is combined into one line, therefore including reassignment as well. Again, reassignment is not a straightforward case of delegating a line of dialogue to another character, but it more often than not involves rephrasing, sometimes dramatisation and invention as well. Below, I will present three examples of reassignment, one example of an instance of pure reassignment which is done without any mediation that alters the line, another example where the dialogue of two characters is combined and, finally, an example with regular dialogue transfer (a very common case involving rephrasing).

The first example in the category of reassignment (Ex.9) shows the purest possible instance where a character's line is transferred as such to another without any rephrasing or other means of mediation. There are only five of such cases at this stage of the adaptation. The line here is transferred to the screenplay's main character Paul who has taken Brutal's place as supervisor of an execution, unlike in the novel. It is this reversal of roles in the Darabont's adaptation that ultimately dictates the reassignment of the line. The line of dialogue is very 'cinematic' in the sense that it consists of a short and simple sentence; therefore there is no need – in fact, basically no possibility – to do much to it. It is a simple order given to another character:

(Ex.9)   *Roll on one.* (Paul, screenplay p.121)

(9a)   *Roll on one.* (Brutal, novel p.506)

As will be explicated below when discussing direct transferrals of lines, it is these kinds of very simple lines of dialogue that are transferred directly to screen rather than long, complex sentences with subordinated clauses. Again, it seems that the differences between literary dialogue and cinematic dialogue are not to be found in the shorter lines in the novel but in the more complex ones. While the novel tolerates both short lines of dialogue like the one in the example (Ex.9) above and longer lines such as Brutal's very lengthy line in (Ex.44a) below, the long and more complex lines of literary dialogue will be utilised carefully and selectively by the adaptor.

The second example is that of reassignment with combined character dialogue. That is to say, a part of the line is taken from another character and merged in with the line of dialogue of the one that utters the line of dialogue in practice.

(Ex.10) *No game. See for yourself.* (Paul, screenplay p.73)

(10a)   *None of this is a game, my friend.* (Brutal, novel p.271)

   "Go and check for yourself," I said. "It's a free country." (Paul, novel p.271)

Here the lines of Brutal and Paul are merged into one (*No game. See for yourself.*). The line is subsequently uttered by Paul in the screenplay, Brutal therefore "donating" his line to Paul. The combined line includes omission of Brutal's *my friend* and Paul's *It's a free country* (10a). Moreover, like (Ex.9) above, the present example also involves rephrasing. It is worth noting that rephrasing generally shortens the line(s). This is true of the example (Ex.10) above as well. Both the line itself is much shorter than the two combined ones together (in fact, shorter than *either* of them) and the two sentences in the screenplay line are short and simple in themselves. It seems, then, that the motivation for combining lines lies in – again – compression and economy. To whom the combined line is delegated, however, appears to hinge upon the characters' mutual standing within the film's story framework, following a certain tendency of delegation explicated in more detail below after (Ex.11).

The final example in the reassignment category shows the most typical case of dialogue delegation: regular dialogue reassignment. As the case so often is, the example in this category also includes a rephrasing of the line. Here is an example in which a line is reassigned from Dean to Paul:

(Ex.11) *Percy. You want to think about what you were doing just now.* (Paul, screenplay p.30)

(11a)   *"You want to think about what you <u>was</u> doing just now," Dean said.* (Dean, novel p.89)

The rephrasing affects only one word in the line, the verb *were/was*. The grammatically non-standard form is changed into the standard form, thus making the character appear perhaps more sophisticated and literate than if he was using the form often labelled as incorrect. This type of rephrase occurs elsewhere in the film adaptation as well (see, for example, (Ex.44) for another instance where *ain't* becomes *isn't*), rendering the film adaptation (main) characters somewhat closer to the standard in terms of the language they use. As pointed out above, here the line is reassigned from Dean to Paul, the main character in the film and also the death row supervisor, i.e. highest in command. Interestingly, there is a clear pattern governing the reassignments in terms of who, in general, "gives" lines to other characters and, furthermore, who gets to "receive" lines.

Indeed, what is even more interesting than *how* a line is reassigned is the question of *who* is it reassigned *from* and *to whom*. While it is an easy question to answer how a line is reassigned – it is simply transferred to another, often with some modifications – the most interesting points in terms of film adaptation arise from the reassignment ratios in "donated" and "received" lines. To be sure, there are certain tendencies involved in reassigning dialogue in *The Green Mile*. These have to do with characterisation, but I believe also with the conventions of classical mainstream narration. That is to say, for example, the main characters receive lines of dialogue from secondary characters to build up their characters and bring them more to the front.

In all, 34% of all the reassigned lines are delegated to the main character Paul Edgecomb. This is indeed a significant percentage (as opposed to Brutal's 14%), which signals clearly the mainstream cinema conventions in terms of character composition with regards to the overall structure of the film. Clearly, the most prominent feature of reassignment is the transferring of Brutal's lines to Paul. Four of Paul's lines are delegated to Brutal in the screenplay, but Paul obtains 17 of Brutal's lines. In all, Paul "gives" 11 lines to other characters and "receives" 34 lines in return. To compare this with other main characters, Brutal gives 19 lines and receives 14 whereas the ratio with Dean is 23/4, with Harry 14/15, and with Percy 2/1. Paul gives most of his lines to Brutal (4) and receives the most from Brutal (17). Brutal receives the most lines from Harry (6) and gives the most to Paul (17). Harry,

in turn, receives the most lines from Dean (9) and gives most of his to Paul (7). Finally, Dean receives the most lines from Paul (2) and gives the most to Harry (9). The large number of received lines with Harry have their origins in Dean and Paul who gives two lines, and a few other characters who all "donate" a line each. Hence, Harry gets much of Dean's lines – and some of his characteristics in the process. Indeed, there is a certain sense of, if not switching of roles between Dean and Harry for the screenplay, then at least a sense of the novel's Dean "leaking" into the screenplay's Harry via the lines of dialogue. As can be deducted from Percy's ratio, he remains much the same as in the novel, judging from the point of view of dialogue reassignment.

What can be deducted from the reassignments, then, is that Paul is clearly lifted up to be the main character in the screenplay. He receives a striking number of lines from Brutal, whose prominence in the novel is thus somewhat lowered for the screenplay. This follows the mainstream film conventions according to which a screenplay has to have one stronger character, an active protagonist who serves as the focus for the audience. Moreover, this character needs to play a part in the final phases of the story (in *The Green Mile* Darabont does this by, for example, switching the roles of Brutal and Paul in the climactic scene where the last execution of an inmate takes place).

Therefore, Darabont has not delegated 17 out of the 19 lines of Brutal's "dialogue donations" to Paul to spite Brutal's fans, but to serve the purposes of mainstream cinema narration conventions. While Brutal may have a somewhat greater prominence in the novel, the main character in the film adaptation is Paul. Brutal's prominence in the novel may well have to do with the fact that the readers appreciate the first-person narrator Paul more when he does *not* highlight himself, but rather his right-hand-man Brutal. Stephen King undeniably knew this when he was writing the novel. However, Frank Darabont also knew that by keeping some of the most memorable lines in the novel uttered by Brutal for him, rather than reassigning them to Paul, he would have splintered the focus of the screenplay between two major characters. Thus, he would perhaps have diminished the emotionally satisfying ending for the main character produced by the 'Archplot' structure of the classical story design (see McKee 1997:45) that originates with Aristotle and which is, in other words, the mainstream cinema story structure with the sole, active main protagonist who is the centre of the screenplay.

Another remarkable issue involved in reassignment of the lines of dialogue is that Curtis Anderson in the novel gives eight lines to warden Hal Moores who takes the place of the rude and aggressive Anderson in the screenplay. Anderson, in fact, does not exist at all in Darabont's *The Green Mile*. Another case such as this is between the novel's cruel nursing home worker Brad Dolan, who is deleted from the screenplay and some of his lines are modified and delegated to an invented, much kinder character Hector, also working in the nursing home. These choices involving reassignment, amongst others, reflect Darabont's different interpretation and handling of the story mood in his adaptation. Clearly, by analysing also the lines that never made it to the screenplay (which will not be dealt with in the present study), we would be able to draw a comprehensive picture of the film adaptation in terms of characterisation and the differences between the mood and other aspects of the novel in relation to the film adaptation. After all, what happens to those lines in the screenplay that do have a basis in the novel is only part of the whole picture. Lines that never made it to the screenplay would add the rest of the details to the complex picture that is film adaptation.

4.1.5 Rephrase

Rephrase means simply saying much the same thing but in other words. The novel-screenplay stage of *The Green Mile* has 340 instances of rephrase. Therefore, approximately 37.8% of the lines in the screenplay have their origins in the novel, but have been incorporated to the script after rephrasing them. As the examples below will demonstrate, rephrasing serves several purposes. It is used to alter the lines so that they correspond better with the adaptor's view of the characters, for example, and it often compresses the lines of dialogue in the novel, foregrounding in the screenplay narrative that which is important within the line. In some cases, however, rephrasing may also make the line longer than in the novel. Therefore, I have, in effect, divided the rephrasings into three subcategories according to their relationship with the lines of dialogue in the novel. Consequently, I termed the three subcategories Contraction, Annex and Custom. Contraction means that as a result of rephrase, the line in the screenplay is shorter than its counterpart in the novel. Annex, in turn, means that the rephrased line is longer than the line of literary dialogue. Finally, Custom means that the line length is not significantly altered in the process of rephrase. I chose to examine the relationship of the lines between them and

literary dialogue in terms of line length on the grounds that the theoretical framework suggested so strongly that cinematic dialogue consists of short(er) lines. Indeed, my analysis showed that there are 199 cases of Contraction as opposed to 38 instances of Annex and 103 of Custom.

Below, I will present examples from each of the three categories in order to show the most typical instances of rephrasing and illustrate the functions and possible motivations they might have. The first example (Ex.12) demonstrates an instance in which rephrasing does not significantly alter the length of the line. The part of the line in brackets is an invention added to the rephrase itself.

(Ex.12) *You and Harry and Percy are all <u>down</u> in the laundry <u>doing your wash</u>…(probably take ya'll a few hours before you're back—)* (Dean, screenplay p. 96)

(12a) *"[…] You and Harry and Percy are <u>over</u> in the laundry, <u>washing your clothes</u>."* (Dean, novel p.378)

The rephrase in this particular line means exactly this: *down in the laundry* changes into *over in the laundry*, and *washing your clothes* changes into *doing your wash*. In the screenplay, there is no implication of 'washing one's clothes' referring to card games and moonshine being drunk in the prison laundry by some guards as in the novel, where the narrator contends that "[w]hen you spend your life taking care of mud-men, you can't help getting a little dirty yourself". Therefore, there is no obligation to retain the 'washing your clothes' expression in the adaptation on the grounds that it might be a specialised term used for the occasional illegal get-togethers. Conversely, then, the rephrase is significant in that it renders the expression more colloquial: compare, for example 'over there' and 'down there' or 'wash the dishes' and 'do the dishes'(see also Ex.35 and Ex.36 for similar rephrases). While the literary dialogue in this particular case might not be very "literary" (there is an abundance of variant spellings and non-standard grammatical forms in King's novel), the screenwriter has to be increasingly aware of spoken language and its conventions, since his dialogue ultimately ends up in the actors' mouths (see, for example, (Ex.5) for dropping out the last 'g' from *praying* for the screenplay). Hence, the degree of "realism" of the dialogue in terms of its relationship with conventions of spoken language is higher for screenplay dialogue than literary dialogue, which, in reality, ends up read aloud only rarely. Moreover, the literary narrator can convey information on the characters that makes them more like "real people". The screenwriter, in turn, has less room for explanations and

embellishments, and so the dialogue has to make the characters realistic. The rephrase above, then, is a typical instance of rephrase in which the line is changed slightly so that it becomes more colloquial.

The next example demonstrates the major subcategory of contraction. Here rephrase means also cutting down the length of the equivalent line in the novel.

(Ex.13) *You expect me to believe that? I heard the goddamn thing crunch.* (Percy, screenplay p.72)

(13a) *"You expect me to believe that? The goddam thing* crunched*! I heard it! So you can just—"* (Percy, novel p.270)

In (Ex.13), the rephrase combines two sentences into one (*The goddam thing* crunched*! I heard it!* becomes *I heard the goddamn thing crunch*). The rephrase does not affect the meaning of the sentences themselves, but renders the expression somewhat tighter. In addition, in terms of the effect on the actor's interpretation, the rephrase allows Percy to remain more calm and self-assured in the scene. Instead of bursting out his anger (as the line in the novel suggests), Percy in the screenplay appears unfaltering and sure of his interpretation of the past situation, where he stepped on Del's pet mouse and killed it. Therefore, while the contraction type of rephrase renders the lines shorter than their equivalents in the novel, it is not to say that there would be no effects on the lines themselves or their suggested interpretation regarding the actors' work. As in other cases of rephrase, the act of changing the line reflects also the adaptor's view of the storyworld. Through comparatively small modifications, the adaptor is able to make use of an existing line in the source text, but mould it so that it meets his vision of the story, its characters and, for example, the mood of the scene.

The next two examples present cases of what I have termed Annex, that is, rephrasing a line so that the resulting line in the screenplay is longer than its literary predecessor. The motivations to this type of rephrasing seem to be those of 'verbal embroidery'. In other words, the result of the rephrase serves a comic or a poetic function or, in some cases, a characterisational function. Below, I will present the two examples together and then proceed with the respective analyses.

(Ex.14) *Percy. They're moving house over in the infirmary. Why don't you go see it they could use some help?* (Paul, screenplay p.12)

(14a) *"Percy," I said. "They're moving house over in the infirmary."*
"Bill Dodge is in charge of that detail—"
"I know he is," I said. "Go and help him." (Paul, novel p.14)

(Ex.15) *You be still now. You be so quiet and so still.* (Coffey, screenplay p.103)

(15a)   *"I see it," he said. Speaking not to her—I don't think so, anyway—but to himself. "I see it, and I can help. <u>Hold still...hold right still...</u>"* (Coffey, novel p.408)

The first example (Ex.14) serves mainly one function, that of characterisation. The analysis suggests that the rephrase grows out of the different degrees of realistic presentation of the two media. Furthermore, while the novel is able to "divert" the reader's attention away from certain things, the screenplay anticipates the "in-one's-face" realism of the visual medium. That is to say, the novel's line is blunt and a straightforward order that threatens Percy's authority in the situation. Moreover, the line in the novel does not seem to take into account the presence of the new inmate in the situation (Coffey is standing right next to the guards). In the screenplay rephrase, however, the inmate's presence is accounted for and Paul tries to uphold Percy's authority in the eyes of the inmate. In other words, the screenplay anticipates the visual context of the film, in which the viewer never loses the sight of the whole situation. While in the novel the line of dialogue can "drown" amidst the other words, other lines of dialogue (the dispute between Paul and Percy goes on for a page in the novel, unlike in the screenplay) and explanative narration (which concentrates here on Paul's physical unease because of his painful urinary infection and mental irritation caused by the late-summer heat and Percy's unprofessionalism), the immediacy and the (photo)realism of the future film experience would not tolerate the exclusion of the inmate vs. guard standing. Therefore, the adaptor renders the line so that it takes into account the fact that the guards (including Percy) should be professionals and seek to uphold their authority over the inmates. A guard losing his control and digressing into a verbal fight, and receiving a direct order because of insubordinate behaviour in front of an inmate would undermine his standing and perhaps cause danger on the block later on due to his abated authority.

The last example in the rephrase category is a line from Coffey (Ex.15), which is rephrased so that it corresponds almost exactly a previous line he has uttered in the screenplay (a line, which was originally rephrased and reassigned from Del to Coffey for the screenplay). This, it turn, makes the line characterise Coffey even more intensely, since the line's core is repeated in the screenplay, unlike in the novel. The line that Coffey uttered before was *You be still, Mr. Jingles. You be so quiet and so still*, which was in the novel spoken by Del (p.15), also to the mouse: *Be still, Mr. Jingles. Just be so still and so quiet*. The rephrase in (Ex.15), then, is a sort of verbal embellishment, if you like, rendering the adapted line more poetic. The length of the

part of the line that is adapted here grows from five words (*Hold still… hold right still*) to eleven while the rest of the line (*I see it. I see it, and I can help*) is adapted into another line present earlier in the script.

