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**HIGH FIDELITY – A COMPARISON OF THE NOVEL AND THE FILM**  
**Bakalářská práce**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracoval samostatně a uvedl všechny použité prameny.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The question of faithfulness is a common topic in relation to the comparison of a novel and its adaptation. In this study, a variety of parts of the High Fidelity novel and its movie adaptation have been analysed and compared in order to present a number of differences that occurred during the adaptive process. Although the majority of the movie is true to the novel, a number of alterations were depicted, for example a difference in plot structure or setting.

## INTRODUCTION

The main topic of this thesis is the comparison of the *High Fidelity* movie adaptation, directed by Stephen Frears, and its novel predecessor of the same name, written by Nick Hornby. In general, the theme of comparing a novel with its adaptation is usually connected with the issue of the films fidelity towards its literary predecessor. Therefore, the main aim of this thesis is to present the dissimilarities that occurred between the adaptation and the original as a result of the adaptive process. This is done on the example of *High Fidelity* by an analysis and comparison of a number of key aspects of both works and a proper demonstration of their differences as well as their correspondences. The reason for this work is the ever increasing popularity of the adaptations in the contemporary cinema, with movies such as *The Hobbit* or *Revenant* as an example, and the subsequent discussion of the faithfulness of these films among the audiences. Thus, *High Fidelity*, a well-known work which adaptation gained quite a number of positive reviews, was chosen as a template on which to show the possibilities of the movie in question of fidelity.

As such, the thesis is divided into two sections. First *Theoretical Part* presents chapters concerning the background of the two examined works, a general information about the theory of adaptation and an analysis of the novel. The second *Practical Part* is then centred on the comparison of the novel and its adaptation. Therefore, it contains chapters studying the differences of each of the components that were laid out in the analysis of the novel as well as a final classification concerning the film's type of adaptation.

Additionally, the thesis draws upon a variety of different secondary sources as both the topics of movie adaptation and fidelity, as well as the specific case of *High Fidelity*, are subject to a diverse approaches of examination. Perhaps the most important work connected to the discourse of the adaptation process is *Novel to Film: an Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* by Brian McFarlane as it offers a practical, yet thorough, explanation of the whole concept. However, numerous other sources are used as well, such as *Postwar Literature 1950 to 1990* from William May or *Lexikon teorie, literatury a kultury* by Ansgar Nünning, with addition of a variety of articles concerning *High Fidelity*.

Finally, a method of comparative analysis is used in order to properly display the relation between the novel and its adaptation. As such, this thesis examines and compares individual parts of both works, beginning from the most general pieces like story, plot, setting and point of view, to the most concrete, namely, characters, theme and motives.

## 1. THEORETICAL PART

In this part, a theoretical base is set in order to provide a general understanding of the influences behind the compared works and the theory of adaptation. The part is ended with a chapter depicting the analysis of the novel that serves as a template on which the comparison is done in the practical part of this thesis.

### 1.1. Literary background of the novel *High Fidelity* by Nick Hornby

In this chapter, a brief background of the *High Fidelity* novel is to be set and a number of information concerning Hornby's literary style is presented.

Being the author of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, specifically of the 90's, Hornby is usually ranked as a postmodernist author and therefore his work carries the signs of a postmodernist literature. Beginning in the 1960's, postmodernism evolved from the preceding modernism. Questioning the traditional values in society, it follows the modernist tradition of absurdity and alienation as popular topics. However, where modernists tried to make a solid undivided explanation of the world, postmodernists accept the decentred existence and its indeterminate meaning.<sup>1</sup>

In Britain however, postmodernism served mostly as a source of inspiration as local authors were quite cautious towards it. This resulted in a mixed form of pragmatic postmodernism which can be seen, for example, in the works of Graham Swift or Julian Barnes.<sup>2</sup>

From a social point of view, Nick Hornby is seen as a typical writer of the "New Lad" phenomenon. The sexist and ironical New Lad endorsed drinking, consumerism and personal happiness, with gender and gender-specific activities being an important aspect.<sup>3</sup>

In general, Hornby's novels combine the life of common people and their problems such as, the loss of illusions, obsession, dissatisfaction or fear of commitments, with a pastiche of music and

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<sup>1</sup> NÜNNING, Ansgar, Jiří TRÁVNÍČEK a Jiří HOLÝ (eds.). *Lexikon teorie literatury a kultury: koncepty / osobnosti / základní pojmy*. 1. vyd. Brno: Host, 2006, 912 s. ISBN 80-7294-170-4.

