

Television Adaptations of Jane Austen's *Emma*, 1972–2009

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Abstract. The aim of this paper was to analyse how three different television adaptations of Jane Austen's *Emma* (1815) avail themselves of the medium of television to narrate the story. The productions analysed are John Glenister's BBC series from 1972, dramatised by Denis Constanduros; Diarmuid Lawrence's ITV film from 1996, dramatised by Andrew Davies; and Jim O'Hanlon's BBC series from 2009, dramatised by Sandy Welch. A close reading and formal analysis of the three television productions, against a close reading of the novel and theoretical perspectives on narration and adaptation by Seymour Chatman, Linda Hutcheon and Linda Costanzo Cahir, showed differences related to the different formats of TV series and TV film as well as to the differences in ideals and conventions related to television drama between 1972 and 2009.

1. Introduction

This paper is based on the first-ever essay I wrote at university, in the autumn of 2006. The essay was a comparison of two television adaptations of Jane Austen's *Emma* (1815), a BBC series from 1972 and an ITV film from 1996, and it was supervised by Mats Johansson. The theme for his tutor group was television, but I was keen to write about the literary classics I had gone to university to study, and although Austen was far from Mats's professional expertise he guided me through the project with characteristic encouragement and commitment, giving me a very positive first experience of academic writing and paving the way for my eventual research interests in the field of adaptation studies. The present paper has been extended to also include the BBC series from 2009 as well as theoretical perspectives from Seymour Chatman's *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film* (1990), Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006) and Linda Costanzo Cahir's *Literature into Film: Theory and Practical Approaches* (2006).

Emma is of course a classic novel which has given rise to many more adaptations and appropriations than the three studied here. It had already been adapted for television a few times before 1972, for the BBC, NBC and CBC. During the period 1972–2009, it was adapted for cinema twice: in 1996, as *Emma*, written and directed by Douglas McGrath and starring Gwyneth Paltrow as Emma Woodhouse; and just one year earlier as the high-school comedy *Clueless*, written and directed by Amy Heckerling and starring Alicia Silverstone as Cher, Emma's modern-day, Beverly Hills, teen equivalent. During the 2010s, there were two blog-

style YouTube web series based on Austen's novel: *Emma Approved* (2013), produced by Pemberley Digital, and *The Emma Agenda* (2017), produced by Quip Modest Productions. In additions to this, the novel has been adapted many times for non-screen media such as novels and stage-plays. The most recent screen adaptation is the film *Emma* from 2020, directed by Autumn de Wilde, starring Anya Taylor-Joy, with a screenplay by Eleanor Catton.

This paper will deal with the three most recent television adaptations of *Emma*. The 1972 version is a six-episode BBC television series, in its entirety 4 hours and 22 minutes long, dramatised by Denis Constanduros, directed by John Glenister, and starring Doran Godwin. The version from 1996 is a 1-hour-and-47-minute-long ITV television film, with a script by Andrew Davies, directed by Diarmuid Lawrence, and starring Kate Beckinsale. The 2009 version is a BBC television series, comprised of four hour-long episodes, written by Sandy Welch, directed by Jim O'Hanlon, and starring Romola Garai. This paper analyses the differences between the ways in which these three different productions avail themselves of the medium of television to narrate Austen's story. First, the three adaptations will be compared with respect to narrating techniques, including cinematography, editing and music. I will then move on to how the novel's focalisation has been translated in the adaptations. Finally, I will deal with omissions and additions in relation to the novel and how the discourse compares to the story in each of the adaptations.

2. Cinematic narration

According to Linda Hutcheon, the move from 'the telling mode to the showing mode', from 'print to performance', means that 'description, narration, and represented thoughts must be transcoded into speech, actions, sounds, and visual images' (Hutcheon 38, 40). In *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Film and Fiction*, Seymour Charman calls the 'cinematic narrator' a 'composite of a large and complex variety of communicating devices', including voice, noise, music, props, location, actors, cinematography and editing, divided into an auditory and a visual channel (Chatman 134–35). Linda Costanzo Cahir further specifies the elements of cinematography and editing as including camera shots, camera angles, camera movements and editing devices (Cahir). Chatman makes it clear that the cinematic narrator should not be confused with the voice-over narration present in some films (134). Among the three TV productions studied here, O'Hanlon's TV series from 2009 includes a voice-over narrator – in this case the actor playing Mr Knightley, Jonny Lee Miller – at the beginning of

the first episode. This should not be taken to mean that Mr Knightley is the ‘narrator’ of the series; rather, the narrator is an unnamed entity made up of elements such as cinematography, editing, music and acting, including the voice-over.