4.1.6 Transference

Transference is simply a word-for-word rendering of a line in the novel. The line, however, is not necessarily uttered in equal contexts in the two media. There are a couple of issues that need to be pointed out concerning my classification of transferred lines. First, I have chosen to classify a transferred line that is also reassigned as simply transferred. Moreover, I include lines with slightly differing spelling as transferred. To give an example, there is a line in the novel (p.224) *Whatchoo talking about?*, which is consequently spelled in the screenplay as follows: *Whatchoo talkin' bout?* (screenplay p.65). This is, according to my categorisation, a directly transferred line. The spelling in the screenplay anticipates the actor's actual voicing of the line and need not, in my opinion, be considered different from the equivalent line in the novel. After all, the syntax and semantics of the line do not change.

I identified 95 instances of Transference in the screenplay. In other words, the transferred lines comprise approximately 10.6% of the dialogue at this stage. Some of the directly transferred lines are extended with invention (12 cases) or rephrase (four cases). That is, the transferred lines do not always end up standing on their own in a line of dialogue, but are added to or embellished with stretches of invented or adapted dialogue. 'Pure transfers', in turn, are directly transferred lines without any additions. Below, I will give three examples of transference. The first example (Ex.16) is a directly transferred line without additional stretches of dialogue (a pure transfer). The last two examples (Ex.17) and (Ex.18) demonstrate transferences with invention and rephrase, respectively.

The first example (Ex.16) in the present section is a case of pure transfer, which is by far the most prominent instance of transference:

(Ex.16) *What did you do, big boy? What did you do to me?* (Paul, screenplay p.51)

(16a) *"What did you do, big boy?" I asked in a low voice. "What did you do to me?"* (Paul, novel p.185)

In all, 79 of the transferred lines are these types of pure transfers. That is to say, circa 8.5% of all the lines in the screenplay are directly transferred from the novel and stand on their own (i.e. are not combined with rephrased sections or inventions). The

percentage may not be very high, but 79 lines of directly transferred dialogue is not insignificant, either. What is typical of these transferred lines is that they are short (usually less than ten words) and they normally consist of one to three short sentences, such as in the example above. In the present case of dialogue adaptation, however, there are exceptions to the presupposed "rule" of pure transfers being simple and short. Yet, their number is fairly insignificant in the totality of the film – or even of the pure transfers – since there are only five directly transferred lines that exceed 15 words, the longest one of them being 36 words (two sentences). Hence, the conclusion is that not only simple and short sentences are transferred directly. Indeed, the longer transferred lines that exist in *The Green Mile* have something in common. Three of them have a humorous effect while the two others exist in a "lull" actionwise. That is, the last two are parts of scenes which are scarce in action but emotionally charged (the speakers of those lines being an inmate preparing to be executed and a woman whose life has been saved a minute earlier).

Generally, however, the transferred lines are more in tune with the following: *They got all the men they need* (screenplay p.12), *Yes sir, boss, I can talk* (p.13), *I'm listening* (p.57), *Holy Christ, he's pitchin' a fit* (p.63), and *Does it hurt, yet? I hope it does! I hope it hurts like hell!* (p.121). Consequently, literary dialogue with long lines, such as presented in (Ex.6) and (Ex.44), is heavily cut and only the most essential parts (in terms of information, characterisation or, for example, humour) are transferred. As became apparent above, I do not count transferred lines with heavy cutting as transferred, since often the majority of a line does not survive to the screenplay. Therefore, the Cut Transferences, as I have chosen to term them, are listed under Abridgement rather than Transference.

There are 12 instances of the second type of transferral presented in the next example (Ex.17). Here, the transferred line is added to with invention. That is, a part of the line is extracted as such from the novel, yet the screenwriter has found it necessary to provide additional information or, for example, characterisation-related material. In the example below, however, the function of the invention incorporated in the line of dialogue is to "weld" it to the previous line, which is an invention as well. To clarify the example and its relation to the previous lines, I will present also the two preceding lines. The underlined part of the last line below is the directly transferred one.

(Ex.17) *Is his head properly shaved?* (Paul, invention, screenplay p.33)

> *No, it's dandruffy and it smells.* (Dean, invention, screenplay p.33)
>
> *I'll take that for a yes. All right, Arlen, let's go.* (Paul, invention and transference, screenplay p.33)

The addition, *I'll take that for a yes*, is an invented reaction to the preceding invented line, namely Dean's reference to Toot's (an inmate) dandruffy head. The equivalent sequence in the novel does not have the comic undertone that the invented lines above bring to the scene. The example above demonstrates how seamlessly invented lines and transferred lines can coexist in a screenplay. Therefore, it seems unjustifiable to suggest that extra-novelistic material could not be incorporated with material taken directly from the source text without inevitably resulting in a disaster. Direct transferral in *The Green Mile* suggests that pure transfer is not the only option for integrating dialogue straight from the novel, but that the line of pure transfer can well interact with other types of adaptation (as will be explicated in the last example in this category) and even invention – even within one single line of dialogue.

The third example (Ex.18) in the present category is a case where a line is transferred as such, but has been extended through rephrasing the rest of the line or some other line. There are only four of such cases in *The Green Mile*. In the last example in this category, I will put forward an instance in which two lines are combined by transference and rephrasing (the element of rephrase was analysed above in Ex.14):

> (Ex.18) *Percy. They're moving house over in the infirmary. Why don't you go see if they could use some help?* (Paul, screenplay p.12)
>
> (18a) *"Percy," I said. " They're moving house over in the infirmary."*
>
> *"Bill Dodge is in charge of that detail—"*
>
> *"I know he is," I said. "Go and help him."* (Paul and Percy, novel p.14)

In the above example, Paul's first line (*Percy, they're moving house over in the infirmary*) is transferred as such. Moreover, the line in the screenplay is added to with a rephrased section of another line, in this case also spoken by Paul. Therefore, the line of dialogue in the screenplay is a combination of two separate lines in the novel, and hence it is, as a whole only in part directly transferred. A possible motivation for rephrasing here is the same as in the rephrases dealt with above: they are motivated by either questions of characterisation which are different for the adaptor compared to the novelist, or they are perhaps worded so that the line becomes shorter than it originally was or, conversely, the line is verbally embellished by another expression. The very basic effect is that combining lines saves time in a

scene, which is presumably the motivation in the case above. In terms of transferral, examples (Ex.17) and (Ex.18) support the view according to which transferral of lines from the novel to the screenplay is not a fixed process of copy-paste. The transferred lines necessarily interact with the other surrounding lines and, indeed, the whole context of the screenplay.

4.1.7 Invention

Invention equals producing a line that does not exist in the novel as spoken by any one of the characters or presented by the narrator in the narration itself. We are, then, dealing with a line of dialogue that cannot be traced back to the novel or said to be cued by the literary predecessor. Hence, inventions are extra-novelistic elements in the adaptation which can be seen to serve the adaptor's interpretation of the characters or the story, or to serve the story itself, e.g. by adding coherence to the story's unfolding.

The question of invention is not a straightforward issue in terms of reception. Some see them as ugly and disrespectful deviations from the source text author's intentions, some as necessary additions to the storytelling, as expressions of the filmmaker's own vision, or as innovations that make the most out of the film medium's capabilities resulting in unforgettable scenes. Whatever the attitude towards the inventions may be in each case, motivations for inventions are various. Perhaps the chief motivation, and the most obvious one would be that the source text is lacking something that the adaptor considers to be of importance in order to get certain information across to the viewer, whether it be characterisational, plot-related or concerned with some other end in the storytelling process. Moreover, adaptors might think that they are able to articulate something in a more appropriate or effective way than what said in the equivalent passage in the source text. An invention might also serve the adaptor's interpretation of the story, perhaps enhancing an aspect in the novel or thwarting another one. Furthermore, a line might be invented to highlight a character trait to make him or her more likeable, or it might add coherence to the narrative flow. In addition, a line might be invented to carry a theme or serve the structure (as with Berliner's (1999) dialogue genres above, where certain types of lines close off a scene, for example). What is clear in terms of inventions is that they exist because the adaptor thinks they will somehow better the film. As the dialogue analysis of *The Green Mile* will show, those inventions that

have a clear purpose within the motion picture survive until the end and others are left on the cutting room floor. The essential point is that the inventions exist for a reason. They are not there to mark departure from the novel and assert the screenwriter's artistic rights just for the sake of it, nor are they there to annoy the 'loyal reader' (see Nokes, as quoted by Sheen 2000:16).

In all, there are exactly 400 inventions in the screenplay. The number of inventions is staggering, considering that the whole screenplay consists of 900 lines of dialogue. These figures mean that inventions influence 44.4% percent of the lines one way or the other. That is, the line itself is an invention or an invention may be present as a part of a line that is, for example, rephrased. Out of these 400 lines, 340 are completely extra-novelistic, i.e. are not suggested by the literary predecessor even partly.

Most of the inventions in *The Green Mile* are just that, inventions, which means that the whole line is made up and it does not have a point of reference in the novel. However, there are some inventions that are a part of, for example, rephrased or dramatised lines of dialogue. In such cases, the invented part of the line is longer than a few words, which distinguishes it from Elaboration. Furthermore, the range of inventions stretches from an invented line standing on its own amongst lines derived from the novel – one way or the other – to long sequences of successive inventions, the longest being a stretch of seventeen invented lines (i.e. an entire scene). Below, I will present five examples of inventions. One of them is an invention embedded in a rephrased line, the line, therefore, ending up having a strong invented streak in it. The second example includes two invented lines in a short sequence that makes up a scene. Moreover, I will put forward an example of a short invented sequence that exists amongst lines derived from the novel. This will show how invention is used to provide necessary information, amongst other things. Based on my analysis, other reasons for inventions are adding depth or cohesion to the scene, digging deeper into a character, or simply adding a slightly lighter, comic touch to the drama. Indeed, the second example (Ex.20) demonstrates this comic functionality. The fourth example exhibits a case in which the invented line has a special function of closing off a scene, referred to earlier by, for example, Berliner (1999). Finally, the last example in the present category is an introduction of an invented element through a line of dialogue in the adaptation, the element eventually spanning over the whole arch of the motion picture.

The first example in this category (Ex.19) shows invention of dialogue combined with customary dialogue adaptation, which, in this particular case, is rephrasing. Percy's line below is directed at an executed, native American inmate lying dead on a gurney. I have underlined the invented element in the example below for clarity.

(Ex.19) *Adios, Chief. <u>Drop us a card from hell, let us know</u> if it's hot enough.* (Percy, screenplay p.39)

(19a) *"Adiós, Chief," he said. "Hope hell's hot enough for you."* (Percy, novel p.115)

Percy is perhaps the worst of the bad in the story, a wolf wearing a sheep's skin, in a way, since he is superficially supposed to be one of the "good guys" as he is a prison guard and not one of the inmates on death row. Yet, he exhibits his cruelty continuously towards the inmates as well as his fellow guards, which is perhaps why the invention above was added to the line. *Drop us a card from hell* makes the line of dialogue even more taunting because it polarises the relations between the electrocuted inmate and the guards and suggests an action that cannot possibly be implemented, all the while likening an individual's death to a holiday. The finality of death is downgraded to a vacation in hell, as if the inmate was able to send postcards which all, stereotypically, carry good news, especially about the weather. Moreover, the invented *drop us* part likens the attitudes of the other guards to Percy's own. Paul and Brutal are present in the room when Percy utters the words, and Brutal's reaction (he snatches Percy's hand away from the inmate's face and proceeds to tell Percy to *keep* [*his*] *goddam hands off him*) clearly assures the reader of the screenplay that Percy treating the group of guards as a unanimous unit is ungrounded. Again, it is worth noting that the line from the novel would have been perfectly transferable as such. Yet, the adaptor chose to add to it and, indeed, as the example shows, the invention here serves a purpose of characterising Percy further as a villain and underlining his cruelty, prompting the reader to feel stronger repulsion towards him.

The second example in this category (Ex.20) presents a short invented scene that is cued by the novel in one sentence, yet the two lines of dialogue are purely inventions. The invention here includes not only dialogue, but also a character. Therefore, a single sentence in the novel gives rise to all this: the adaptor builds a scene around it, creates a character (Earl) and invents the two lines for him and Bill (a guard). I maintained above that invention includes lines of dialogue that cannot be traced back to the novel, yet here I am explicating that the novel cues the inventions

in the next example. This is simply because in my view, the novel does not cue the lines of dialogue themselves in any way. As will be shown below, however, it does cue the scene and the janitor character, but it does not prompt a line from the character, let alone *the* line the screenwriter chose to write to him. Nor does the line in the novel suggest that the scene includes interaction between Earl and Bill. Here are the two invented lines that comprise a short scene in the screenplay:

(Ex.20) *Been sweepin' floors here ten years, never had to wear no damn tie before.* (Earl, invention, screenplay p.65)

You're a V.I.P. today, Earl, so just shut up. (Bill, invention, screenplay p.66)

(20a) *The politician from the state capital would most likely turn out to be an office janitor in a borrowed tie. But Delacroix had no way of knowing any of that.* (narrator, novel p.227)

The future scene to which the narrator here implies (a "politician" form the state capital attending a show put on by an inmate and his pet mouse) is never delved into in the novel. In the screenplay, however, we are shown Earl the caretaker preparing to be presented as a politician from the state capital. In the screenplay, Earl establishes himself as a prison caretaker (*been sweepin' floors here ten years*) and the fact that a prison guard is putting on the tie for him in the scene suggests that it is borrowed rather than Earl's own, in which case he probably would have put it on himself. The fact that another character puts it on for him suggests that the unprepared Earl was "dragged" to the room to be presented as a VIP guest when he was perhaps sweeping those floors he here talks about. The ultimate effect of the invention here is that of comic relief. The short invented scene is inserted between scenes of preparing for an execution rehearsal and, subsequently, ending one. Moreover, as can be deducted from this, the other function of the invention is to compress time. The very short scene with only two lines replaces a very long scene of execution rehearsal, which has already been included once in the screenplay. Therefore, the reader of the screenplay (or viewer of the future film) already has the knowledge of what goes on in the rehearsal and repeating it would be greatly redundant.

The third example in the category (Ex.21) is a case in which a short sequence of invented lines amidst adapted lines realises the principle of film dialogue according to which as much should be said in the least number of words. The invention provides necessary information for the viewer and cues a future scene. Again, for clarity, I have underlined the invented lines between the rephrased, adapted lines.

(Ex.21) *If it's something they can see with an X-ray, maybe it's something they can fix.* (Paul, rephrase, screenplay p.20)

Maybe. (Hal, rephrase, screenplay p.20)

This just came in. D.O.E. on Bitterbuck. (Hal, invention, screenplay p.20)

You didn't come all the way down here just to hand me a D.O.E. (Paul, invention, screenplay p.20)

No. I had an angry call from the state capital about twenty minutes ago. Is it true you ordered Percy Wetmore off the block? (Hal, rephrase, screenplay p.20)

The example shows invention used also as a vehicle of cohesiveness within a scene and a stretch of the whole story. The two invented lines above combine two events and provide a concise "burst" of information to the viewer. In the novel the D.O.E. on Bitterbuck is not announced in itself and the scene from which the above stretch of three rephrased lines is extracted consists of two issues: Paul and Hal discussing Hal's wife Melinda and her headaches and the problems Percy has caused on the Mile. The screenplay, however, uses invention to include more information (Bitterbuck is to be executed shortly) and move perhaps more gently from one topic to the other. To exemplify, the novel moves from Melinda to Percy in the following way, through Hal's line of dialogue: "I thank you for your concern, Paul. Now let's talk about Percy Wetmore" (p.52). Otherwise, the scene follows along the lines of the novel. The two inventions, in other words, replace the above-mentioned line of dialogue from the novel. Moreover, the invented line for Paul adds tension to the scene as well: when he suspects Hal did not come to see him just to hand him a paper that Paul is accustomed to receiving occasionally in his line of work, the audience knows to expect to hear something from Hal that might threaten Paul or at least affect him negatively. Such, indeed, is the case. Paul's job might be in danger because Percy has called his aunt to complain, ironically, how Paul has been treating him on the E Block. Hence, again, the invention here has a clear function and a purpose: it provides information and adds tension to the scene while rendering the conversation between Paul and Hal perhaps more unobtrusive in terms of topic changing.

The example below (Ex.22) is one where the functionality of an invented line comes to the fore in a way Berliner (1999:3) suggested above (under the heading 2.3.2 *The Realism of Cinematic Dialogue*), when he gave examples of film dialogue having genres of its own. The line below is the only invented line in the scene. Significantly, it is also the last one, and as such it falls into the scene-ending-line

category. The equivalent section in the novel (p.363) does not have a line at all, but has Brutal and Paul exchange looks, the narrator explicating what Brutal's gaze tells Paul:

> *Brutal's eyes met mine.* He [Coffey] knows*, I could almost hear him saying.* Somehow he knows. *I shrugged and spread my hands, as if to say* Of course he knows.