HENTZL, Gary a Joseph W CHILDERS (eds.). *The Columbia dictionary of modern literary and cultural criticism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, xii, 362 s. ISBN 0-231-07242-2.

<sup>2</sup> MAY, William. *Postwar literature, 1950 to 1990*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2010, iv, 299 p. ISBN 9781408204740

<sup>3</sup> GILL, Rosalind. Power and the production of subjects: a genealogy of the New Man and the New Lad. *Sociological Review Monograph*. 2003, vol. 51, 23 p. ISSN 0081-1769.

CORTESE, Daniel a Pamela LING. Young Adult "New Lad" Masculinity as a Product of Consumption. *Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association*. 2009, 26 p.



art. His simple but surprising beginnings are set in the midst of action in order to highlight some flaw of the main character and the stories are usually accompanied by self-reflexive dialogues. Another typicality in Hornby's works is the absence of an ending.<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion, a general picture of Hornby's work has been set in order to provide a better understanding of the creative process behind *High Fidelity*. However, the movie with which the novel is compared later in this work was made in a different time than the novel and by a different set of authors. Therefore, a brief background for the movie is provided in the next chapter.

## **1.2. Background of the movie High Fidelity**

Perhaps the most important authors, who were behind the creation of the High Fidelity movie, were the director Stephen Frears and the producer, actor of the main role and the head of the script-writing team, John Cusack. This chapter describes the background of their work and their influence on the movie adaptation and its success.

Just as the adaptation is basically an English novel in American setting, Stephen Frears is a British director working on an American movie. Having been offered the position by Cusack, he greatly contributed to the movie's visual quality. His roots begin in BBC, the British Broadcasting Corporation. Through his career, with works such as *Play for Today* or *Fail Safe*, he learned to adapt his style to a number of different types of movies. Especially visible during his time in America, he is able to move between, for example, horror melodrama in *Mary Reilly* and neo-noir *The Grifters*. Moreover, his BBC years influenced his choice of themes which include the topics of race, sexuality, politics and class problems.<sup>5</sup>

Speaking about his directorial style, Frear's is appraised for approaching his work in the manner of an artisan, a style he learned from a Czech director, Karel Reisz. Thus the quality of his movies lies vastly on the characters and he puts an immense effort to equally match all the visual and aural parts of the film with its script and ideas.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> CHIFANE, Cristina. From *High Fidelity* (1995) to *Funny Girl* (2014) or What Makes Nick Hornby's Novels so Popular. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research* [online]. 2015, **4**(2), 192- [cit. 2016-02-24]. DOI: 10.7596/taksad.v4i2.474. ISSN 2147-0626. Dostupné z: <http://kutaksam.karabuk.edu.tr/index.php/ilk/article/view/474>

<sup>5</sup> DEBORAH, Allison. Stephen Frears: Master of hi-lo Culture. *Film International*. 2007, **volume 5**(issue 3), 17p.

<sup>6</sup> GARCIA, Maria. Stephen Frears Presents: 'MRS. HENDERSON' RECAPTURES A WWII THEATER LEGEND. *Film Journal International*. 2006, **volume 109**(issue 1), 10.

When related to the High Fidelity novel, the basis on which the adaptation was made, it is evident how well it suited Frears' views and style, since sexuality, sexual relations as well as class-related issues are one of those involved in the story.

Considering his part on the movie, apart from his contribution as a director, Frears managed to acquire a number of aspiring actors for the movie's cast. Namely, he found out Lisa Bonet, an African-American actress for the role of Marie LaSalle<sup>7</sup>, and Iben Hjejle, a Danish actress who played Rob's ex-girlfriend Laura.<sup>8</sup>

However, good directing is merely a part of a successful movie. A great deal of work was also done by the script-writing team as it was their task to create a script, based on Hornby's novel, from which the film would be made. In order to achieve this, John Cusack employed the help of D. V. De Vincentis and Steve Pink, his co-writers from the movie *Gross Point Blank*, with addition of Scott Rosenberg.<sup>9</sup> It was their idea, as Mr Cusack stated in an interview, to move the setting of the story from north London to a downtown Chicago. Since all of the writers are born natives of the city, they knew all the parts of the town, bars and record stores which would fit perfectly to those depicted in the original book.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, they cooperated on the choice of music that would match the one presented in the novel. Both Cusack and his team have a type of "autobiographical" attitude towards music which lies in the ability of musical experience to change as one's life evolves, with songs having different meanings and inducing different emotions in various stages of life. According to Cusack, this is well captured in the novel and it was something they tried to carry over into the movie as well.<sup>11</sup>