A comparison of the editing in the three adaptations makes it clear that there is a marked difference in rhythm and pacing, and that the 1972 series stands out as being comprised of much longer and proportionately fewer shots than the two later productions. The 1996 film is particularly quickly paced: Louise Watson of the British Film Institute especially comments on ‘the director Diarmuid Lawrence’s snappy pacing’ (Watson ‘Jane Austen’s *Emma* (1996)’). As an illustration, even though the 1972 series lasts for 4 hours and 22 minutes and the 1996 film only for 1 hour and 47 minutes, each production includes the same number of scenes, 77. Out of the 77 scenes in the 1972 series, 69 are interiors and 8 exteriors, while 40 of the scenes in the 1996 film are interiors and 37 exteriors. One of the reasons for this is that the film is shot on location to a larger extent, while the series is largely filmed in a studio. According to Sergio Angelini, British television in the 1970s was ‘[s]tylistically...still intensely theatrical, at least partly for technical reasons’. Television drama, he continues, was usually filmed in studios ‘with long scenes shot straight through’. The equipment used for location shooting was really intended for sports events and considered ‘technically inferior’ (Angelini).

One difference in cinematography is that a moving camera is more often used in the 1996 and 2009 versions than in the 1972 version. There are also more close-ups and generally more variation between different types of shots in the two later productions, while the 1972 series relies heavily on medium shots. The effect of this is a cinematic sense of being carried along, inside the story, for the viewer of the 1996 and 2009 versions, while the 1972 version keeps the audience at a distance, giving an impression of objectivity and neutrality in relation to the events of the story. In the scene taking place at the ball at the Crown Inn, the 1972 version shows the dancing from the outside, as though seen by an observer standing a few paces away from the dancers, while the camera’s point of view in the 1996 version almost seems to be that of one of the dancers: we get to see the dance from the inside, and we are much closer to the ‘other’ dancers. In the 2009 series, these ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ perspectives are mixed and complemented with a bird’s-eye view of the dancing.

In 1998, P. D. James gave a speech on ‘*Emma* Considered as a Detective Story’, arguing that *Emma* is largely about ‘hidden truths’, notably the secret engagement between Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax, and Mr Knightley’s love for Emma, which the reader can get to the bottom of by correctly interpreting the clues given by the writer (James 250–52). In the 1996 film, the cinematography and editing play an important part in giving us similar ‘clues’

to the outcome of the story, and sometimes misleading us. There is often some confusion as to whose point of view it is that we see. Whom we see looking at whom when, and who says what at the same time, are points well worth considering. The 2009 series provides red herrings in a similar way, for example when the viewer observes Mr Knightley walking into Donwell Abbey and apparently starting to imagine Jane Fairfax as the mistress of Donwell, as an image of Jane playing the piano fades into the frame. At the same time, Mrs Weston is heard in voice-over trying to persuade Emma that Mr Knightley is contemplating proposing to Jane. It is not entirely clear whether this scene is an accurate representation of Mr Knightley's thoughts or takes place in Emma's imagination.

When it comes to the lighting, there is more variety in the 1996 film than in the earlier adaptation. The 1972 series is consistently lit as though by daylight, while several scenes in the film take place in the evening or at night. Many of the interiors give the impression of being filmed by candlelight. In the same way, the moon is presented as the sole source of light in the opening scene. The lighting in the 2009 series is similarly varied, but on the whole a shade brighter; many scenes seem to be taking place in strong sunlight. The colours of the 1972 version are subdued without many strong contrasts. While all three productions, in keeping with Regency fashion, include many light colours and pastels, the 1996 version is dominated by contrasts between light and dark and the 2009 version by bright, rich colours.

