

Tiến Phát Nguyễn

Narrative Techniques in the Twenty-first Century: An Intermedial Approach to the Cognitive Interplay between Theatre, Prose, and Film

In a convergence culture, content flows seamlessly across diverse media platforms. However, beyond the “what” of content transfer, the “how” of narrative adaptation remains mostly underexplored. Relatively few scholars have examined the migration of narrative techniques across media, despite it being one of the most dynamic aspects of contemporary storytelling. Traditional narratology, historically centered on the novel, has often exhibited “blind spots” (Sommer 2005), marginalizing or even dismissing narrative practices in other art forms. For instance, Genette’s theory excludes cinema and theater from narrative studies, contending that these mediums lack a narrator (Genette 1972).

As storytelling continues to evolve alongside technological advancements, narrative devices are continuously adapted and reimagined, resulting in hybrid forms that both honor their origins and expand the boundaries of each medium. This raises a crucial question: how do narrative techniques travel across media, moving among theater, prose, and cinema, to shape new genres? Technological advancements have consistently influenced both the form and content of narratives. For instance, the oral tradition of theater has significantly shaped the narrative structures of drama, just as literary techniques have left their mark across different historical periods. Drawing on the transmedial phenomenon of adaptation, this dissertation hypothesizes that each narrative technique, rooted in a specific art form, not only shapes human perception but also travels across artistic boundaries, influencing other forms of expression with its medium-specific cognitive effects. Consequently, these techniques must be examined from an intermedial perspective, employing cultural lenses that highlight the interactions among narrative tools. This potential was already recognized in the conceptual outlines of transgeneric and intermedial narratologies proposed by Nünning and Nünning (2002).

Building on these foundations, this study investigates the cross-media migration of narrative techniques, aiming to identify emergent hybrid forms that reflect contemporary human experiences. Grounded in postclassical narratologies, the project proposes a theoretical framework for analyzing narrative techniques across artistic disciplines, with particular attention to the intersections between theater, prose, and film. To achieve this, the study is organized into six main chapters, each examining the bidirectional influences between specific media: theatre to prose (*mise-en-scène* in the case of scenography and theatrical blocking, performing texts with audio channel); prose to theatre (telling on stage, and complex plot-structure); theatre to film (theatre framing on screen in slow cinema, and dialogue-driven scene); film to theatre (camera and projection on stage, and cinematic pacing scenes); prose to film (literary focalization, and serial storytelling); film to prose (scripts and camera in prose). Ultimately, this exploration seeks to demonstrate how narrative

strategies, when viewed intermedially, can illuminate new perspectives on storytelling technologies in an ever-evolving cultural landscape.

Works Cited

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Tiến Phát Nguyễn

Gießen Graduate Center of Cultural Studies, Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen

E-Mail: phat.nguyen@uni-giessen.de or phastnt@gmail.com