Lastly, another topic worth mentioning is the quality of actors. Taking up on the leading role, John Cusack was already an experienced actor when he played the role of Rob in *High Fidelity*, with parts in such movies as *The Grifters* or *Being John Malkovich* his skill and dramatic prowess is clearly visible.<sup>12</sup> However, the adaptation's success does not stand solely on Cusack's acting abilities as there are many other roles that have important parts in the story.

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<sup>7</sup> LUCIA, Cynthia. The Complexities of Cultural Change: An Interview with Stephen Frears. *Cinéaste*. 2003, **volume 28**(issue 4), 7.

<sup>8</sup> FREARS, Stephen. Interview: Casting Is Everything. In: *High Fidelity*. DVD. 2000

<sup>9</sup> RAFTERY, Brian M. Being John Cusack. *Entertainment Weekly*. 2003, (issue 690). ISSN 1049-0434.

<sup>10</sup> CUSACK, John. Interview: 122 Pages. In: *High Fidelity*. DVD. 2000

<sup>11</sup> CUSACK, John. Interview: Music and Memories. In: *High Fidelity*. DVD. 2000

<sup>12</sup> RAFTERY, Brian M. Being John Cusack. *Entertainment Weekly*. 2003, (issue 690). ISSN 1049-0434.

Namely, one of those is the role of Laura, played by Iben Hjejle. A rising actress in Europe with such films as *Mifune*, Hjejle was found by the director Stephen Frears in Berlin and was offered the role of Laura, leading to her debut in American cinema.<sup>13</sup>

Another example are the roles of Barry and Dick, played by Jack Black and Todd Louiso. While Black had been brought to the filming of the movie by Cusack and his team due to their personal acquaintance, Louiso was picked from a number of other actors who came to the casting for the movie. As stated by Frears, different actors could play the role of Dick but Louiso had the essence of being “*adorable*” which won him the position.<sup>14</sup>

To conclude this chapter, a brief summary of the influences behind the *High Fidelity* movie were presented, ranging from the director Stephen Frears, script-writing team led by John Cusack to the background of the actors. Following on this, a topic of Theory of Adaptation is presented in the next chapter to briefly elaborate the complex creative system that puts together the effort of all of the above in order to create a successful movie adaptation such is *High Fidelity*.

### **1.3. Short Theory of Film Adaptation**

In the preceding chapters, a brief background was drawn out for both the *High Fidelity* novel and the movie, but considering the film being an adaptation it is sensible to also discuss the matter of adaptation itself and to introduce brief summary of the base principles that constitute this particular genre. Therefore, this chapter introduces some basic information considering the theory of adaptation and presents a rough picture of what adaptation actually is.

#### *1.3.1. Background and popularity*

Adaptation can be described as a process, as well as a result of such process, of conversion of a literary source, novel or drama, into a form of a film.<sup>15</sup> It is one of the first movie genres that established itself in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, as Brian McFarlane states in his *Novel to Film*, this is due to the film becoming primarily a narrative element, thus leading the creators of movies to set their focus on the works of literature, especially novels, in search of inspiration and possible source of

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<sup>13</sup> LEYDON, Joe. Film Review: *High Fidelity*. *Daily Variety*. 2000, volume **267**(issue 12), 2 pages.

FREARS, Stephen. Interview: Casting Is Everything. In: *High Fidelity*. DVD. 2000

<sup>14</sup> FREARS, Stephen. Interview: Casting Is Everything. In: *High Fidelity*. DVD. 2000

<sup>15</sup> CORRIGAN, Timothy. The Novel and Film. *Film and literature: an introduction and reader*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1999, page 20. ISBN 0-13-526542-8.

material for film making.<sup>16</sup> This trend continued ever since and is visible even today in contemporary cinema or TV.