Another difference between the productions is the use of music. In the 1972 series, there is period-appropriate music played mechanically on a harpsichord or a similar instrument for the duration of the credits, and the same piece of music features twice in the actual series, once played by Mrs Weston and once at the ball, along with another piece, both performed by a small ensemble. Jane Fairfax, who is supposed to be famous for her musicality, plays the piano a couple of times and sings a few bars of a song, but parodically badly. This production does not make use of any background music whatsoever. In the 1996 film, on the other hand, there is background music in most scenes, as well as 'live' music all through the ball and on several other occasions. The music is an important mood-setting factor and can even be seen as part of the plot. At the ball, for instance, the dancers' relations and attitudes towards each other are depicted in the interplay of music and acting. In the same way, the songs that the characters play and sing are carefully chosen with respect to lyrics and to the degree of difficulty appropriate for the character in question. Emma, who 'knew the limitations of her own powers too well to attempt more than she could perform with credit' (171), sings an English folk song, while the more proficient Jane Fairfax displays an advanced classical repertoire. When it comes to background music, some characters and locations in the film have

their own themes, the most prominent being the Donwell theme. In the 2009 version, music is used in a similar way, but there are fewer musical performances by characters. A musical theme composed by Samuel Sim in a modern style is played over the opening and closing credits of each episode.

Another part which music plays in the 1996 film and the 2009 series is in the transition between scenes. Music is often played as a scene ends and leads up to the action of the next scene, especially in the film. Dialogue voice-overs are used in the same way, and editing devices such as dissolves are frequently used between scenes. In the 1972 series, there are some dissolves, especially in the later episodes of the series, but neither music nor voice-overs are used in transitions. Also, the beginnings of the scenes are rather more abrupt in the film, thus minimizing any delaying small talk. In most scenes in the 1972 series, the actors enter the set as they would enter a stage, and the scene does not finish till they exit again in the same way. In the 2009 series, in addition to music and dissolves, there are sometimes more radically inventive transitions between scenes: at the end of the strawberry-picking party at Donwell Abbey, for example, Emma watches black-and-white drawings of Box Hill in a book; and, through a dissolve between a shot of a page in the book and a shot of a view in colour, the drawing turns into the real Box Hill. Another inventive narrating device is when Mr Woodhouse reads out loud to Emma from the letter he is writing to Isabella and his voice-over carries through to the next scene and tells the viewer, though the letter to Isabella, that Emma has tried to visit Jane Fairfax, who is ill and has not received her, and that Emma has therefore sent her some arrow-root; at the same time, the camera shows Emma walking from the Bateses' house and looking up at a window to spot Jane there.

A central part of driving the story forward in television drama is of course the dialogue. The 1972 dialogues are usually closer to those of the novel than those of the two other versions in length and style – but not always in exact wording, as they have sometimes been rephrased for no apparent reason. The language is usually somewhat more informal in the 1996 film and considerably more informal in the 2009 series than in the 1972 version. While dialogues in the film are often formed almost entirely out of phrases from the book, they are always drastically shortened. For example, in the novel Frank Churchill says,

A very successful visit: – I saw all the three ladies; and felt very much obliged to you for your preparatory hint. If the talking aunt had taken me quite by surprize it must have been the death of me. As it was, I was only betrayed into paying a most unreasonable visit. Ten minutes would have been all that was necessary, perhaps all that was proper; and I had told my father I should

certainly be at home before him – but there was no getting away, no pause; and, to my utter astonishment I found, when he (finding me nowhere else) joined me there at last, that I had been actually sitting with them very nearly three-quarters of an hour. The good lady had not given me the possibility of escape before. (150)

In Andrew Davies's script for the film, this line has been reduced to, 'I thought it would never end. Ten minutes would have sufficed. But there was no getting away. The...talking aunt – you know. I was there three quarters of an hour'. The 2009 series is of course longer than the film, and Sandy Welch's dialogue is not quite as economical. It is a combination of slightly shortened and sometimes partly rephrased dialogue from the novel and new-written lines, which either serve functions provided by the narrative voice in the novel or work as a mediator between the classic text and the modern viewer.

The acting style, finally, differs a great deal between the three different productions. The 1972 series is traditionally theatrical in style; the characters behave in a formal and vaguely 'old-fashioned' way but not always in line with historically correct manners. Their facial expressions are dominated by smiling and their postures and gestures are dignified and restrained, with the occasional emotional outburst causing a comic effect. The body language of the actors in the 1996 film is more relaxed, as are their facial expressions; and the film is dominated by a naturalistic acting style. Here, on the other hand, the direction pays careful attention to historically correct manners and behavioural conventions. In the 2009 series, the actors move and speak in a way that feels very contemporary by comparison, and most of the characters express their emotions more openly than in the two previous versions.