The novel's way of ending the chapter suggests closure as well, but in this case it does not do it through dialogue: the characters communicate through looks they exchange. The scene could have been ended the way the chapter ends in the novel. After all, film is a visual medium: Tom Hanks as Paul and David Morse as Brutal would have had no trouble acting out the passage from the novel presented above, especially when the scene before would have provided the necessary information to get across to the viewer the subtext of the actors' gazes and body language. However, the adaptor chose to invent a line to the equivalent scene in the script to end the scene perhaps more dramatically – or at least in a way that is more in line with mainstream film conventions and lines at the end of the scene "that suggest closure" (Berliner 1999:3). Without the invention, there might have been that 'dramatic thud' that Berliner (ibid.) warned against. The invention for Brutal can be found at the end of the short sequence below:

> (Ex.22) *Anybody wants to back out, now's the time. After this, there's no turning back. (off their looks) So? We gonna do this?* (Paul, rephrase, screenplay p.92)
>
> *Sure. I'd like to take a ride.* (Coffey, elaboration, screenplay p.93)
>
> *I guess we're <u>all</u> in.* (Brutal, invention, screenplay p.93)

As Berliner (1999) and Kozloff (2000) above pointed out, film dialogue sometimes has a rhythmic, even musical quality, which is exploited at the end of scene to suggest closure or perhaps anticipate the next scene. The line above does indeed suggest closure at the end of the scene, but it also cues the subsequent events: the viewer knows to anticipate that the characters will now take action once it is established that they are 'all in'. The beat (in the screenwriting sense of 'short pause') between the line uttered by Brutal and the actual ending of the scene seems to say wordlessly "Let's go!" and, indeed, the next scene shows Paul, Brutal and Harry taking action.

The last example (Ex.23) introduces a major structural invention for the film adaptation. The line of dialogue here simultaneously refers to the beginning of the film and the end. That is, it tightens the structure of the whole film by connecting the beginning and the ending more clearly than in the novel, as well as connecting the

characters of Paul and Coffey perhaps in a more meaningful way. Here is the particularly structurally significant invented line:

(Ex.23) *I ain't never seen me a flicker show.* (Coffey, screenplay p.117)

The line is pure invention and the film Coffey here refers to is never mentioned in the novel. In the film adaptation, however, Coffey sees a film and this film ties together the beginning and the end of the adaptation as well as the past (events on the Mile in the 1930s) and the present (Paul in the nursing home). In the beginning of the screenplay we have Paul bursting into tears when he sees a film on the television, and towards the end of the script it is revealed that the film was the same one Coffey and the guards watched some sixty years ago. The novel has Paul getting anxious over a film (not the same one as in the screenplay/motion picture) as well, but the novel explains this by a character in the gangster film reminding Paul of one of the inmates, William "Wild Bill" Wharton, and his cruelty. There is no film shown to Coffey in the novel. Therefore, the line above is a part of a larger web of structural inventions (scenes and dialogue) that make the narrative more coherent in terms of interlocking the beginning and the end and thus round the motion picture more fully into an Aristotelian whole.

The film Coffey here refers to, although he does not specify it, but it nonetheless becomes significant to him as well as the viewer, is important both structurally and thematically. Structurally it binds the motion picture together and thematically it repeats the religious imagery present: the Christ-like figure John Coffey refers to Astaire and Rogers in the film as being *Angels. Just like up in heaven* (screenplay p.118). In the novel the significance of the film that upsets Paul is much lesser and it does not have the importance as an object as it does in the film adaptation. Moreover, the connection between the film character and Wild Bill in the novel remains abstract when compared to the concrete experience within the film adaptation where we see Coffey watching the film and then quoting it just before his execution. The film Coffey watches accumulates significance and emotional charge towards the end of the screenplay – which we then project to the beginning where we remember reading about Paul bursting into tears as he watched it himself again in the nursing home after so many decades.

To conclude, invention seems to be a prominent and very important aspect of film adaptation in terms of dialogue. The analysis showed that over 37.8% of the lines in the screenplay are pure inventions and a total of 44.4% of the lines in the

screenplay are inventions or include invented components. The enormous number of invented lines, however, appears to go largely unnoticed. That is to say, in the case of *The Green Mile*, the large number of invented lines has not prevented many critics and advertisers from calling it a 'faithful' adaptation of s Stephen King novel. This despite the fact that my analysis shows over one third of the lines in the screenplay do not exist in the novel in the first place. Surely, judging by dialogue alone, one could not consent that the present adaptation follows too closely to the novel. This so-called fidelity, or the *sense* of the film being much alike the novel might have its roots in some other aspects, for example the plot or the characters, that remain outside the scope of the present study. Most importantly, invented lines of dialogue carry many functions and exist for specific reasons such as comic relief and time compression. In addition, inventions provide information, suggest closure, cue future scenes, and add cohesiveness as well as tension. Therefore, a closer examination of dialogue adaptation in *The Green Mile* seems to suggest that inventing dialogue in film adaptation is a prominent feature that would deserve further inspecting and theorising.

What subsequently happens to these invented lines and all the other lines in the screenplay will be examined below in the final stage of film adaptation: shooting and editing the motion picture.

4.2 Shooting the Film: Alterations Made to the Screenplay

There are a somewhat larger number of categories in the second phase of adaptation where we move from the screenplay into the dominion of the motion picture and, hence, for the first time, from written text into the realm of spoken dialogue. The dialogue undergoes various kinds of developments at this stage and, perhaps not surprisingly, the degree of alteration is notable. In all, 478 lines remain as they are in the screenplay, in other words, just over half of them. Below, I will be dealing with those remaining lines that go through a metamorphosis, are deleted, or in terms of those lines not present in the screenplay, are invented for the motion picture.

The alterations to dialogue that exist in the final product, that is the motion picture, have much to do with the actors interpreting, inventing and improvising as they take the text out to the set. Indeed, director Alan Rudolph (2003, n.p.) maintains that while he usually writes his own scripts, he regularly suggests that the actors collaborate with him in changing their dialogue. According to him, this is "simply

part of the process". In addition, McKee (1997:393) asserts that actors and directors rewrite dialogue to "lift the scene's energy". Therefore, this is the stage where the dialogue in the screenplay is put to test: the question is how well it fits the characters and the actors' mouths and how it works best for the storytelling. Furthermore, the actors bring in their interpretation of the lines, their intonation and style of acting, which, as we shall see, results in the lines of dialogue changing to match their "actor personalities", if you like. However, one must not forget the process of editing, which is the phase where the story is finally patched together. Therefore, the dialogue alterations present here have to do with not only the actors and screenwriter-director Darabont, but also other professionals, such as editor Richard Francis-Bruce. While the scenes are filmed over and over again, trying different interpretations and different intonations, lengths of pauses, gestures and body language and so forth, only one version makes it to the screen. Unfortunately, we do not generally have access to these different takes. Therefore, I will have to be content with the one available version of the filmed *The Green Mile* and draw my conclusions based on that. Yet, undoubtedly the available version will reveal some of the complexities of dialogue adaptation.

Moreover, the complex nature of filmmaking implies also that I am unable to make assumptions in terms of the particular stages of production the modifications below have taken place, namely whether they are the result of actor-director work on the set or editor-director work in the postproduction phase, for example. Fortunately, the present thesis does perfectly well with the problematising above. What is needed, then, to carry out the analysis below, is merely the knowledge that certain kinds of alterations have been made somewhere along the line after the finishing of the screenplay and the releasing of the motion picture. These alterations tell us something of the adaptor's work as well as of the work input of several other people involved in the production of a film adaptation. Our focus, however, remains in the alterations made to dialogue and their implications on the differences between literary and film dialogue as distinctive entities.

Before going into the analysis itself, a few words must be said of the methods at this point. The major difference between the screenplay and the motion picture is naturally the distinction addressed above: written dialogue vs. spoken language. Therefore, throughout the analysis, special attention needs to be paid to the subtleties of spoken dialogue, never forgetting the (audio)visual context that surrounds it.

Intonation, facial expressions, gestures and body language, as well as camera angles, zooms, cuts, the musical score and frame compositions, amongst a plethora of other signifiers, play a vital part in the construction of meaning in film productions. In the present analysis, the foregrounded elements coexisting with the dialogue are facial expressions, intonation and use of pauses or silence (the rhythm of speech). They all have an immediate effect on lines of dialogue, and facial expressions are omnipresent due to mainstream film conventions favouring synchronised sound. Heretofore, then, dialogue has had only two dimensions – it has been merely words on a page – but now it has a myriad of dimensions. As the analysis below demonstrates, this affects the dialogue and its wordings in many interesting ways.

4.2.1 Abridgement

The definition for this category equals that of Abridgement above in 4.1.2. In all, there are 91 abridgements at this stage of the adaptation and they range from single word omissions to exclusions of whole sentences. That is, 9.4% of the lines in the motion picture are abridged. I will present four examples in this category to demonstrate the range of abridgements that have occurred when moving from the screenplay to the motion picture.

Very often, abridgement includes words such as *it's*, *but*, *then*, *is*, *no*, *and*, *the*, *well*, *uh*, *oh*, as well as some repetitions and names of characters. This is interesting in the sense that those very kinds of words are very often the results of elaborations as well, as will be shown below in the next section. Therefore, as the case seems to be with elaborations, these types of abridgements perhaps testify on the actor's work and interpretation of the lines rather than deliberated choices of dropping certain words such as *and* or *is*. The lines change slightly as the actors voice them. As the present section along with the following one show, sometimes a word or two are added and sometimes dropped. The focal issue here seems to be the fact that we are dealing with spoken dialogue and the slight reworkings of the dialogue make manifest the organic quality of the lines as they find their ultimate form which "speaks better", to quote Asheim (1949:35). Below, (Ex.24) and (Ex.25) exhibit very typical cases of abridgement, and I will discuss the two lines after presenting both of the examples. The abridged words have been underlined for clarity.

(Ex.24) <u>No.</u> *I had an angry call from the state capital about twenty minutes ago.* <u>Is</u> *it true you ordered Percy Wetmore off he block?* (Hal, screenplay p.20 / motion picture)

(Ex.25) was partly quoted already above in section 4.1.3 on elaboration with regards to 'verbal embellishment'. I will, however, quote the whole line this time to demonstrate what subsequently happened to that dramatised and rephrased line with elaborations. The abridgements are underlined while the two additional elaborations present in the finished motion picture are typed in boldface.

> (Ex.25) *They usually call death row the Last Mile,* <u>*but*</u> *we called ours the Green Mile,* <u>*because*</u> *the floor was the color of faded limes. We had the electric chair* <u>*then*</u>*. Old Sparky, we called it. (beat)* **Oh**, *I've lived a lot of years, Ellie, but 1935 takes the prize. That* <u>*was the*</u> *year I had the worst urinary infection of my life. That was ...* ***that was*** *also the year of John Coffey,* <u>*and*</u> *the two dead girls...* (Paul, screenplay p.8 / motion picture)

The patterning of the abridgements in the example above suggests that they are the result of the actor's interpretation of the line of dialogue. That is, actor Dabbs Greer is pausing between the phrases so that the pauses themselves render the words *but*, *because* and *and* unnecessary. In other words, he separates the longer sentences into several shorter ones through his recitation and the connectors are not subsequently needed. Moreover, the word *then* can be considered unnecessary because the imperfect 'had' already carries the temporal information.

I believe that the abridgement of the two successive words in the first *That* <u>*was the*</u> *year* structure is, however, a deliberated choice. This is presumably so because the sentence regarding the urinary infection is a slightly comical one, reminding the viewer of something that a "silly old man" would say (moreover, Dabbs Greer utters it in a whispering, secretive voice). The omission of *was the* renders the sentence less formal and as if the information it carries was insubstantial to the story Paul is about to tell Elaine. Of course, it is not. Here, the functionality of cinematic dialogue shows itself: the urinary infection is a very important device in the story and the fact that Dabbs Greer utters it in such a nonchalant way, the "silly old man" way, only confirms that cinematic dialogue attempts to hide its artificiality by attempting to sound spontaneous. In reality, the viewer is prepared for an eventual major story turning point here, the moment when there *is no more* urinary infection, and it is done without letting the viewer be conscious of it yet. Moreover, the exclusion of *was the* here breaks the repeating structure within the line (*That was the year – That was the year*), thus rendering more weight on the next sentence about John Coffey, which is even further stressed by repeating the *That was... that was* (the elaboration here). These abridgements would imply, then, that some of them are results of the actor's interpretation of lines (again, reflecting the temporal nature of spoken

language) while others seem to be conscious changes that affect not only the line itself but also the scene and the overall reception of the film by the viewer.

Furthermore, we also have a few cases of excluding profanities in the screenplay: *my ass*, *the hell*, *goddam Percy* and *no French knickers with come in the crotch*. These choices are most likely characterisational and are made in order to affect the viewer's relationship with the characters, to make them more likeable, perhaps, to the viewer. Some profanities are retained, however, and they are most often uttered by Percy, but in one case Paul, and in one scene by Hal's wife Melinda suffering from a brain tumour which affects her speech. In fact, the last example of the four deleted profanities are from her line which was thus made somewhat less offensive, while another curse word was left in. Therefore, abridgements do have a characterisational motivation and/or effect as well.

Moreover, many of the abridgements include deletions of large sections of lines. There is even a case, presented in (Ex.27) below, in which the whole line except for one word is omitted. The next example, however, presents an instance of a more common case of abridgement where only a smaller part of the line is omitted. These abridgements seem to have the purpose of compressing the line, making it more 'pertinent', as Bluestone (1957:130) has put it.

> (Ex.26) *Well, I'm sure you had reason, Paul, but like it or not, the wife of the governor of this state has only one nephew, and his name happens to be Percy Wetmore.* <u>*I need to tell you how this lays out?*</u> (Hal, screenplay p.134 / motion picture)

In the line above, Hal does not, in fact, have to ask if he needs to tell Paul how it lays out in the first place. Hal's whole line is a preparation for "laying it out", which Paul, consequently, does in the very next line himself. Therefore, the abridged question (which exists in the novel as well as a paraphrase) is redundant in the context of the scene and hence not needed. Yet, abridgements may also serve a different kind of purpose, namely the kind of related to the audience's reception. Such a case is presented below in (Ex.27), as well as above in (Ex.25).

> (Ex.27) <u>*Your time here can be easy or hard, depends on you. If you behave, you get to walk in the exercise yard every day. We might even play some music on the radio from time to time.*</u> *Questions?* (Paul, screenplay p.14 / motion picture)

The line is a rephrase and a combination of two of Paul's lines in the novel, embellished with an invention about the exercise yard. The information carried in the abridged portion of the line is made clear through other means. For instance, it will become apparent during the course of the motion picture that the guards (except for

Percy) treat the inmates fairly and according to their behaviour. In one of the scenes we also hear music being played on the radio so that the inmates can enjoy it as well. Furthermore, Paul is giving the above speech to a new inmate, the gigantic Coffey, and it only makes sense for him to maintain his authority in the eyes of the newcomer. The references to the exercise yard and the radio would perhaps have softened his image too much at this point. In addition, when Paul appears more authoritative with his short line *Questions?*, the impact of Coffey's reply to this is, in turn, much greater. Coffey's only question is *Do you leave the light on after bed time?*, and it leaves Paul speechless for a while. Therefore, the abridgement serves also the effect of the next line of dialogue and hence increases the tension within the scene through effective juxtaposition.

In sum, it seems that abridgement occurs either as a conscious choice or as a result of the actor's interpretation of the line. The seemingly less conscious changes are susceptibly results of the lines finally being spoken out loud: words are dropped as the actors aim for speech that appears natural and spontaneous in its "incompleteness". The conscious choices, in turn, seem to be motivated by the need to affect and guide (or perhaps mislead, as in (Ex.25) with Paul commenting on his urinary infection) the viewers' reception, narrative understanding and their reactions.

4.2.2 Elaboration

As with Abridgement above, this category is defined according to the same principles as Elaboration in the previous section concerning alterations made to the dialogue in the first adaptation phase. Elaboration, then, refers to a line that is rendered more verbose than its pre-existing equivalent, in this case, the line in the screenplay. Like above in 4.1.3, even a one-word addition qualifies as an elaboration. An elaboration generally equals some individual added words or perhaps word pairs within a line of dialogue (in practice the number of elaborative words per line never exceeds eight words).