One of the reasons for such popularity of the topic among the film-makers is perhaps its potential to be financially lucrative because it benefits from the prestige and renown achieved by the literary predecessor and therefore can be seen as a promising investment. McFarlane adds up to this idea with a quotation of a screenwriter Frederick Raphael who, considering the producers, stated that they “*like known quantities...they would sooner buy the rights of an expensive book than develop an original subject.*”<sup>17</sup>

When seen from different perspective, however, the increased demand for adaptations is also a question of its viewers as they tend to search for any opportunity to witness their favourite characters and stories come to life through the miracle of cinematic projection. An example of this development is Moris Beja’s note on *Academy Awards*, presented by McFarlane, which shows that since its beginning, “*more than three fourths of the awards for best picture have gone to adaptations.*”<sup>18</sup>

Additionally, this trend continues even in the present day and can be observed on the 2016 *Academy Awards* as well, with the movies *Revenant*<sup>19</sup>, based on Michael Punke’s *The Revenant: A Novel of Revenge*, and *Spotlight*<sup>20</sup>, an adaptation of the stories of *The Boston Globe* journalists and a winner of the best picture award. Even *High Fidelity*, an adaptation of Nick Hornby’s novel, had its share of this acclaim with the *Movie of the Year* award from *American Film Institute* for the year 2000.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that while the audiences wish to see their favourite novel in picture, as stated above, they are already pre-equipped with a number of fantasies, such as the appearance of characters or the atmosphere of the story. However, the adaptation is done by

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<sup>16</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 3. ISBN 0-19-871150-6.

<sup>17</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. *Adaptation: The Phenomenon. Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 7. ISBN 0-19-871150-6.

<sup>18</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. *Adaptation: The Phenomenon. Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 8. ISBN 0-19-871150-6.

<sup>19</sup> 2015 Oscar nominees: Best picture nominee: *The Revenant*. *The Oscars* [online]. U. S. A. [cit. 2016-03-13]. Dostupné z: <http://oscar.go.com/nominees/best-picture/the-revenant>

<sup>20</sup> 2015 Oscar nominees: Best picture nominee: *Spotlight*. *The Oscars* [online]. U. S. A. [cit. 2016-03-13]. Dostupné z: <http://oscar.go.com/nominees/best-picture/spotlight>

<sup>21</sup> AFI: *Movies of the Year. American Film Institute* [online]. U. S. A. [cit. 2016-03-13]. Dostupné z: <http://www.afi.com/afiawards/AFIAwards00.aspx>

a variety of people with different ideas, therefore, as McFarlane points out through a quotation of Christian Metz, the viewer will only be presented with “*somebody else’s fantasy*” and vulnerable to the possibility that he “*will not always find his film.*”<sup>22</sup>

In conclusion, this shows the subjective nature of the adaptation process and opens up a question of fidelity or truthfulness of the movie adaptation towards its literary source.

### 1.3.2. *Fidelity – The Issue of Being True*

Each time a new movie adaptation finds its way into the light of the world a great number of critics, whether professionals or common people, appears to present their opinion on the topic of *fidelity* of the movie towards its literary predecessor. Pointed out by McFarlane, this may be due to the novel being created first as well as the more prestigious position of literature among the intellectual class which gives the film adaptation a lesser standing as a secondary work that must, primarily, stay true to the original.<sup>23</sup>

However, as hinted before, adaptive process is a matter of subjective essence. Therefore any attempt of the filmmakers to create a *fidelity* movie attempting to capture the exact meaning of the literary text is eventually faced with the possibility of failure. This is due to the film being a mere resolution of its author’s ideas which were based on his reading of the book. As such, those ideas might not necessarily correspond with the notions of those who will see the final adaptation, as their views on the source novel might be quite different from those of the creator.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, perhaps as a result of the above mentioned issues, more contemporary movements have moved from the topic of strict *fidelity* towards a more open and flexible field of *intertextuality* which portrays the relation between an adaptation and the novel as one of the work and its resource.

In this context, the base of that relationship changes and instead of questioning if the movie is “*faithful to its source*” the matter of discussion becomes the question of “*how the choice of a specific source and how the approach to that source serve the film’s ideology,*” as marked by

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<sup>22</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. *Adaptation: The Phenomenon. Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 7. ISBN 0-19-871150-6.

<sup>23</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. *The Discourse on Adaptation: On being faithful. Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 8. ISBN 0-19-871150-6.

<sup>24</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. *The Discourse on Adaptation: On being faithful. Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 9. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

Christopher Orr in McFarlane's *Novel to Film*.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the process of adaptation can also be connected to the *interpretation theory*, as its elemental intention is to adapt the idea of the text. This needs to be grounded in a careful analysis and a general understanding of its meaning, both of which are interconnected.<sup>26</sup>

Still, although the question of movie's fidelity is no longer the primary aspect in these modern forms of criticism of its quality, there is an option to evaluate it and for that circumstance Dudley Andrew presented a few categories of film adaptations in his *Concepts in Film Theory* on which it can be further judged.