In period drama, there must always be made some allowances when it comes to the performers' appearance and acting. For example, it has been pointed out that the actors' teeth have to be whiter than teeth realistically would have been two centuries ago, since a historically accurate tooth colour would have conveyed to the present-day viewer serious illness. Further, it can be noted that the pronunciation of the English language has changed since the early nineteenth century, but film and TV adaptations of Jane Austen's novels always tend to favour the received pronunciation of their own time – which in turn means that the pronunciation is not quite the same in the 1972 and the 2009 version of *Emma*. Even taking these conventions into account, though, it is clear that there is a development from 1972 to 2009 towards decreasing importance being attached to creating a sense of archaic and correct behaviour, in favour of recognisable emotions and attitudes.

3. Omissions and additions, story and discourse

Some important issues when it comes to TV adaptation, discussed in Erica Sheen's essay "'Where the garment gapes': Faithfulness and Promiscuity in the 1995 BBC *Pride and Prejudice*", are the necessity of omissions and the questions of additions and fidelity to the original work (Sheen 14). In adapting a novel for the screen, some events will of course have to be omitted to fit the overall story into a film format. Although this is a necessary part of the process, these are often the differences between a novel and its film adaptation that viewers who are familiar with the novel on which a film is based disapprove of most vocally. However, as Hutcheon points out, 'in a television series, there is more time available and therefore less compression of the adapted text is required' (Hutcheon 47).

For obvious reasons, a film of 1 hour 47 minutes requires more omissions than a series of four hours or more, and there are accordingly more omissions in the 1996 adaptation than in the two other ones. By way of example, the whole of chapters 9 (which is about a charade written by Mr Elton, and the misunderstandings concerning for whom he wrote it (54–65)) and 52 (where Emma and Jane Fairfax become reconciled (341–48)) have been left out of the film – as have the Coles and Mrs Weston's pregnancy. In several cases, two or more events from the novel have been compressed into one. The final scene of the film is a harvest feast at Donwell Abbey; the event in itself is an invention, but many different dialogues, scenes and pieces of narrative from the last few chapters of the novel have been collected and placed in this scene. The harvest feast also serves the purpose of bringing all the main characters together at the end, and the final dance looks almost like a curtain call in how the main characters are paired up in rows in order of centrality to the plot.

As far as the 1972 adaptation is concerned, there are not many major omissions or additions – or 'inventions', as Erica Sheen calls them (Sheen 16). No chapter has been omitted in its entirety, and the most marked factual difference from the novel is the identity of Mrs Dixon: in the book she is the daughter of Jane Fairfax's ward, Colonel Campbell, but in the 1972 series she is Jane Fairfax's prospective employer. There are also minor additions, like Mr Woodhouse's speech at the end of the final episode, where he toasts the two engaged couples and says that Mrs Weston should not have wine while she is breastfeeding.

In the 1996 film, the inventions are more numerous. The perhaps most notable invention is a number of 'dream sequences', commented on by Louise Watson ('Jane Austen on Television'). Two of them give expression to Emma's desire to arrange for her protégée

Harriet Smith to marry an eligible man, while the other two show Mr Knightley about to marry another woman (first Jane Fairfax and then Harriet). There are also other ‘pairs’ of additions in the film, which, like the two pairs of dream sequences, have the purpose of making the film more integrated by connecting the beginning and the ending. Such a pair is the two chicken-thieves scenes, which start and end the film and are thus used as a sort of framing device. Another example is two lines of Mr Knightley’s: relatively early on in the film he says, as he takes his baby niece ‘out of [Emma’s] arms with all the unceremoniousness of perfect amity’ (Austen 76–77), ‘I remember holding you thus once upon a time’; and at the end of the film, when he and Emma have just become engaged, he says, ‘I held you in my arms when you were three weeks old’. In addition to the above-mentioned inventions, there are a number of flashbacks in the film. These flashbacks sometimes contain new combinations of image and sound, which makes the viewer see the sequence in question in a new light. Another addition is the class perspective, where the lives of the upper-middle-class main characters’ servants are foregrounded. For example, Mr Knightley is shown from the start to be a likeable character when he greets a servant at Hartfield, enquiring after his family. At Box Hill, a group of servants are seen carrying all the picknick fare and even tables up the hill.