There are 145 elaborations made to the screenplay in the actual shooting stage of the motion picture (i.e. 15.1% of the lines undergo elaboration). The elaborations tend to be what one might label 'unnecessary intensifiers' (Naremore as quoted by Kozloff 2000:206), repetitions or 'empty words' such as *hey* or *well*. By calling these words 'empty', however, I am not suggesting that they would not have any function in everyday conversation or in people's speech in general. Rather they are empty in a

strictly dramatic sense. Berliner (1999) and McKee (1997), amongst others, pointed out above that cinematic dialogue serves a narrative purpose and carries information. In this sense, the elaborations do not seem to add any significant information or narrative functions to the lines of dialogue in the whole context of the film. Some of the words that come up frequently as elaborative words are: *you*, *no*, *that*, *and*, *I*, *hey*, *that's*, *well*, *just*, *have*, and *it's*. I will present a few examples of such elaborations below. I have highlighted the elaborations in the lines with **BOLDFACE CAPITALS** for clarity. That is, the highlighted portions of the lines do not exist in the screenplay, but have been added to the dialogue in the last phase of the adaptation, i.e. once the actors have stepped in to interpret the lines.

(Ex.28) *I just didn't sleep well, is all.* ***I HAD** a few bad dreams. It happens. I'll be fine.* (Paul, screenplay p.6 / motion picture)

(Ex.29) *The man is mean, careless, and stupid.* ***THAT'S A** bad combination in a place like this. Sooner or later, he's gonna get somebody hurt. Or worse.* (Paul, screenplay p.21 / motion picture)

(Ex.30) *Here,* ***YOU** take him.* (Del, screenplay p.75 / motion picture)

(Ex.31) *I said **THAT WE** –* (Brutal, screenplay p.29 / motion picture)

As the examples above demonstrate, nothing significant goes on in the lines of dialogue in terms of their dramatic functions or meaning. It seems, rather, that the elaborations are the result of the actor interpreting the lines. Acting is not reciting, but living and breathing a character. Once the actors bring in their personalities, their voices and intonations as well as their own wordings, the line undergoes a slight change. There is nothing to suggest that the three lines above, for example, could not have been uttered as they were written in the screenplay, that is, without the added elaborations or the 'empty words'. However, the elaborations are there because the lines of dialogue are not simply written words on a piece of paper anymore, but uttered in an interactive context of speech that both mirrors the world and creates one. Once written dialogue becomes spoken lines and we move from the textual mode to the temporal, something is bound to happen, like in (Ex.31) where Brutal has, in actuality, time to utter two extra words (*that we*) before he is eventually cut off. One of the possibilities is that the lines accumulate a word or two, depending on the actor's interpretation of those particular lines of dialogue. Yet, I do think that there are some *effects* if not functions related to elaborations. I will discuss them in more detail below, but first, I will present a couple of more examples.

Another common aspect of elaboration is repetition. The actor might repeat a word or more already incorporated in the line of dialogue, or he might come up with "extra" words such as in (Ex.32) below which are then repeated. While Naremore (as quoted by Kozloff 2000:206) is talking about naturalistic acting in particular when he maintains that actors "occasionally […] speak softly and rapidly, repeat words, slur or throw away lines", these naturalistic elements are surely present in non-naturalistic acting as well, although they are perhaps not foregrounded to such a large extent. Yet, these naturalistic elements render the dialogue to sound more realistic and spontaneous. After all, as linguists have demonstrated, there is an abundance of repetitions and hesitations and other, what might be called "dramatic impurities" in everyday talk. The examples below exhibit elaboration in the form of repetition. The first example (Ex.31) presents an extra item being repeated (*Come on*) while in (Ex.32) the repetitions are derived from the line itself.

(Ex.32) ***COME ON, John! Sick it up! COME ON! Cough 'em out like you done before!*** (Brutal, screenplay p.104 / motion picture)

(Ex.33) *That's more than I can say about your jobs! All your jobs! **NO, NO, NO**, you can't do this to me! **YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME!** You can't!* (Percy, screenplay p. 95 / motion picture)

The examples above show very typical cases of elaboration, in which the line is added with some words, in this case repetitions. The first example (Ex.32) incorporates Brutal uttering the words *Come on* twice. The elaborative words in the line reinforce the feeling of urgency the character is experiencing. Moreover, the words *come on* are most familiar to us from everyday speech, and their use in this context reflects the likely choices of words were the situation a real-life one. In (Ex.33), in turn, the repetition is most likely motivated by the need to keep the line of dialogue going until Percy is, in fact, gagged in the scene. Mainly through repetition, then, the actor builds up the line in the situation of interaction between the characters, responding to the needs of the circumstances and the scene. Therefore, elaboration may be motivated by the needs of the scene as well as the interpretative choices by the actor. Furthermore, in both of the cases, the extending of the line heightens the tension by communicating urgency, and hence affects the viewer's experience of the events.

While we were occasionally able to witness what Kozloff (2000) called 'verbal embroidery' with elaboration in the previous phase of adaptation, it seems that this function does not exist at this point. That is, there seem to be no cases of a line of

dialogue becoming perhaps more poetic than its literary counterpart or the equivalent line in the screenplay. Instead, the implications of elaboration here have to do with the actors' work and the differences between written and spoken dialogue. It seems that almost every single case of the elaborations is a result of choices made in acting as well as results of the interactive situation of acting, where the actors (characters) react to one another physically, through verbal language, gestures, and body language. Moreover, the nature of the elaborative words and their dramatic or semantic insignificance in the larger context of the film or even in one particular scene implies that we might be largely dealing with unconscious choices and rendering here. It is unlikely that the elaborations have been discussed through between the director and the actor before their implementation – although there may be exceptions to this, of course. What the elaborations suggest at this point of the adaptation, then, is that they are a part of the actor's interpretation of the character and the result of the actor's voicing of the lines: the elaborations seem to demonstrate how the lines change slightly once they become uttered by actors. Therefore, what the elaborations at this stage seem to suggest is that not all of the choices in adapting dialogue are necessarily deliberated. Sometimes a line may change "by accident" as the actors interact and react to one another while wearing the skins and holding the emotions of their characters. Therefore, even a line that was perhaps intended to be directly transferred may end up not being one.

4.2.3 Expansion

What I have termed Expansion are those lines that do exist in the screenplay and are uttered as such in the motion picture, but have been added to extensively or, in other words, made continuous by, for example, repeating the content of the line in the screenplay. The easiest way to make clear just exactly what expansion means is to present an example. In (Ex.34), Percy is hollering until Paul finally interrupts him. First, I will present the line as it is written in the screenplay and subsequently give the expanded version of it in the motion picture. The line in the screenplay exists as follows:

> (Ex.34) *Percy keeps yanking on the big man's cuffs, leading him along with a cry of:*
>
> *Dead man walking! Dead man--* (Percy, screenplay p.11)

In the motion picture, however, the equivalent line is such:

> (34a) *Dead man! Dead man walking! Dead man! Dead man walking! Dead man walking here! Dead Man! We got a dead man walking here! Dead man walking! We got a dead man walking here!* (Percy, motion picture)

What expansion then means, is that the line is inflated into a continuous fabric of words. Presumably, the actor does this by improvising, building the line up from the given bit of dialogue. (Note: when I talk about improvised lines, I do not suggest that there is no "calculated" element in them. On the contrary, the basic assumption is that only the initial idea may have been conceived through improvisation, and the idea is subsequently refined through repeated shots and trying new ways of acting it out. The improvised line is thus rehearsed repeatedly until it is as if scripted in. An improvised line, then, rarely is exactly that which we understand from the word 'improvisation' as happening on the spot.)

There are only six cases of expansion in *The Green Mile* (0.6% of the lines), one of them being an unusual one in the sense that it is, in fact, Fred Astaire in a film singing rather than a character in *The Green Mile* whose line is expanded. (Or in this case, there has not been any need for the screenwriter to write all of the required Astaire's singing in the script.) In three cases, including the Astaire one, the screenwriter seems to suggest expansion to the actor by adding suspension points after the last word in the line. Moreover, in most of the cases, the expanded line spreads into the background, if you like, and becomes "verbal wallpaper", as Kozloff (2000:120) calls the speech existing in or having been delegated to the background. In other words, verbal wallpaper is speech that may be "inaudible, decentered and that serves no narrative function" (ibid.). The above example with Percy's line is verbal wallpaper before the actual line is foregrounded by adding volume and changing the quality of the sound. That is, his cry of *Dead man walking!* can be heard already in the background while other characters converse before Percy's line itself begins when the sound technician foregrounds it.

Similarly to relocation below, expansion has little to do with film adaptation per se. Rather, it tells something about the relationship between screenwriting and acting. Yet, it is important to acknowledge its existence within the process of shooting a motion picture. Expansion, like all the other categories in this last phase of film adaptation, tell about the process nature of filmmaking and the fact that what is in the screenplay is by no means fixed or salient. In the present study, I am looking at what happens to dialogue in the process of adapting a novel and expansion is one of the answers to this question. However, as the issue of expansion is less central to the

topic of the thesis regarding the differences between cinematic and literary dialogue (aside from the obvious fact that there is no need nor physical possibility for the 'verbal wallpaper' effect in literature), I will leave it at that and move on to the more fruitful developments in dialogue adaptation.

4.2.4 Rephrase

There are 122 instances of rephrase when moving from the screenplay to the finished motion picture. Rephrase at this point is rather insignificant when compared to the rephrases done in the first phase of the adaptation process. That is to say that the most significant work in terms of rephrasing the adapted lines seems to be on the shoulders of the screenwriter rather than the director, the actors, and the film crew. However, there is a great number of paraphrasing involved at this stage as well, in all 12.7% of the lines being affected by rephrasing.

The great majority of the rephrases here include the following kinds of changes explicated in examples (Ex.35) to (Ex.41). The first half of the example presents the rendering of the line in the screenplay (the page number is given after the example) and the part after the arrow shows how the line is subsequently uttered in the motion picture.

> (Ex.35) *over in the infirmary* → *down in the infirmary* (screenplay p.12 / motion picture)
>
> (Ex.36) *in here* → *around here* (screenplay p.14 / motion picture)
>
> (Ex.37) *keep half the lights burning in the corridor* → *keep a few lights burning down the corridor* (screenplay p.14 / motion picture)
>
> (Ex.38) *see with an X-ray* → *see on the X-ray* (screenplay p.20 / motion picture)
>
> (Ex.39) *Tell you what I think* → *You know what I think* (screenplay p.21 / motion picture)
>
> (Ex.40) *I bet that X-ray turns out to be nothing at all* → *I'm sure that X-ray turns out to be nothing at all* (screenplay p.22 / motion picture)
>
> (Ex.41) *Huh?* → *What?* (Screenplay p.29 / motion picture)

As can be deducted from the examples above, most of the rephrasings in the last stage of the adaptation are not very significant in that they would change the content of the line or the character implications of it. Rather, they are simply paraphrasings which, very often, render the rephrased expression more colloquial (see Ex.35, Ex.36 and Ex.38, for example). (Ex.40), however, is an exception in that the rephrasing in that particular case was truly needed if the filmmakers wanted to avoid an unintentionally funny "echoing effect". Paul's *I bet* is changed to *I'm sure* because

the next line is a Direct Transferral added during the filming, and the added line of Hal's is simply *You bet*. The *I bet* / *You bet* construction would have backfired because it sounds unintentionally amusing. However, there are some other types of rephrases as well, and they are significant in terms of characterisation and narrative cohesiveness. An example of such a rephrase is presented below in (Ex.42):

(Ex.42) *We'll get it* [a broken finger] *looked at, Del, <u>now keep yourself quiet like I said!</u>* (Paul, screenplay p.13)

(42a) *We'll get it looked at, Del. <u>In the mean time you just stay quiet</u>* (Paul, motion picture)

Here, Paul's aggressive and highly authoritative expression is rendered into a softer one. Moreover, if the rephrase did not happen, the line would also be inconsistent with the preceding narrative, since a previous line in which Paul tells Del and another inmate to *keep your nose quietly on your business* is deleted in the last phase of adaptation. Therefore, in the motion picture Paul, in fact, has not told Del to keep quiet before, and Del has not done anything to provoke an order to keep quiet in the first place – not even in the screenplay. The rephrasing here has to do with both the context of the utterance (its relationship with other lines) and characterisation. The rephrase renders Paul to be more likeable in the eyes of the viewer as he acts more understanding towards an inmate whose fingers have just been broken, instead of simply giving him a direct order to 'keep himself quiet'.

Another example with a particularly significant rephrase is a case in which an expression in French is translated into English, following the rule of intelligibility of mainstream film dialogue, to make sure the viewers will not miss the meaning of the words:

(Ex.43) *Mr. Jingles, he be scared to live out <u>dans la foret</u>* → *scared to live out <u>in the big woods</u>* (Del, screenplay p.69 / motion picture)

There are not many of rephrases with marked significance such as this, however. In all, I identified seven of them, out of which two are presented above. Therefore, it seems that rephrasing at this stage of the adaptation process is cosmetic rather than strongly characterisational, structural, or compressive like in the first phase. There is, however, a tendency to render lines more colloquial (or more easily understandable, as in Ex.43) through rephrase at the second stage of the adaptation.

4.2.5 Relocation

This category involves lines that have been relocated somewhere else in the story. Very often this means simply moving the line back or forth inside a scene, the temporal distance between the original place and the relocated one remaining rather small. It is perhaps more likely that relocation of lines of dialogue takes place in the editing phase. The process of shooting a motion picture is not a linear one in the first place, so it would be perhaps naïve to assume that in each of the cases the loci of dialogue lines would be re-determined while the filming was still in progress.

The Green Mile includes 12 instances of relocation. That is, 1.2% of the lines in the screenplay have been relocated. As mentioned above, the temporal distance between the place of the line in the screenplay and its location within the structure of the motion picture remains rather small. For example, lines 53-55 are all relocated to before line 49, the order of the lines in the sequence remaining as such. In general, relocation moves the line(s) to an earlier place within the structure of the story, the distance from the original place of the line remaining, on average, less than five lines. There is one single case, however, in which a sequence of two lines is moved 15 lines back, yet the lines remain within the same scene. Usually the lines are relocated somewhere earlier in the script, with only one exception to this: there is a sequence of three lines, which is moved forward within the structure of the story.

The category of relocation is less meaningful in the context of the present study in that while it demonstrates the organic properties of a film adaptation, it perhaps has less to do with film adaptation per se. Rather, it tells more about filmmaking in general, how the place of the line can affect the overall experience of the film and how changing its location in the story the filmmaker can achieve perhaps something that would get less emphasis otherwise. That, however, is a topic for another thesis. Nonetheless, to say a few words on the relocated lines in *The Green Mile*, it must be pointed out that there is little structural or lexical alteration involved in the relocated phrases, although there is some level of textual metamorphosis concerning four of the instances (either rephrasing, abridgement or cutting of sentences). Therefore, relocation exists in film adaptations as well, as they do in perhaps most films. My analysis suggests, however, that the relocation of lines within the structure of the story (in terms of the screenplay and the motion picture) does not reflect anything significant relating to the location of the lines in the novel. That is to say, relocating lines at this stage of film adaptation cannot be considered to be a form of

Backtracking, for example, since the actual relocation of a line does not render the structure of the motion picture any closer to that of the novel. For example, relocation of two lines that are on pages 16 and 17 in the novel renders the lines to be in the finished motion picture just before lines that have their sources on page 14 in the novel. In other words, the novel's structure in terms of line loci does not dictate the relocation of the lines. There are other reasons for relocation, and they most likely have to do with storytelling and building up and maintaining tension in a motion picture rather than with a desire to conform more closely to the adapted novel.

4.2.6 Reassignment

There are only five instances of reassignment at this stage of the film adaptation (affecting, therefore, a mere 0.5% of the lines in the motion picture). What is significant about these five cases is that they are not particularly significant. That is, they are all related to lines of dialogue that did not exist in the screenplay in the first place. Rather, each of the reassignments happen as a part of Backtracking, and in all of these cases this means taking a line from the novel when there is not one in the screenplay. In fact, three of these reassignments are present in an example presented below (Ex.44) under the heading Backtracking. There we witness two of Brutal's lines having been delegated to Paul and a line of Curtis' to Hal. Moreover, there are no surprising delegations of lines to other characters involved here. For example, Curtis' lines were delegated to Hal in the previous adaptation phase and they are reassigned to Hal here as well.