In the 2009 series there are a few events that, though they are not inventions in relation to the novel, are presented as being central to the story where in the novel they are not even described in detail but only briefly alluded to. In the series, the viewer gets to see several scenes from Emma’s childhood, from her infancy to her teenage years. The series also includes the deaths of Mrs Woodhouse and the first Mrs Weston. Frank is taken away by Mrs Churchill, his father standing alone in the rain as the child looks out of the carriage window. The viewer also witnesses Jane leaving her home with Mrs and Miss Bates to go and live with the Campbells and Miss Bates trying to persuade her mother what a good thing this will be for Jane’s education. At this point, the Bateses live in a larger house and Miss Bates comments that owing to financial circumstances they will soon have to move. Mrs Bates seems to go into some sort of apathy after Jane leaves and does not speak again until the last episode, when, to Miss Bates’s surprise, she suddenly expresses a wish to see Mrs Weston’s new baby.

The scenes taking place during the childhoods of Emma, Frank and Jane are accompanied with a voice-over narration which borrows a few phrases from the first page of the novel but mostly serves to point to the similarities and differences between the backgrounds of these three children who have all lost at least one parent and prepare the viewer for the psychological interpretation of Mr Woodhouse’s anxious and hypochondriac disposition. Throughout the series, Mr Woodhouse intermittently comments that he knows he is

overprotective. The reinterpretation of Emma's father as someone who has been traumatised by the early death of his wife transforms him from a comic caricature into a psychologically believable and almost tragic character. The emphasis put on the fact that Emma, Jane and Frank have all lost a parent early ties the three characters together on an existential plane, a bond that Emma comments on in a conversation with Harriet. Both Emma and Frank having lost their mothers young may be seen as an additional reason for Emma's readiness to feel a connection with Frank; and the very similar early experiences of Frank and Jane – effectively losing both their parents, being torn away from their home and everything familiar to be brought up by strangers in more financially advantageous circumstances – is a plausible explanation for the love between these two very dissimilar characters.

The novel *Emma* is narrated mostly chronologically, but it also includes some flashbacks, such as the account of the background of the Fairfax/Bates family. The beginning and the end of the story are summarised by the narrator, so that even though the story includes Emma's early childhood and her marriage to Mr Knightley there are not any actual scenes taking place before the evening of Miss Taylor's wedding day or after the visit to Randalls to see the Westons' baby, which takes place while all three couple (Emma and Mr Knightley, Jane and Frank, Harriet and Mr Martin) are still engaged. The 1972 series tells the story in a linear way starting at Hartfield after the Weston wedding, that is when the dialogue begins in the novel, and ending at Hartfield, celebrating Mrs Weston's baby and two of the engagements, that is roughly where the dialogue ends in the novel. The exposition necessary at the beginning of the series is conveyed in dialogue. The discourse of the 1996 film starts the night before the Weston wedding and ends at the Donwell harvest feast during the three engagements. Here, too, all exposition is conveyed in dialogue. The 2009 series starts when Emma is a baby, with much of the exposition given in voice-over narration and visual flashbacks. There are recurring flashbacks throughout the series, but the story is mostly narrated in a linear way. The series ends with Emma and Mr Knightley's honeymoon, when all three couples are married.

All three adaptations are to some extent held together symmetrically by cross-references between the beginning and end of the discourse. In the 1972 version, the framing device is the Weston marriage: the first episode begins when Miss Taylor has just got married, and the final episode ends when she has just given birth to her child. This version also both begins and ends at Hartfield: the last scene has been moved from Randalls to Hartfield for this purpose. In the 1996 film, a detail from the narrative in the last chapter of the novel has been picked out to frame the discourse: Mr Woodhouse is reluctant for the wedding between Emma and Mr Knightley to take place in the near future, but when Mrs Weston's turkeys are stolen

he changes his mind since Mr Knightley's presence at Hartfield would make him feel safer. This event is not even mentioned in either of the other versions, but in the 1996 film it is foregrounded to the point where the whole film starts with some people stealing poultry from Hartfield during the night; indeed, the first view of Emma is at the window in her nightgown, having apparently been woken with the commotion as the thieves are chased off the grounds. In a scene not present in either of the other versions, where Emma and Mr Knightley break the news of their engagement to Mr Woodhouse, Emma says that 'the chicken thieves have returned to the neighbourhood' and asks her father if he would not feel more at ease under Mr Knightley's protection. The very last shot of the film then shows the thieves returning to Hartfield. Since Mr Knightley is at the Donwell harvest feast with all the other characters and unable to do anything about it, it can only be hoped that Mr Woodhouse will not withdraw his blessing.

In the 2009 series, too, a detail from the novel has been expanded to form the basis for the final scene. In the novel, Emma mentions having never seen the sea, and at the end she and Mr Knightley plan to go to the seaside for two weeks after their wedding. In the first episode of the series, Mr Woodhouse asks a visitor not to mention the sea in front of Emma (who is then about eight years old), since it is best for children not to know anything about something so dangerous. Later during the series, Emma repeatedly mentions not having travelled outside of Highbury and feeling like an outsider having led such a secluded life, not having even visited her sister in London. Her unacquaintance with the sea, then, is connected to Mr Woodhouse's overprotective attitude. At the end of the last episode, as Emma and Mr Knightley are going away on their honeymoon, it turns out that Mr Knightley has planned a surprise trip to the seaside, and the series ends with a spectacular view from a cliff on the south coast of England. Incidentally, it is not mentioned in this adaptation that Mr Knightley does not like surprises since the pleasure they give is usually outweighed by the inconvenience, an attitude he makes clear in the novel.

4. Focalisation

Austen's *Emma* is narrated by a third-person extradiegetic-heterodiegetic narrator, and Emma herself functions as the focaliser. The fact that the events of the story are seen from Emma's point of view and that the reader is allowed to partake in her thoughts is the most significant contributing factor to many readers feeling sympathy for and even identifying with Emma

despite her bad qualities and reprehensible actions: while we see her mistakes, we understand why she makes them and that her intentions are good.

The few episodes where Emma is not present are of course deviations from her perspective; notable among these are the flashbacks relating Frank Churchill's and Jane Fairfax's past, respectively, (12–14; 122–24) and the conversation between Mr Knightley and Mrs Weston about the friendship between Emma and Harriet in chapter 5 (28–32). During this scene, the perspective is objective rather than anything else – the chapter consists almost entirely of dialogue. Only in the two very last sentences of the chapter does the narrator leave this objective stance and go on to if not relate then at least hint at Mrs Weston's thoughts.

There is, however, one instance in the novel where Emma is present and the perspective is not hers but Mr Knightley's: the 'alphabets' episode in chapter 41 (258–65). What is conveyed to the reader here are Mr Knightley's suspicions about Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill. The representation of his thoughts is a little restricted: nothing is disclosed of what he thinks of Emma, since his being in love with her is one of the main puzzles of the 'detective plot', and so must not be revealed at this early stage. For example, the narrator states that Mr Knightley had 'for some reason best known to himself [...] taken an early dislike to Frank Churchill' (259). Here, it may be inferred from the ironic tone that the narrator does know Mr Knightley's reason but chooses not to divulge it. In the same way, Mr Knightley's free indirect discourse, which is used to convey subtle clues, carefully refrains from being too outspoken: 'he must – yes, he certainly must, as a friend – an anxious friend – give Emma some hint' (264). But as Mr Knightley's opinion of Emma is not overtly stated, which means that the reader is not presented with any alternative to Emma's self-image, the change of perspective does not in any way influence the effect of Emma's position as focaliser.

On screen, focalisation does not work in quite the same way as in literature. The viewer, almost by definition, sees all characters and events from the outside. The viewer has the possibility to imagine the thoughts and feelings of all the characters but enters into the consciousness of any one character more seldom than in literature. Nevertheless, there are techniques that direct the viewer more towards the interiority of one particular character, such as including more close-ups of that character's face or letting the character express their thoughts verbally. The closest equivalent of focalisation in film is perhaps the visual perspective of the camera. Cahir likens the practice of letting the camera show what a character is looking at, as if the camera were the character's eyes, the cinematic equivalent of a first-person perspective:

In film, the camera becomes the pen that creates the narrative perspective. Point of view is created largely through camera placement. When the camera is placed to show us what and how a character sees, the camera is filming from a first person point of view. (Cahir 70)