The significance of these very few cases of reassignment lies in that, at this point, the characters are consistent enough not to require delegating lines of dialogue to other characters. This, in turn, implies that the first stage of film adaptation, that is, the writing of the screenplay with its large number of reassigned lines was the major phase in the adaptation process in terms of shaping the characters and allotting them their roles within the story. The adaptation, then, is very far developed already by the screenwriter. For our further purposes, however, the question of reassignment at this stage of the film adaptation is not particularly interesting. Therefore, we will move on to other aspects of dialogue adaptation in the final stage of adapting *The Green Mile*.

4.2.7 Backtracking

Backtracking means that there is a specific alteration made to the line that signals a returning back to, or closer to, the rendering of the equivalent line or stretch of narration in the novel. In other words, after the alteration the line is more in tune with its literary counterpart. I have not included such occasions as deletions of invented lines as backtracking, although one might argue that deleting a line that had been invented for the screenplay could be said to be moving back and closer to the novel. Deleting an invented line, however, might move the story away from the novel as well, depending on the nature of the line of dialogue in relation to the novel. Therefore, Deletion is a category of its own and any significant questions related to it are discussed in the next section below.

There are 26 instances of backtracking in the screenplay-motion picture phase. In all, 2.7% of the lines in the film are rendered so as to make them correspond more closely to the equivalent line in the novel. The instances range from one-word additions as well as additions of sentence-length to additions of whole lines that are not present in the screenplay but exist in the novel. Backtracking also includes instances of rephrasing (there are 12 of such cases). Five of the cases of backtracking, however, involve a reassignment of the line to another character. In other words, even though a line is rendered to be a closer equivalent of a line in the novel, it is still reassigned to a different character than in the source text. I will present three examples of backtracking below: one in which a line from the novel is added to the film when it is not present in the screenplay, one in which an addition of one word renders the line equal to its counterpart in the novel, and finally, a case of backtracking as a result of rephrasing.

The most prominent type of backtracking is a case in which the screenplay is lacking a line where there is one in the finished motion picture and in the novel. Out of all 26 instances of backtracking, there are 18 of cases such as this. What this tells of the shooting of the motion picture is that the novel was used on the set. The crew did not rely solely on the shooting script, but went back to the novel to perhaps try out some of the things there that were not included in the screenplay. Most often, these types of backtracking – i.e. a line incorporated in the film while it does not exist in the screenplay – involve a rephrase, but there are two cases of backtracking in the form of direct transferral from the novel directly to the motion picture (one of them is, however, reassigned). Such a case of direct transferral is presented below,

where the line is an answer to Hal's (Anderson in the novel) question W*hat the hell happened?* (screenplay p.82). In fact, the first example in the present category demonstrates a backtracking sequence of three successive lines. Because we are dealing with a sequence of lines, I will present the backtracking lines in the film first on their own, and then quote the matching passage in the novel for comparison. The first example in this category will also give a good idea of what dialogue adaptation seems to be in terms of cutting lines. The example (Ex.44), then, presents two types of backtracking in one: a direct transferral and abridgement. First, the backtracking sequence as it is in the finished motion picture:

(Ex.44) *An execution. A successful one.* (Paul, motion picture)

How in the name of Christ can you call that a success? (Hal, motion picture)

Eduard Delacroix is dead. Isn't he? (Paul, motion picture)

Below is the equivalent passage from the novel (p.305-306). The adapted parts of the lines in the example above have been underlined for clarity:

(44a) "Okay boys," Anderson said […] "what the hell happened?"

"An execution," Brutal said. I think his even tone surprised Anderson, but it didn't surprise me, at least not much; Brutal had always been good at turning down his dials in a hurry. "A successful one."

"How in the name of Christ can you call a direct-current abortion like that a success? We've got witnesses that won't sleep for a month! Hell, that fat old broad probably won't sleep for a year!"

Brutal pointed at the gurney, and the shape under the sheet. "He's dead, ain't he? As for your witnesses, most of them will be telling their friends tomorrow night that it was poetic justice—Del there burned a bunch of people alive, so we turned around and burned *him* alive. Except they won't say it was us. They'll say it was the will of god, working *through* us. Maybe there's even some truth to that. And you want to know the best part? The absolute cat's pajamas? Most of their friends will wish they'd been there to see it." He gave Percy a look both distasteful and sardonic as he said this last.

In the screenplay, Hal does not get a verbal answer to his question *What the hell happened?*, but all eyes turn to Percy. Consequently, the next line after Hal's question in the screenplay (p.82) is his other question: *Percy? Something to say?* The above sequence of three backtracking lines in the finished film seems to fit perfectly between Hal's initial question and the eyes finally turning to Percy, since the sequence exists in this place in the novel: it was originally cut for the screenplay but reinstated for the film. Possible motivation for this reinstating is the fact that it prepares for two invented lines later on in the scene (which are inventions already in the screenplay):

Percy fucked up, Hal. Pure and simple. (Paul, rephrase, screenplay p.82)
Is that your official position? (Hal, invention, screenplay p.82)
Don't you think it should be? (Paul, invention, screenplay p.82)

The above lines all exist both in the screenplay and in the finished motion picture. The first line uttered by Paul is rephrased from the novel (p.306), but the last two are inventions. With reference to the 'official position', the backtracking sequence (Ex.44) states plainly that Paul considers the execution to be 'successful one' despite the terrible things that happened there and "The Bad Death of Eduard Delacroix", as King titled this particular instalment of his novel. Paul's determined, professional attitude expressed in the inventions is reflected also in the backtracking sequence which, then, support each other in the scene. Moreover, the sequence is a short one, of only three lines, and hence it can be inserted rather easily to the scene. It is highly unlikely that a much longer backtracking sequence would have been reinstated from the novel at this point. As mentioned above already in the data and analytic framework section, the motion picture is close to twice as long as an average mainstream film. Therefore, Darabont was surely very aware of the time restrictions when any further additions of lines or sequences were discussed. In my view, then, the backtracking here was motivated by the context of the scene as well as characterisation (it confirms Paul as a professional who thinks ahead).

As can be seen from the example above, direct transferral entails generally 'short, simply constructed sentences', as McKee (1997:389) expresses it in terms of what film dialogue generally is like. The above line in the novel (Brutal's *An execution. A successful one.*) indeed is an example of short sentences with simple structures. While the backtracking of that line equals direct transferral, it also features a reassignment from Brutal to Paul. As referred to in the reassignment sections above, Paul tends to receive most of the reassigned lines, most likely because he is the main character in the film and is played by the biggest star in the motion picture, Tom Hanks. This particular instance repeats that pattern. Similarly, also the second line from Brutal is reassigned to Paul.

Moreover, in the example above (Ex.44), there is reassignment also following the fact that Darabont has combined the characters of Hal and Curtis, reassigning many of Curtis' lines to Hal, yet preserving the character as a whole more like Hal, in other words less aggressive and rude. Hence the deletion of the words *a direct-current abortion like*, which do not fit Darabont's interpretation of Hal's character, but are very much Curtis in the novel. In the motion picture, both Hal (Curtis in the novel) and Brutal's references to the audiences' reaction to the execution of an inmate that went wrong are left out. Presumably, this is because the film audience

saw with their own eyes the horrifying execution of Delacroix as well as the resulting panic in the audience witnessing the execution. Moreover, Hal (Curtis) points out in a line just before the sequence above, that the smell of burnt flesh and what the witnesses had to see caused some of the witnesses to vomit. In the film, the point that the whole event was a terrifying disaster becomes clear without going into lengthy ponderings on how the witnesses reacted and will perhaps act later on. Moreover, including Brutal's extremely long line of dialogue from the novel in the film would have slowed down the pace markedly and drawn unnecessary attention to the line itself. In effect, Darabont made use of the most semantically essential parts of the equivalent lines in the novel. Repeated references (as Hal brought it up already before the backtracking sequence) to the witnesses seem beside the point when the characters are highly tense and attempting to come to terms with what happened a little earlier and what might affect their careers if the matter was handled in a wrong way.

Next, I will put forth an instance where an addition of a single word equals backtracking and also renders the line as directly transferred:

(Ex.45) *Am I gonna have trouble with you, big boy?* (Paul, screenplay p.12)

(45a)   *Am I gonna have <u>any</u> trouble with you, big boy?* (Paul, motion picture)

(45b)   *Am I going to have <u>any</u> trouble with you, big boy?* (Paul, novel p.12)

Due to the addition of the word *any*, the line in the finished film corresponds to the line in the novel, excluding the variant spelling of 'going to' / 'gonna', which I have decided to count as insignificant in the whole context of film adaptation. I have done this on the grounds that the screenplay spelling merely anticipates the actor's pronunciation of the line (which, in itself, however, is a significant notion) and the syntax/semantics of the sentence remains the same regardless of the variant spelling. The backtracking here might well be a result of the actor's unconscious wording, since the expression 'any trouble' is a very familiar one. Yet, there is a chance that the word 'any' was added to render the line of dialogue as it is in the novel. We are not able to trace Darabont's intentions. Therefore, it is impossible to conclude whether this backtracking was a conscious aspiration for textual fidelity or a largely unconscious choice of wording that grows out of a person's acquired understanding of the conventions and processes of spoken language. Yet, based on the general tendencies present in the category of rephrase, it might be safe to suggest that the addition of the word 'any' results from the movement from written dialogue into the

realm of spoken language, rather than from seeking an equivalence with the source text line of dialogue. After all, the 'gonna' / 'going to' structure remains the same. Nonetheless, the outcome is that because of an addition of one single word, the above line turns out as one of the few directly transferred lines in the adaptation.

The last example in this category is (Ex.46) below, where we have an illustration of backtracking as a result of rephrasing. Here a line of dialogue that was already rephrased for the screenplay is rephrased again, only this time to adhere more closely to the form of the line in the novel.

(Ex.46) *I'll be taking her up to Indianola next day or so for some tests. Head X-rays and the like. She is scared to death. Truth to tell, so am I.* (Hal, screenplay p.20)

(46a) *I'll be taking her over to Vicksburg next day or so for some tests. Head X-rays and who knows what else. She is scared to death. Truth to tell, so am I.* (Hal, motion picture)

(46b) *Dr. Haverstrom wants her to go in hospital up to Indianola. Have some tests. Head X-rays, he means. Who knows what else. She is scared to death. Truth to tell, so am I.* (Hal, novel p.52)

In the example above, *the like* in the screenplay is rephrased so that it corresponds more closely to the line in the novel: *who knows what else*. Interestingly, the rephrased section of the line in the finished motion picture is longer than the screenplay version and thus it diverges from what might be expected of cinematic dialogue and its efficiency. While this may be so, the rephrase *who knows what else* is more significant in that it signals more clearly the character's state of mind. Hal lets Paul know that he is scared to death for his wife and through the rephrase he appears less in control of the situation when he indicates that he does not definitely know what exactly the doctor will do to her in the hospital. The rendering *and the like* in the screenplay would suggest that Hal has some knowledge of what perhaps would happen if he took his sick wife for some tests.

While the rephrase presented above renders the line more towards its literary counterpart, there is another rephrase in the same line of dialogue which does the opposite. That is the rephrasing the *up to Indianola* into *over to Vicksburg*. Other place names have not been changed for the film adaptation, so what we might be dealing with here is a personal choice by the director and/or the actor(s). One of the possible explanations for the alteration is that (some) Vicksburg perhaps has a special meaning to the filmmaker and thus it is embedded in the motion picture, much in the same vein as with director Renny Harlin who uses the Finnish flag or

Finlandia vodka in his films to signal his native country. Yet, in the whole context of the film, changing a town's name is less significant than the rephrasing of a line in another way, such as presented above, since it has to do with characterisation. In addition, the minuscule rephrasing of a preposition *up* into *over* does not carry any semantic differences within the context of the line. We are perhaps dealing with the actor's personal word choice here, which is not necessarily deliberated at all but merely a result of his own acting idiom. Therefore, the above example is an interesting one in the sense that it simultaneously moves towards the novel as it does move away from it, but clearly the weight of the alteration in terms of significance lays upon the former explication of rephrase, that is, the characterisational one.

As can be seen from the examples of data above, backtracking is not a straightforward case of cutting a line form the novel and pasting it into the margins of the screenplay. More often than not, backtracking involves rephrasing. Some lines are also reassigned, elaborated or abridged. This implies something about film adaptation in terms of dialogue. It implies that the screenplay and the novel already are separate works of art that are not strictly comparable. That is to say, even backtracking lines need to be modified so that they would fit the film's story world which is different from that of the novel's. Moreover, as (Ex.46) above suggests, the adaptors (and actors) bring in their own personalities as artists. They do not attempt to conceal their existence and slavishly reproduce the novelist's vision, but they necessarily make the film adaptation look like themselves as well.

Most importantly, what the backtracking itself seems to imply at this stage of the adaptation process, is that the novel was clearly used on the set during the filming. This is, indeed, the only means of facilitating backtracking in the first place. In other words, in this particular case of film adaptation, we do not have a case of first writing the screenplay and then pushing the novel aside while shooting the motion picture based on just the script. Therefore, we might conclude that Darabont and his crew have returned to the novel for material, even though his version of *The Green Mile* differs from King's in many respects, e.g. in terms of character compositions. To conclude, although backtracking is not a very prominent feature quantitatively, it certainly is so qualitatively.

4.2.8 Deletion

Deletion differs from Abridgement in that whereas in abridgement the omission might include only a word or two, deletion signals the dropping off of an entire line. The standard practice in mainstream filmmaking is that a tremendous amount of material is shot, and the motion picture is then patched together from these different versions of scenes. Therefore, it is safe to say that the screenplay includes several lines which were most likely all filmed, but which were simply left on the cutting-room floor. In other words, the nature of deletions is not that certain lines of dialogue would have been dropped out before they were even shot. Rather, the actual deletion of lines presumably took place in the editing process.

In all, 116 lines were deleted for the finished motion picture. This is to say that 12.9% of the 900 lines in the screenplay were dropped out. The number of deletions here is quite large, but when one compares this to the number of *added* lines in this final stage of adaptation – the inventions dealt with below – one cannot simply jump to the conclusion that deleting one out of nine lines in the screenplay would be a sign of one picture being worth a thousand words. However, as the analysis below will show, many of the lines that are found in the screenplay but did not make it to the finished motion picture would have seemed over-explanatory if retained. In other words, the lines were dropped presumably because their content could be conveyed through the subtext alone, i.e. through the actor's facial expressions and body language or the general mood of the scene. Examples of such lines of dialogue are presented below (Ex.47-Ex.50).

First, I will present four examples of lines that were dropped out from the motion picture supposedly because the visual or other type of context rendered them redundant or unnecessary.

(Ex.47) *Yes. Yes you are.* (Paul, screenplay p.8)

(Ex.48) *Why's that?* (Paul, p.10)

(Ex.49) *You sure you wanna be in there with him?* (Brutal, screenplay p.11)

(Ex.50) *I understand.* (Paul, screenplay p.90)

As, for example Bluestone (1957:58) and Palmgren (1986:399) point out, the visual context – whether we are talking about the cinema or about theatre, as Palmgren is – plays a part in our interpretation of the lines of dialogue. Moreover, sometimes the visual context may render a line redundant. Indeed, Sinyard (1986:5) maintains that

even a mere movement of the camera may do this. It seems that the informative visual context is the main reason for the deletions above.

The line in (Ex.47) is a simple confirmation. In the previous line, Elaine had told Paul she was his friend: Paul considers this for a moment (instead of saying the line above) and then proceeds to tell his story about what happened on the Green Mile. In other words, he realises that she, indeed, is his friend and that he could confide in her. The effective use of silence and the implications the viewers are able to derive from it based on their knowledge from both real-life situations and the corresponding conventions of cinematic dialogue render the line unnecessary.

Furthermore, with the line presented in (Ex.48), Paul's attentive gaze and a slight movement of the head "ask" the simple question already. Subsequently, the words are no longer needed. Moreover, the answer to his wordless question comes right after, as Brutal's (then uninterrupted) line explains why Paul might not want to get into a cell with Coffey: *He's enormous* (Brutal, screenplay p.11).

In (Ex.49), the guards' reaction to Coffey's enormous size – the wonder-filled but at the same time concerned expressions and their body language – signal nervousness. Therefore, these factors already fulfil the function of Brutal's question. The audience is undoubtedly already wondering whether a regular-sized man like Paul would survive in the same cell with a giant of a death row inmate such as Coffey. Hence, the line can be dropped without affecting the desired mood in the scene. In addition, as the context of (Ex.48) already suggested, Brutal had referred to his apprehension about going into a small cell together with a gigantic convicted murderer.

Finally, (Ex.50) is another case of 'silence gives consent' where the use of silence speaks as much – if not more – than words. Brutal asks Paul if he understands that if Coffey tried to escape while the men took him to save the life of Hal's wife, they would have to shoot him down. This is followed by shots of the Paul, Dean and Janice, as well as Brutal and Harry, i.e. the people around the table, all considering Brutal's words. Silence here provides the answer. The people all understand that this is the case and Brutal may go on: *So. Tell us what you had in mind* and with that, the scene ends.

Another significant category of deletions deals with lines that are inessential in terms of the plot or narrative. As Berliner (1999:4, 6) pointed out above, cinematic dialogue "either advances the plot or supplies pertinent background information" and

it normally consists of "an uninterrupted flow of narrative information". Any information that is secondary to the narrative or that is redundant in some way is cut. I will present two short examples (altogether four lines) of such cases and explain why exactly the lines are inessential or redundant in their respective contexts.

(Ex.51) *He* [Paul's son] *was nineteen that year.* (Paul, screenplay p.123)

But if that's true... (Elaine, screenplay p.124)

The two deleted lines in (Ex.51) follow each other amidst a conversation between Paul and Elaine in the nursing home. Paul's line above confirms Elaine's previous line in which she says as follows: *You said you and Jan had a grown son in 1935. Is that right?* (p.123). As far as the narrative is concerned, there is no need to point out the son's age here. It is enough to tell in Elaine's line that he was a grownup, since we never even see the son in the film. Elaine's previous line is enough to make the viewer wonder how the son being a grownup can be possible: Paul would have to be now over one hundred years old. Moreover, in terms of Elaine's line, her facial expression does the asking and no words are needed. Furthermore, her previous line already raised the question (by implication) posed again here in the deleted line. Therefore, the scene can move on and achieve everything it needs to achieve without these two lines of dialogue. Consequently, Paul goes on right after Elaine's question about his grown son and says: *The math doesn't work, does it?* (p.124). Another example of deletions motivated by narrative movement is (Ex.52) below:

(Ex.52) *It was a dream. Go back to sleep.* (Paul, screenplay p.25)

Weren't no dream. It was a mouse all right. (Coffey, screenplay p.25)

Before Paul's line above, Coffey lets him know that he saw a mouse go by. Paul refutes this (Ex.52) and Coffey responds with his line, insisting that it was a mouse. The line in the screenplay that follows these two deletions has Paul admitting that it was a mouse and that one *Can't put anything over on you* (p.25). Therefore, the result of the four-line sequence is that Paul ends up confirming to Coffey that it indeed was a mouse he saw 'go by'. This, in turn, renders the two deleted lines above unnecessary, since their function in the sequence is nothing but stalling the narrative. There is no new information provided with the two example lines above, they serve no characterisational purpose or provide, for example, comic relief. They are empty lines, if you like, in terms of narrative functions. Hence their deletion from the finished motion picture.

Moreover, there are several cases of deletions of whole sequences of lines (by 'sequence' here I mean a succession of three or more lines within one scene). In all, there are nine of such sequences. One of them is presented below in (Ex.53). What seems to be suggesting the motivation for deleting these sequences is the pace of the story and/or characterisation. The deleted sequences are all lacking in the forward-thrust of the narrative, that is to say, they lag in terms of pace. *The Green Mile* is a film which is over three hours long, which calls for deletion of unnecessary scenes, despite the film's general leisurely pace. The example below exhibits a rephrased/invented dialogue sequence, which is in the context of the whole story, incompatible in terms of the characterisation of Coffey. In the example of a deleted sequence below, he is very childlike, unlike in the finished motion picture, in which he is simply rather innocent but not childish. Moreover, in the finished film, the scene is presented wordlessly and within approximately 20 seconds, the depiction of the nightly journey taking much less time than it would have required if it had been presented with the dialogue present in the screenplay. Below, the sequence involves Paul, Brutal and Harry escorting Coffey across a field after they smuggled him out of the prison to help a sick woman with his special healing abilities.

(Ex.53) *How far is it* [the car they are to use]*?* (Brutal, rephrase, screenplay p.98)

Just up ahead... (Harry, rephrase, screenplay p.98)

Hey there, little firefly. Where's Mrs. Firefly this evening? (Coffey, invention, screenplay p.98)

Oh, there you is. You come out to play too? (Coffey, invention, screenplay p.98)

They seem... drawn to you. (Paul, invention, screenplay p.99)

I love 'em, is why. They don't think no hurtful thoughts. They's just happy to <u>be.</u> Happy little lightning bugs... (Coffey, invention, screenplay p.99)

The last four lines are all inventions for the screenplay, the first two lines being rephrases from the novel. As referred to above, the motivation for the deletion of these lines is most likely two-fold, the main reason perhaps being inconsistency in characterisation. The childlike Coffey here does not reflect the interpretation of him elsewhere in the screenplay/finished motion picture. In addition, the function of the sequence above seems to be to underscore the miraculous aura that surrounds Coffey: even fireflies are attracted to him. However, he has proved his special, unearthly qualities already before this sequence and has done so several times during the course of the film. In this sense, the sequence in (Ex.53) is perhaps redundant

since it does not introduce anything particularly fresh. Moreover, because the characterisation here is mismatched with the general view of Coffey in the film, the motivation for deletion is clear. However, another motivation, although perhaps less significant compared to the main one, is that of time restrictions. There is no reason to retain a scene that does not forward the narrative or provide important character or background information in the finished film which is, in the end, over three hours long even without this particular sequence.

What is interesting about the deletions made during the editing process is that many of them were those very lines that were inventions in the screenwriting phase, as can be seen also from the previous example which includes deletions of four invented lines. In all, there are three larger categories of deletions at this stage of the adaptation. Those categories are deletions of inventions (58 lines), deletions of rephrased lines (34) and deletions of transfers/cut transfers (12, out of which six are directly transferred lines). The rest of the deletion categories number one to six deletions each, e.g. two reassigned lines and six dramatised lines were deleted. In other words, 14.5% of inventions, 12.6% of transferred lines and cut transfers and 10.0% of rephrases are deleted. It is interesting that a proportionally larger number of cut transfers/transferred lines is dropped out as opposed to rephrased lines. This would suggest that rephrasing a line of literary dialogue, rather than simply transferring (a part of) it, would increase its "survival potential" until the finished film. This is so, however, only on the surface, and one cannot say this definitely without a thorough analysis of the functions of those particular lines within the narrative.

Nonetheless, deletion of inventions is by far the largest of the deletion subcategories. As referred to above, those inventions with a clear purpose seem to survive. That is, the four inventions present in the example (Ex.53) above were cut while, for example, lines put forward in the Invention section which did have strong functions (e.g. Ex.21 and Ex.23 above) survived until the end. The deletion of inventions is the most significant group of deletions: it is the only one that, in proportion, exceeds the average number of deletions. That is, while on average 12.9% of all the lines are deleted, the deletions of inventions number 58, i.e. 14.5%. The number of inventions in the first stage of the adaptation, however, was four-fold compared to the number of transferred lines. Hence, a much larger number of inventions than direct transferrals survive to the film.

4.2.9 Invention

There are 179 inventions at this final stage of film adaptation. That is, 18.6% of the lines in the finished film are affected by invention. In all, 17 of these are parts of existing lines (in other words, the inventions *add* extra-novelistic elements to lines in the screenplay), but in all 162 inventions are 'pure inventions', that is, whole new lines that are invented for the motion picture. When compared to the number of deletions (which add up to 116) in this final phase of film adaptation, this figure is quite high. It means that approximately one ninth of the screenplay underwent a total change: 12.9% of all the lines in the screenplay were dropped out and the inventions brought in, after which we are left with more lines in the film than existed in the screenplay in the first place. The longest succession of invented lines comprises of 11 lines uttered in an intense sequence of commotion concerning a struggle involving six characters.

The category of invention here is defined slightly differently from the way it was defined above in the first stage of the adaptation. An invention here is a line that *does not exist in the screenplay* but is made up for the film, the line itself being cued by the novel or not is less significant, yet important. That is to say, this present category of inventions includes also lines that are cued by the novel, but might be, for example rephrased. Such a case is considered a Backtracking line described above in section 4.2.7. In other words, an invention might be a backtracking line, but a backtracking line is not necessarily an invention (it might be a rephrase or an elaboration). In all, there are 16 cases in which the novel somehow cues the invented line and any backtracking lines are included in this figure. Furthermore, other cases of inventions include, for example, additions of sentences to existing lines. The majority of the lines in this category are, however, completely extra-novelistic (134 lines). Therefore, the most important distinction of an invention at this stage is the fact that the line does not exist in the screenplay itself. As (Ex.55) below will demonstrate, however, an invention might be cued by the *screenplay direction*, much in the same vein as dramatisation is based on the narrator's speech in the novel. This will be further clarified below, as will all the other subcategories of invention in this dialogue adaptation phase.

In a few cases the invention is at the same time a backtracking line. That is to say, the added ("invented") line is taken from the novel, with or without modifying it first. An example of such cases was presented above (see Ex.44). Therefore, the first

example here demonstrates a short sequence of two regular invented lines from close to the beginning of the film. The inventions are the very first two lines spoken in the 1930s story past. These lines nor the event (a phone call) are not as much as hinted at in the novel. In other words, they are pure inventions.

> (Ex.54) *Put me through to E Block.* (Guard, making a phone call, invention, motion picture)
>
> *E Block? Yeah. Right.* (Brutal, answering the phone, invention, motion picture)

The function of the inventions above is clear: they are there to introduce one of the main characters, Brutal, and let the viewer know where he is (the E Block of the penitentiary). Novel introduces its characters through the narrator's words, but with cinema the information – such as names and important past events or the history that the characters share – needs to be conveyed in a subtle, unobtrusive manner in dialogue. The example above establishes the place, while, for example the very first line in the screenplay (*Morning, Mr. Edgecomb. Some Danish for you this morning?*) by a nurse in the nursing home introduces our main character: Paul Edgecomb. Indeed, starting from the lines presented above in (Ex.54), the first scene in the film set on the Green Mile (E Block) manages to introduce skilfully to the viewer the five guards on the Mile, Coffey, and Del. Therefore, invention carries the necessary story information that the lines of dialogue in the novel need not incorporate at all.

Furthermore, there are some inventions which are suggested by the screenplay (e.g. *Marjorie Detterick calling from the porch for everybody to come eat, supper's ready*, p.112, explicated below in Ex.55) that are hence realised by the actors perhaps as a result of improvisation. The second example in this category presents a sequence of four invented lines, out of which two are cued by the screenplay, as will be shown below. The scene itself is not present in the novel. The related direction in the screenplay is quoted in (Ex.55) while the actual invented lines are presented in (55a).

> (Ex.55) *Marjorie Detterick calling from the porch for everybody to come eat, supper's ready... [...] Klaus coming down the ladder, calling to his daughters. The little girls running past the man with the paintbrush* [Billy]*, who turns and smiles as they go by...* (screenplay p.112)

> (55a) *Klaus! Supper time! Bring the girls!* (Marjorie, invention, motion picture)
>
> *Girls! You heard your Momma!* (Klaus, invention, motion picture)
>
> *Yes, Poppa! We're coming!* (girls, invention, motion picture)
>
> *Come on, Billy! Hard work enough for one day. Come get you some supper!* (Klaus, invention, motion picture)

In this case the actors create the lines that are cued by the screenplay direction (the first two lines by Marjorie and Klaus). These inventions are comparable to dramatisation in that here the actors in collaboration with the director "dramatise" the screenplay "narrator's" language. Moreover, the girls' reply is, similarly to the two following examples below, a line which is part of a "natural continuum" of interaction. That is, the characters are reacting to other characters' previous words in a manner that appears spontaneous and natural, reflecting the sequential character of spoken language in real-life context. In all, there are no equivalent lines for these four examples above in the novel, so the inventions most likely result from improvisations or possible choices discussed on the location. As pointed out above, the case of improvisation is not as simple as this, and it is naïve to assume that the very first take on improvising a particular line would end up in the film before other options have been tried out. Therefore, it is safe to presume that these lines above are carefully "scripted" after they have been perhaps conceived through initial improvising.

Furthermore, dramatically the sequence is extremely important, since the viewers are finally revealed the heretofore-concealed identity of the real rapist-murderer. The sequence shows through images and dialogue the relaxed, even warm relationship between the Dettericks and the murderer, Billy. Therefore, what the viewer knows at this point about subsequent events and the characters injects an eerie resonance to the seemingly everyday words and the casual sequence of dialogue.

Moreover, as implied above, there are many inventions which are reactions to previous comments or, for example, rhetorical questions posed by another character that exist already in the screenplay. The next two short examples, (Ex.56) and (Ex.57), present this common case of invention, where the invented line is a reaction to the preceding, scripted line. The invention occurs as a natural extension of the speech sequence, contributing to a sense of continuity within the scene.

(Ex.56) *Then where the hell is he* [the mouse]*?* (Brutal, screenplay p.26)

Well, I don't know. (Dean, invention, motion picture)

(Ex.57) (speaking calmly after Billy has spat a liquefied chocolate cookie from his mouth onto his face) *Hope your bags are packed.* (Brutal, screenplay p.64)

My bags are packed, I'm ready to go! Where we goin'? Let's go! (Billy, invention, motion picture)

In the two examples above, the invented line is most likely a result of improvisation. Here a character reacts to another character's words in a way that seems "natural",

extending the scene and creating a realistic effect of genuine, spontaneous interaction between people. As Berliner (1999) points out, mainstream cinema dialogue aims to conceal its artificiality. One of the ways to do it would seem to be extending or adding to scripted lines through improvisation in order to achieve an effect of spontaneity. Moreover, (Ex.57) above functions as a comic relief as well while characterising Billy as a funny and harmless prankster, thus making the final revelation of his true nature (he had, in fact, committed the rapes and murders for which Coffey is executed) all the more surprising and dramatic for the viewer. Therefore, the invention is also motivated by dramatic needs. In all, the film adaptation lives a life of its own here, originating inventions from its own context rather than that of the novel.

Invention at this stage is also used to add something meaningful to an already existing line and such is the case in the example below:

> (Ex.58) *JACK! Goddam sponge is dry!* (Paul, invention, screenplay p.78 / invention, motion picture)

The example above includes an invented line (Paul's *JACK!*), which is further expanded by another invention during the filming (*Goddam sponge is dry!*). There is a sponge on the top of the head of an inmate being executed and the sponge is supposed to have been soaked in brine. Such is not the case. Previously, Paul has whispered at Brutal that the sponge is dry, but Brutal failed to either understand it or perhaps believe it (his reply is *What?*). Therefore, Paul explains to Brutal why he is calling out to Jack. Therefore, the *Goddam sponge is dry* part is directed not at Jack (who is the one throwing the electric chair switch on and off), but at Brutal, who in the situation, right after Paul has managed to yell *JACK!,* grabs Paul's forearm to prevent him from telling Jack to stop the execution that is already underway. The invention here, then, seems to serve at least one major purpose: it makes clear to the audience that Brutal knows what he is doing when he tells Paul to refrain from commanding Jack to shut down the electricity. After all, a normal reaction in such a horrendous incident would perhaps be to ask someone to kill the current – which would make things even worse, since the inmate would be still alive. The invented line saves Brutal's face, so to speak, in the eyes of the audience, who might not understand right away why he would want to prevent Paul from ostensibly "ending" the inmate's suffering. In other words, the invention here provides necessary information for the viewer and clarifies the situation.

It might be concluded that invention at this stage serves a feeling of continuity as well as spontaneity. It brings coherence to dialogue while reflecting the interactive nature and the sequential dynamics of spoken language. Furthermore, inventions also act as vehicles of characterisation and information, as in the first invention category above. In addition, some inventions add a humorous effect to a scene and hence provide comic relief amidst the drama and excitement.

Only one category is left to be presented in this section. The last category I will deal with is that of Direct Transferral: how many and what kinds of lines from the novel survive as such to the motion picture in this particular film adaptation.

4.2.10 Direct Transferral

Direct Transferral of lines was the question which originally sparked off the present thesis. As explicated above, according to some views on film adaptation, dialogue is one of the elements in novels that is directly transferable to screen. The theoretical background in the present study, however, suggested that making a film out of a novel is not such a simple case of copying a line and pasting it into the mouths of the actors. Furthermore, as the analysis above has shown, much goes on in the process of film adaptation. The lines of dialogue go through a massive metamorphosis already in the screenwriting stage of the adaptation, and the dialogue continues to evolve during the process of shooting the motion picture.