This particular filming technique usually only happens momentarily and so does not influence the work as a whole in the same way that a first-person narrator or a focaliser can in a novel. In the 2009 series, however, it occurs right at the beginning of the first episode and therefore sets the tone for the series: while Mr Knightley relates the circumstances of Emma's birth and early childhood in voice-over, the camera cuts from a shot of Emma as a baby to her parents' faces looking down on her so that the viewer sees what she sees. Later on in the series, Emma's thoughts are sometimes heard in voice-over, and sometimes she even speaks them out loud when she is on her own, as if in a soliloquy. In the 1996 film, Emma similarly sometimes gives short exclamations to herself that lets the viewer know what she is thinking of ('Oh, Lord, Harriet!'; 'Oh, God that I had never met her!'), and at one point she says a couple of sentences out loud to herself ('I love him. I have always loved him. Oh, what have I done?'). The dream sequences, furthermore, give insight into Emma's fears and fantasies. The 1972 series, by contrast, is what must be termed externally focalised. The information the viewer has is closer to the information Emma has than to that of any other character, but that is simply because she is in almost every scene, so the viewer will seldom be privy to anything that she is not.

All three adaptations do show Mr Knightley's suspicions about Jane and Frank. All versions show him after having witnessed some 'clue' to their relationship, with a facial expression that makes it clear he is in deep in thought, after which he reveals his suspicions to Emma, who claims that he must have misunderstood the situation. Mr Knightley's observation of the anagram game is most foregrounded in the 1996 film, through the composition of the frame, where he is shown sitting at a slightly higher level, behind the others. In the 2009 series, Mr Knightley stays in the room after the others have left and solves the Dixon anagram that Frank gave to Emma and then to Jane. Here, the camera shows what he sees, clearly making him the focaliser. This version also shows that Mr Knightley starts to think of Emma in a romantic way after the ball, when the viewer sees his face, apparently thinking fondly about something, after which there is a cut to a flashback of Emma dancing with him at the ball. This foreshadows the ending of the story in a much more explicit way than the novel does.

5. Concluding remarks

Many of the differences between the three adaptations of *Emma* have their reason in the difference in time: in 1972, TV drama was more influenced by the theatre, and in 1996 it was more influenced by the cinema, which had itself undergone great change since the 1970s. While the 1972 adaptation of *Emma* could just as well have been performed on stage (had it not been for its length), the 1996 and 2009 adaptations use methods which are specific to film and television, such as quickly paced editing, close-ups, voice-overs, dream sequences and flashbacks. Music is used for a wide range of purposes in the 1996 and 2009 versions, while it is avoided rather than used in the 1972 series. Another difference is that the 1972 and 2009 adaptations are series, whereas the 1996 adaptation is a film. Hence, both the overall story and the dialogue are more compressed in the 1996 adaptation than in the other two versions. The wording of the dialogue is also more informal and modern in the 1996 film than in the 1972 series, and even more informal and modern in the 2009 series. The acting style becomes increasingly naturalistic between 1972 and 2009.

In *Literature into Film: Theory and Practical Approaches*, Cahir (16–17) divides film adaptations, which she prefers to call ‘translations’ (from the language of literature into the language of film) into literal, traditional and radical. Most adaptations are traditional translations, where the overall story and setting are the same as in the novel but certain changes are made to fit the new medium and the vision of the film makers; but some adaptations that keep very close to the original on a more detailed level may be called literal, and adaptations that ‘reshape’ the text so much that they may be seen as independent works rather than the same story in a different medium may be called radical. Amy Heckerling’s *Clueless* is a good example of the phenomenon of radical translation. According to this model, the 1972 series would qualify as a literal translation of *Emma*, while the two later versions are traditional translations. If anything, it would be possible to read the 2009 series as a radical translation, since it reimagines *Emma* as a story about three orphans growing up with or without their traumatised families.

The cinematography, editing and music all contribute to the dignified, dispassionate tone and calm pace of the 1972 series; they create a sense of everything happening in a flow in the 1996 film, reinforced by the heavily cut dialogue and the energy of the acting; and they match the dialogue and acting style of the 2009 series in the almost expressionistic prioritisation of feeling over correctness, sometimes resulting in anachronisms but remaining faithful to the feel of the novel.

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