Direct transferral of dialogue does exist, however. I have defined as a directly transferred line any line of dialogue which exists in the film in the exact form it does in the novel, leaving aside variant spellings such as *getting/gettin'*. In addition, I have allowed reassignment without disqualifying the line as directly transferred. Moreover, I made a slight compromise with one of the lines out of common sense. The line in the novel involved calling a character Curtis, but since Curtis does not exist in the film adaptation and his place has been assigned to Hal, in the film the line is addressed to Hal accordingly. Hence, the line in the novel is *Can he carry a tune, Curt?*, while in the film it is *Can he carry a tune, Hal?*. Furthermore, I have not included cut transferences as direct transferrals. In my view, treating CTs as directly transferred does not tell the whole truth about film adaptation. CTs involve adaptation per se – they are lines that have been abridged – and hence should be treated as such. Labelling them as directly transferred would erase from the equation the adaptor's work and the artistry involved. (Note: if one did elect to count CTs as

directly transferred lines, however, the figures would go up somewhat, from 58 to 92 DTs. In that case, out of the 963 lines in the motion picture 9.6% would be considered directly transferred.)

Typically, directly transferred lines consist of, as the cinematic dialogue conventions above in the theoretical framework suggested, short and simple sentences. In (Ex.66) below, I will quote the longest directly transferred line in the motion picture. As can be seen in that particular example as well, even though the sentence is very long, its syntax and overall structure remains simple. Below, I will give some examples of directly transferred lines in order to demonstrate the typical cases in terms of line and sentence length.

(Ex.59) *Your name is John Coffey?* (Paul, motion picture, screenplay p.13 / Paul, novel p.17)

(Ex.60) *You bet.* (Hal, motion picture, no line in screenplay / Hal, novel p.57)

(Ex.61) *I just wanna see what he'll do. In the interests of science, like.* (Brutal, motion picture, screenplay p.25 / Brutal, novel p.62)

(Ex.62) *Watch and learn.* (Paul, motion picture, screenplay p.34 / Paul, novel p.104)

(Ex.63) *Please, son.* (Burt, motion picture, screenplay p.57 / Burt, novel p.204)

(Ex.64) *How about Mouseville?* (Brutal, motion picture, screenplay p.69 / Brutal, novel p.242)

(Ex.65) *Cup.* (Paul, motion picture, screenplay p.92 / Paul, novel p.367)

Many of the lines are very short, ranging from one to four words. The longest DT in terms of word-count is a line with 36 words and it is uttered by Toot, one of the inmates, "a crazy trustee" of the guards, who habitually acts as a stand-in for an inmate to be executed in an execution rehearsal. Below, presented as (Ex.66) and the last example in the thesis, is the longest DT as spoken by Toot while he is strapped to the electric chair and Brutal, the execution supervisor, has asked him if he has anything to say before the sentence is carried out:

(Ex.66) *Yeah! I want a fried chicken dinner with gravy on the taters, I want to shit in your hat, and I got to have Mae West sit on my face, because I am one horny motherfucker!* (Toot, motion picture, screenplay p.35 / Toot, novel p.106)

The transferred line is long enough to allow a minor character take the stage for a while and make himself known to the viewer. Being as long and unusually complex as the line is, it draws attention (of the camera as well as the viewers') to itself. Therefore, the rather unforgettable line makes the minor character also unforgettable (see McKee 1997 on rendering minor characters interesting in order to avoid clichéd "stock characters"). Furthermore, the line is useful in characterisational terms. Toot's

gleeful remark makes the guards laugh, thus showing to the viewer that they are human, despite their perhaps questionable profession as prison guards who carry out executions of other human beings. The scene presents the guards doing their job, which is just that: a job. They have gone through the procedures of execution rehearsal many times and are able to regard them in a naturalised way. In addition, the next line in the scene has Paul tell his men to *shut up* because he does not want the guards to remember the joke the next day in the real execution and start laughing again. Therefore, Toot's directly transferred remark works also as a way to present Paul not only as a friend and a colleague to the other guards as before, but also a firm leader and a respected professional (the men all comply). Finally, a possible motivation for the preservation of the above line is that it lightens the scene from the viewers' point of view by momentarily breaking up the flow of information on execution procedures put forth in the scene.

To sum, the analysis shows that 6.0% of the lines are directly transferred from the novel. That is, 58 lines out of the 963 lines in the finished film. In all, 56 of them were already included in Darabont's screenplay while only two of them were contrived after the screenplay had been finished and the filming process had begun (one of them is presented above in Ex.60). In all, 38.9% of the transferred lines in the screenplay were either dropped out or changed in the process of filming the motion picture. More often than not, the DTs were in their final form already in the screenplay phase, that is, they were not reworked during the process of film adaptation. There are only four exceptions to this (they are, in other words, backtracking lines). Furthermore, some of the DTs are the same. That is, for example, there are three instances of both *Roll on one* and *Roll on two* in the DTs. Moreover, in two separate occasions, Coffey repeats the phrase (*I*) *couldn't help it. I tried to take it back, but it was too late*, which is therefore directly transferred two times.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the percentage of direct dialogue transferral remains low. As the analysis of the dialogue in the three modes of *The Green Mile* has shown, much goes on in the process of adapting literary dialogue to screen and while direct transferral is an option, it is not a very well-favoured one. Rather, the adaptor chooses to mould the dialogue material so that it better suits the new environment and to invent new lines of dialogue to serve the narration as well as characterisation. I will discuss the results of the present study and their implications further below.

5. DISCUSSION

Study of film adaptation can indirectly reveal a variety of interesting issues. Whereas Sinyard (2000:152), for example, examined the deviations between a novel and its adaptation in order to uncover the director's "interpretative slant on the material and what the differences tell us about their respective art forms", film adaptation for me provided a window through to which I was able to look at both literature and film and draw conclusions on adapting dialogue. I examined the dialogue in the two *Green Miles* to seek answers to questions such as What is dialogue adaptation? What are some of the differences between literary and cinematic dialogue? What are the implications on direct dialogue transferral in film adaptation and specifically in a case of popular novel adaptation?

The present thesis involved an attempt to analyse the process of adaptation as it can be perceived in the end-product(s). I also hoped to disclose the possible motivations behind the modifications. While this might appear as a futile attempt, I believe that the motivations are recoverable to a large extent, largely due to the conventions of mainstream filmmaking that are well-documented and well-known to the extent that they are, at least to the filmmaking professionals, seemingly instinctive. Asheim (1949:37) has noted that adaptors seem to be either reluctant or incapable of analysing the motives behind the artistic choices they have made. In his view, years of experience of films renders the filmmakers' decisions more intuitive than calculated, and that researchers are, in fact, on a safer ground analysing the end-products to disclose through deduction the possible motivations behind the adaptative decisions, rather than going out and interviewing the filmmakers (Asheim 1949:36). Yet, whereas the decisions might be intuitive, this does not mean that the motivations would not exist. Like Asheim's (1949:37), my basic assumption is also that no changes in adaptation are made without a reason.

The overall tendency in adaptation research is that the novel is seen as the norm and the study concentrates on the deviations. Furthermore, the research in the field so far has concentrated on comparing the novel and the finished motion picture, thus eliminating the question of process (as it can be perceived in the respective end products) and viewing film adaptation perhaps as more simplistic a production than it in reality is. I divided the process of adaptation into two phases because I assumed we might gain a deeper understanding of the art of adaptation if the screenplay was

included in the analysis. Moreover, I regarded the division important also in the sense that it makes possible to conclude how the eventual movement from written to spoken language specifically affects the adapted cinematic dialogue.

When we are dealing with two separate, yet related organic wholes with their own inner logic, it is only natural that the lines of dialogue do not share their place, equivalent meaning or foothold in their respective contexts of novel and film. Yet, most adaptation critics and researchers so far have not even considered the possibility that the literary lines of dialogue would not perhaps work as such in their new context. The failure to consider the adaptation as a film rather than as a pictorial version of the novel shows itself in these comments and in how direct transferral is praised and anticipated. Indeed, the inclusion of the screenplay in the equation made manifest the more gradual movement from scripted cinematic dialogue to spoken dialogue.

To begin with one of the main findings, the analysis above suggests that direct transferral is not a prominent feature of film adaptation, in this case of a popular novel. Instead of taking a line from the novel and pasting it to the screen, as it were, the adaptor utilises a variety of adaptative functions, that is, different types of modifications introduced to the dialogue. In the absence of existing, established categories, I formulated terms of my own to describe what the adaptor does to the literary dialogue as cinematic dialogue is forged. That is, the present research data itself dictated the categories. As suggested by the analysis, dialogue adaptation equals rephrases, abridgements, reassignments, deletions, inventions, elaborations, transferences, and direct transferrals. The most prominent features of dialogue adaptation in the present case of *The Green Mile* are invention, rephrase, reassignment, and abridgement (first phase), and invention, elaboration, rephrase, and deletion (second phase). As implied above, direct transferral of dialogue remained scarce: only 6.0% of the lines in the motion picture are directly transferred from the literary source.

The results of the present study, therefore, suggested that direct transferral in film adaptation is not a major feature of dialogue adaptation. Moreover, based on the theoretically backed differences between cinematic and literary dialogue, as well as the dialogue conventions upheld by general practices of filmmaking, direct transferral should perhaps not even be a recommended exercise for film adaptors. Today's cinema audiences are proficient film "decoders". Their expectations are

drawn from both real-life interaction and spoken language conventions, but also from other films. They have learned what good film dialogue is like and they supposedly react to deviations easily, especially noting if the dialogue sounds 'annoyingly "written"', as Putman (2000) put it. Film adaptation is, in reality, about making a film, not presenting the literary source in images. Furthermore, the adaptor is surely aiming to make a *good* film and very often films get judged by their dialogue. As a result, the adaptor's work is by no means simple, judging by the effort successful dialogue adaptation alone requires. In other words, film adaptation is not a question of cut-copy-and-paste. Both phases of the adaptation process are highly organic and flexible, allowing various kinds of modifications to the dialogue.

Another important element that the analysis revealed was that invention was a prominent feature not only in the screenwriting phase but also during the filming of the motion picture. Perhaps the most surprising realisation was that invention was as prominent as it was. Almost half of the lines in the screenplay were extra-novelistic, and close to two hundred lines in the filming stage included at least some parts of lines that were invented. Furthermore, inventions seem to fulfil a large number of functions. They are used, for example, to make the narrative more coherent by connecting disparate events or lines, to characterise a person, to add a comic touch to the drama, and to provide necessary information. In the novel there is a narrator who fills in the blanks and this allows even larger gaps between lines of dialogue because the narration can act as an insulator of a kind. In this sense, cinematic dialogue needs to be more informative and often this is where inventions come along. Therefore, the large number of inventions in the adaptation speaks against the assumption that cinematic dialogue could merely consist of direct transferrals, or even of adapted dialogue alone. Had the literary dialogue fulfilled all the necessary functions for motion picture dialogue, there would have not been the need for the adaptor to invent lines of dialogue. Indeed, direct transferral, rephrase, abridgement, elaboration, and perhaps reassignment would have been enough. Yet, the screenplay required exactly 400 extra-novelistic lines of dialogue.

In all, the division of adaptation into two phases proved interesting, perhaps more so than anticipated. It revealed several issues that would have remained hidden had the analysis excluded the screenplay. Perhaps the most striking revelation occurred at the level of Elaboration. As opposed to the 16 elaborated lines of dialogue in the screenplay phase (see Appendix), the second phase saw 145 lines of

dialogue being affected by elaboration. This, in turn, has reference points in two directions: a) it speaks for the screenwriter following the general "rules" of mainstream cinema dialogue writing, and b) it points to the realities of spoken language and dialogue.

Indeed, the first phase included 96 abridgements as opposed to 16 elaborations. This suggests that the screenwriter was aiming for dialogue which was lean and economic – much in the vein the theorists and the textbook advice propose. There were exceptions, however. As Kozloff (2000:28) points out, there are "rules" to cinematic dialogue, but the screenwriters do not automatically go by them. Indeed, breaking a convention can be used to draw attention to the line itself or the character uttering it. Yet, the longer, perhaps more complex lines in the screenplay remained scarce. Interestingly, the large number of elaborations in the second phase speaks of the disparities between theory and practice. Whereas elaboration in the first phase included effects of poetic and comic embroidery as well as naturalistic talk, the second-phase elaborations fulfilled the latter function almost exclusively. Elaborations in the last phase, then, seemed to exist in order to render the dialogue sounding more spontaneous and realistic to the viewers' ears. Therefore, whereas cinematic dialogue is persistently considered to be 'most economic' in its use of words, this should perhaps not be regarded as an axiom. In the present case, a great number of lines underwent a slight change in the second phase of the adaptation and resulted in somewhat longer and more verbose lines of dialogue. It seems, therefore, that as the main aim in cinematic dialogue, 'realistic' and natural-sounding dialogue with dramatic force overrides the absolute economy of words, which is perhaps more of a *result* than an objective.

Cinematic dialogue ends up being spoken out loud and this has an effect on it, hence the adjectives describing cinematic dialogue need some reference points. Certainly, the present thesis is a case study and one cannot safely draw solid conclusions about the nature of film dialogue simply based on the analysis of one film adaptation. Nonetheless, the analysis suggested that cinematic dialogue is lean when compared to literary dialogue, and economic (i.e. to the point and void of, for example, retroaction) when compared to regular, everyday speech.

Furthermore, the two-phase analysis revealed that the characters went through their respective metamorphoses (with regards to their characterisation in the novel) in the screenplay phase. That is, reassignment, which very forcefully affects

characterisation, was much more relevant in the first phase. Indeed, 10.8% of the lines in the screenplay had been reassigned as opposed to a mere 0.5% of lines in the second phase of the adaptation. This, in turn, seems to point towards the fact that the screenwriting phase, in reality, appears to be the most crucial phase in film adaptation in terms of shaping the characters. Moreover, the proportional number of rephrases in the adaptation speaks for this as well (37.8% / 12.7%). Again, this suggests that the screenwriter does the core work for the film adaptation.

Yet, even though in *The Green Mile* case, the screenwriter and the director are the same person, this does not mean that a writer with experience on directing actors would write "perfect" cinematic dialogue already for the screenplay. Rather, what the analysis also suggests is that screenwriting is an art form of its own and acting its own, and they both contribute to the way the dialogue ends up on the screen, as implied above. Therefore, adaptation studies as a research field should recognise also that an adaptation is not made by 'an adaptor' (which is further conflated to mean only the director of the adaptation), but a large number of artists – starting from the screenwriter – with unique personalities, visions, and interpretations to be negotiated during the process of filmmaking. Indeed, Stillinger (1991:176ff) maintains that films are not so much made as they are negotiated.

What is more, the analysis implies that the adaptor was also most aware of spoken language and its conventions, much more so than the novelist, for obvious reasons. While literary dialogue tolerates long monologues, these are irregular in average real-life interaction situations. Moreover, as linguists know, complex subordination in normal conversation is scarce, but, again, literary dialogue allows it. To be sure, cinematic dialogue and films in general are closer to real life than books, and film is a temporal art form, the events unfolding in front of our eyes. The nature of cinematic dialogue reflects this as well through its structure and stylised conventions. Moreover, as pointed out above, the intense visual context in films has an effect on dialogue adaptation as well. The analysis proposed that adaptors tend to avoid verbal expression if a piece of information can be relayed visually, and they do this simply to avoid redundancy.

Furthermore, the analysis above suggested that inventions as well as directly transferred lines and the other strictly *adapted* lines exist in perfect harmony with each other. In other words, the lines interact with other lines in an organic whole. Therefore, it seems unjustifiable to say that, for example, adapting narratorial speech

to character dialogue (i.e. 'dramatisation' above) would be a doomed exercise for the adaptor. Moreover, inventions do certainly not presuppose deletions, as many researchers seem to presuppose. Film adaptation is not a simple case of deleting the 'not pictorial' elements of the novel and adding other elements to 'make up for the omissions' (see, for example, Bluestone 1957, Giddings et al. 2000). The organic and independent nature of film adaptations cannot be stressed too much. The film is able – and *should* be able – to stand on its own; it should not require support from its literary source to be understood.

Therefore, film adaptation is an organic process until the very end, and the adaptation itself does not end with writing the screenplay, nor does it begin no sooner than on the set. Unlike much of the adaptation research even today suggests, film adaptation is an ongoing process that begins with the screenwriter reading the literary text and ends with post-production editing and mixing. Furthermore, both writing the screenplay and shooting the motion picture seem to be of equal importance as far as dialogue adaptation is concerned. The future film, its events and characters are shaped in screenwriting and a large percentage of lines undergo a metamorphosis in the second phase of the adaptation. Indeed, in moving from the screenplay to the finished motion picture, only just over half of the lines remained intact. The importance of the screenplay (regarding dialogue adaptation) is, then, for one, that the characters become who they are in the film. The actual filming stage, in turn, proves important in shaping the dialogue into what cinematic dialogue ultimately is: stylised spoken language.

Therefore, adaptation studies might possibly be missing out some crucial implications (in terms of, for example, finding motivations for the (often disparaged) alterations between the novel and the film) when the research consistently brushes the screenplay aside. Perhaps a closer examination of film adaptation so that the screenplay was included in the equation would open up new perspectives into the research conducted in the field. This, indeed seemed to happen with the present study. After all, film adaptation research traditionally neglects the study of dialogue while conflating, to a large extent, the cinema into mere 'moving pictures'. Contrastingly, Cole and Haag (1999:87), for example, maintain that dialogue is "the vehicle by which a production 'moves'" and because of that the words in the screenplay – were they of dialogue or not – are enormously important. They, in fact, state that in screenwriting, "[d]ialogue is, in a word, sacred" (ibid.).

Yet, in studying the qualities of cinematic and literary dialogue and the full effects and practices of dialogue adaptation, the lines that do not end up in the film should be taken into account as well. To examine dialogue adaptation only from the point of view of included elements and disregard the excluded ones, one risks finding the answers to questions related to characterisation or mood, for example. Nor is one able to find them if the screenplay is left out of the equation. In a word, a more multifaceted and thorough adaptation research is needed to unearth the complexities of dialogue adaptation.

In terms of the differences between cinematic and literary dialogue, my analysis showed that the adaptor chose to utilise only a small number of lines from the literary source as such. This, in turn, suggests that there are some profound differences between cinematic and literary dialogue, since the adaptor saw it necessary to use such a large variety of tools in his working arsenal in order to write cinematic dialogue that, to him, best suited the film. The adaptor cut and shortened lines, he rephrased them, dramatised them from narrator speech, reassigned them to other characters, deleted them, relocated them within the structure of the story, and invented whole new lines. Indeed, the adaptative functions emerging from the data themselves tell something about the differences between the two modes of dialogue. Most importantly, they assert that the differences exist. As Asheim (1949:35) suggests, adaptors rephrase dialogue so that it "'speaks better' in [its] altered form". For its own part, then, the present thesis seemed to confirm that the two modes of dialogue are of different breed, if you like. However, while the present thesis suggested some of the differences between them, the definition of the concept 'an altered form' used by Asheim half a century ago is still open. What exactly is this cinematic dialogue?

Cinema and literature nowadays work both ways: a novelist may be writing in a "cinematic" way. One often encounters the assertion that a novelist writes dialogue that is particularly 'cinematic'. There is not, however, a clear definition for the concept. Indeed, there is a need for more research conducted on cinematic dialogue in general, and not only in the field of adaptation studies. In general terms, whereas film studies tends to over-privilege the image and over-emphasise the viewers' understanding of the narration based on visual cues only, the literary slant of adaptation studies, in turn, over-privileges the word (in the source text) and, consequently, demonstrates inadequate understanding of the cinema's array of

signifiers (see, for example, Lothe 2000 and Lotman 1989). Undoubtedly, a seemingly unbiased field such as linguistics would lend a fresh and fruitful perspective into the study of film and film adaptations. Aural (therefore also verbal) communication in films plays an integral part in the construction of the narrative and, most importantly, the construction of the viewer's *understanding* of the narrative. Therefore, cinematic dialogue certainly deserves thorough examination. After all, "[o]ne word may be worth a thousand pictures", as director Alan Rudolph has said (2003, n.p.).

In addition, cinematic dialogue changes over the years. The variety of industrial, social and technological changes affect it, as Kozloff (2000:19) has pointed out. When watching old classic film such as *Gone with the Wind* (also an adaptation) today, one cannot help but notice how "theatrical" and over-dramatic, not to mention over-explanatory the dialogue sounds to our ears. That is to say, the sociohistorical context of making the adaptation affects the adaptation of dialogue as well. Therefore, while a half-a-century-old adaptation of a novel might include perhaps a larger amount of directly transferred dialogue, its proportion in a modernised adaptation today might end up being much smaller. Supposedly, mainstream cinematic dialogue is not written simply according to the personal aspirations of a screenwriter – although personal artistic expression must not be dismissed – but it follows certain conventions that are bound to the surrounding society and the cinematic conventions and fashions of the time. This might, indeed, prove an interesting research topic in the case of multiple adaptations of a novel. Again, we might be able to gain fascinating results on cinematic dialogue and its developmental history "indirectly", through film adaptation research.

To be sure, the present study raised many other intriguing suggestions for further study as well. For example, to go even further into the realm of 'unknown' popular books would most likely produce even less biased research on adaptation. By this I mean that since King is an extremely widely read author and a public figure, one would suppose that film adaptations made of his stories would seek to be 'faithful'. However, to take an unknown author and a little read popular book which is made into a motion picture would perhaps lead to new insights on the adaptation process as well as the (narration-related) differences and similarities between popular literature and mainstream cinema.

Moreover, I did not use linguistic analysis as such in my thesis. Undoubtedly, a more thorough inspection of literary and cinematic dialogue in terms of syntax, for example, would yield interesting results. What would be interesting to examine also, is whether literary dialogue in popular novels today emulates cinematic dialogue in sentence length and lack of complex subordination. As I pointed out above, some people refer to certain types of literary dialogue as 'cinematic', but they refrain from producing concrete examples or even hints at what exactly this 'cinematic' dialogue in literature means. Most importantly, perhaps it is not simply a result of using shorter and less complex sentences, but there might be some other factors working underneath the surface as well.

In addition, the analysis raised some questions regarding voice-over. It seemed that in the present case of film adaptation, voice-over narration was allowed to sound more literary than the regular dialogue. In other words, it appeared that the same "rules" do not apply to both voice-over and the regular type of dialogue. The sentences were longer and more poetic and the overall line length was more extensive, for example. Some interesting research questions for further study might include a more detailed examination of voice-over in terms of its structure compared to the general dialogue in the film and, in cases of film adaptation, also the literary dialogue in the adaptation's source. Is it true that voice-over narration in film is somehow more 'literary', and how this might become manifest in the syntax and the general structural differences or perhaps the overall style of the lines? Following Berliner (1999), who maintained that deviant film dialogue draws attention to itself, does voice-over do this in purpose? Are voice-over lines different from regular dialogue because they purposely draw the viewer onto a different plane of viewing where, for example, the emotional distance from the events and characters grows larger? Some intriguing results might be obtained within either linguistic, literary or film studies framework.

Finally, a few words must be put forth regarding the general success of the present study. It seemed that with such an ample data, one cannot delve as deep to the qualitative analysis as one would desire. However, the fact that the data was so generous facilitated me to draw some conclusions on dialogue adaptation in quantitative terms. Indeed, the study made it possible to identify the most prominent adaptative functions within the context of the adaptation and draw an elementary picture of what goes on in adapting dialogue. The limited length of the present study,

however, somewhat restricted the qualitative analysis. While I was able to, again, identify some of the major effects of the adaptative functions that the adaptor used to write the cinematic dialogue in the adaptation, the possibility for more detailed qualitative analysis remained outside the parameters of the present study. Therefore, a more general overview emerged from the analysis above, but much remains to be done.

In all, what makes the study of cinematic dialogue so interesting – and at the same time makes it seem so futile – is the fact that 'cinematic dialogue' is a vague concept that is in a constant flux. Firstly, it is not a fixed entity but a variety of different genres or 'registers', as Kozloff (2000) has shown. Not even all of these genres have been mapped out so far. The issue is further complicated by adding the factor of film adaptation. In terms of film adaptation, perhaps the end-product, i.e. the film itself, determines more forcefully the way the adapted dialogue ends up like. That is, when a literary text is adapted, it may even move from one film genre to another (from a detective story into a film noir or perhaps an action film, for example). Surely this will have an effect on dialogue adaptation, and the shaping force of the literary source dialogue itself may be weakened further. How, then, are we to define clearly what exactly adapting dialogue is? The questions remain plentiful and complex.

As pointed out above, studies conducted on popular novel adaptations are still scarce. The present study contributed to the amending of this persistent neglect in the field, but only in a very modest way. The problems arise from the fact that since much of the film adaptation criticism and theory is from this classical literature point of view, many researchers pass these notions on as universal truths. I believe, however, that the oft-expressed criticism condemning the adaptor's artistic freedom is fruitless, and not only in the realm of popular novel adaptations. Much more research on popular novel adaptations is needed, and once the popular novel slant on adaptation studies properly sets off, the circle will hopefully be self-nourishing: once we gain more insights into the practices of unrestricted film adaptation, we will hopefully be able to appreciate the reinterpretations and the artistic aspirations and visions provided by classic novel film adaptations as well. Instead of condemning deviations, we might do better to engage in an unprejudiced and fruitful dialogue between the arts of film and literature.

Indeed, my view on film adaptation in general is that the viewer constructs a third entity at any rate, be the film adaptation faithful or radically different, and be it so in terms of dialogue or other aspects. I know that my *Green Mile* is not that of Stephen King's, nor is it that of Frank Darabont's. Yet because of the adaptation, I now have two *Green Miles* out of which to construct my own, that *tertium quid*, which is so special to me that it prompted me to conduct research on its components.

To conclude, when allowing striking and unusual reinterpretations, we might also be in the process of "freeing the film artist", something that the postmodernist, post-Barthesian age has not yet, in reality, succeeded in doing. It seems that popular novel adaptations might be the less troublesome road to take to begin this journey. There are, therefore, much wider implications also operating in the realm of film adaptation studies. Expanding the field of adaptations studied would assist in the birth of the Text which would exist outside concepts such as 'literary' and 'popular' and would be freely circulated, reworked, reinterpreted, reproduced – and adapted.

6. CONCLUSION

The present thesis is both a quantitative and qualitative look at dialogue adaptation. My aims were to uncover the practices of the adaptor who works with literary dialogue in writing cinematic dialogue. In other words, what does it mean to adapt dialogue? Moreover, I examined the differences between cinematic and literary dialogue and scrutinized the frequency of direct transferral of dialogue in a piece of popular literature adaptation.

For the purposes of the study, the adaptation process was divided into two phases: writing the screenplay and shooting the motion picture. The division was made on the grounds that I suspected it might be worth looking at the screenplay more closely, and that this would, perhaps, unearth some issues related to dialogue adaptation that might otherwise remain hidden. Such indeed seemed to be the case. Moreover, the division was necessary to facilitate examining the factors of dialogue adaptation that specifically resulted from the differences between written and spoken dialogue.

The analysis revealed that adapting literary dialogue into cinematic dialogue appears to be a complex process involving a variety of 'adaptative functions', i.e. modifications that the adaptor does to the literary dialogue when he turns the selected lines into cinematic dialogue. The adaptative functions present in the case of *The Green Mile* are abridgement, backtracking, deletion, direct transferral, dramatisation, elaboration, expansion, invention, reassignment, relocation, rephrase, and transference. In the absence of previously established classifications, I originated the above categories as dictated by the present research data. Therefore, they are not conclusive or exhaustive; rather they merely suggest what goes on in dialogue adaptation. Based on the analysis, the most prominent adaptative functions in *The Green Mile* are invention, rephrase, and reassignment (the first adaptation phase) and invention, elaboration, and rephrase (the second phase).

The two-stage examination of the film adaptation revealed that, for example, invention was a very important adaptative function present not only in the first but also in the second phase. In addition, it became apparent that due to the majority of reassignments and rephrases taking place in the first phase of the adaptation, character compositions were largely determined already by the screenwriter. This, in turn, tells of the importance of the screenwriter and the screenplay in film adaptation, an aspect so often disregarded by adaptation theorists attributing most of the adaptation work itself to the director.

Most importantly, examining the adaptation in two phases made explicit the modifications that resulted from the movement from written language to the realm of spoken dialogue. Especially the elaborations in the second phase suggested that the actual voicing of the lines tended to result in added words such as *you*, *hey*, *that's*, and *well*. It seems that the motivation behind the second-stage modifications is that of making the dialogue sound more spontaneous and natural, following along the lines of everyday conversation.

In terms of direct transferral of dialogue, a question that originally sparked off the present thesis, the results of the analysis confirmed the initial hypothesis that it would be scarce. The views on literary, dramatic and cinematic dialogue presented in the theoretical framework section suggested that there were numerous differences in the three forms, largely resulting from the visual context of theatre and film, the absence of a narrator in the two media, and ultimately the different need for realism that the theatre and the cinema encompass.

The present study suggested that the oft-expressed views in the field of adaptation studies, according to which cinematic dialogue and literary dialogue are similar enough to warrant direct transferral, are questionable. Literary dialogue tends to incorporate long lines with complex subordination, something which cinematic dialogue, in turn, is apt to avoid as it seeks to reflect the conventions of real-life spoken language. The analysis showed that lines of literary dialogue were often cut into smaller units, if not by the screenwriter then by the actors interpreting the lines in the screenplay.

Furthermore, the analysis suggested that the screenwriter, in general terms, is aware of the conventions of spoken language to a larger extent than the literary author, for obvious reasons. This is manifested in the breaking down of longer speeches and eliminating complex subordination, as implied above. In addition, the quality of the second-phase inventions proposes that the sequential nature of real-life interaction influenced many of the inventions as the filmmakers sought to create more 'realistic' film dialogue.

In sum, cinematic dialogue is distinct from both literary and theatrical dialogue. It follows conventions of its own, many of them reflecting those of real-life speech. In order to convince and draw in the film audience, cinematic dialogue needs to sound, in its own terms, natural to us, not literary or theatrical. Therefore, as the present thesis suggested, the adaptor chooses to modify the literary dialogue rather than rely on direct transferral so often anticipated by film adaptation critics.

While the present thesis sought to disclose some of the differences between cinematic and literary dialogue, the answers in which it resulted are by no means conclusive. Rather, the analysis paved the way for future research in its modest and necessarily limited way. It confirmed that cinematic and literary dialogue should be treated as distinct entities and also studied as such. This is so especially in the mainstream film / popular fiction sphere, where the adaptors supposedly need not consider the source text as infallible or something to be revered, and they are free to concentrate on making an excellent film instead of remaining faithful to the letter of, for example, an academically admired classic novel. In addition, cinematic dialogue, especially in relation to literary dialogue is a scarcely researched area in both film studies and film adaptation studies. There remain a plethora of unanswered questions related to, for example, the detailed properties of cinematic dialogue and its developmental history (e.g. as perceived through examination of multiple film

adaptations), and voice-over. The answers can be sought from the point of view of a variety of research fields such as film studies, literary studies, and linguistics.

To conclude, film adaptation is not a straightforward practice of transferring the literary dialogue onto screen. The dialogue in the adaptation process is in constant flux as it is being remodelled and readjusted according to the needs of mainstream cinema narration and its conventions and the 'realism' of the cinema and its relation to everyday language use. In sum, film adaptation makes the silent words on a page into singing rhythms of speech. The two dimensional words on the page gain dimensions of timber and melody, rhythm and pauses, gazes and movements of the body, while they are affirmed, contradicted and juxtapositioned through editing and camera work. The results of dialogue adaptation exist in a multiplicity of dimensions, playing an important part in the magic that is the motion picture.

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APPENDIX

Adaptative Function	First Phase (number of lines)	Proportional number of lines (%)	Second Phase (number of lines)	Proportional number of lines (%)
Abridgement	96	10,7	91	9,4
Backtracking	n/a	n/a	26	2,7
Deletion	n/a	n/a	116	12,0
Direct Transferral	n/a	n/a	58	6,0
Dramatisation	51	5,7	n/a	n/a
Elaboration	16	1,8	145	15,1
Expansion	n/a	n/a	6	0,6
Invention	400	44,4	179	18,6
Reassignment	97	10,8	5	0,5
Relocation	n/a	n/a	12	1,2
Rephrase	340	37,8	122	12,7
Transference	95	10,6	n/a	n/a

Table 1. The overall number and proportional number of lines of dialogue in the adaptation according to their adaptative functions.