### 1.3.3. Types of Adaptation

As stated above, Dudley Andrew drew out a triad of classes concerning the relation between an adaptation and its source text in order to facilitate a proper assessment of the adaptations quality and fidelity. For the purpose of this thesis, his classification is used as it is practical and widely recognized, since it is present in literature such as Timothy Corrigan's *Film and literature*.<sup>27</sup> In this subchapter, a closer look is given to this categorization and examples are presented to give an understandable picture of each type.

#### 1.3.3.1. Borrowing

The first type of adaptation, according to Andrew, is based on the author's intention to simply "borrow" various pieces or parts of the former literary source. Yet the aim of the work is not to create a movie which is true to its predecessor, whether it is a novel, drama or an old legend, but to draw on the fame and renown already achieved by the source material and at the same time to present a range of new artistic elements to gain prestige of its own. Accordingly, even though the audience is presented with a known story their main concern and appreciation should be aimed at the new aspects of adaptation added by the authors.

Therefore, the main characteristics that are evaluated in the source are its "generality" and its possibility to attain long-lasting fame. Andrew supports this statement with works such as *Tristan*

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<sup>25</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. The Discourse on Adaptation: Obscuring other issues. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 10. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>26</sup> DUDLEY Andrew: from Concepts of Film Theory. *Film theory and criticism: introductory readings*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, page 373. ISBN 0195365623

<sup>27</sup> CORRIGAN, Timothy. *Film and literature: an introduction and reader*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1999, 374p. ISBN 0-13-526542-8.

and *Isolde* or *A Midsummers Night's Dream*, which fulfil these prerequisites and tend to be periodically reworked.<sup>28</sup>

#### 1.3.3.2. Intersecting

Contrary to the above mentioned, the main aim of the films in this category is to recreate the former work of art in as precise manner as possible, transforming the source from one medium to another, in an unchanged form. The resulting piece of art can resemble more a “*refraction*” than an adaptation of the source work. As an evidence of this method, Andrew presents adaptations such as, among others, Straub’s *Othon* or Pasolini’s *Canterbury Tales* which are, according to him, both made in the manner of *intersecting*.<sup>29</sup>

#### 1.3.3.3. Fidelity of Transformation

Lastly, the third type of adaptation introduced by Andrew, and perhaps the hardest one, is that which wishes to transform and adapt something fundamental of the novel to a form of a cinematic projection, thus the main aim is to remain true and be comparable to the original text.

This comprises of two specific aspects, first is the adaptation’s ability to be faithful to the “*letter*”, an action easily accomplished by the cinema as the structure of the story, e.g. characters, point of view or cultural background, can be efficiently recreated in the structure of the movie, and second to the “*spirit*” of the novel.<sup>30</sup> The second is considerably more difficult as both systems, novel and film, work with a different set of symbols or signifiers, for example: words in a novel and images of a movie. Even more, the approach of each system is different, novel tends to begin with limited view which develops into a broader picture while films go in an opposite way, from general picture to small details.<sup>31</sup>

To resolve this issue, Andrew presents the semiotic approach of Keith Cohen which states that each system has its own signs and codes that can reappear in a different form in a different system, therefore, to create an adaptation that is faithful, author has to analyse the codes in one system, for

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<sup>28</sup> DUDLEY Andrew: from Concepts of Film Theory. *Film theory and criticism: introductory readings*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, page 374. ISBN 0195365623

<sup>29</sup> DUDLEY Andrew: from Concepts of Film Theory. *Film theory and criticism: introductory readings*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, page 375. ISBN 0195365623

<sup>30</sup> DUDLEY Andrew: from Concepts of Film Theory. *Film theory and criticism: introductory readings*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, pages 375-376. ISBN 0195365623

<sup>31</sup> DUDLEY Andrew: from Concepts of Film Theory. *Film theory and criticism: introductory readings*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, page 376. ISBN 0195365623

example a novel, and find their equivalent codes in the second system, e.g. a film, in order to forge an agreement between the two systems.<sup>32</sup>

In conclusion, the possibility of evaluating the adaptations quality and fidelity is evident, yet before it can be properly appraised it is advisable to know the specific type of adaptation to which it belongs. In relation to *High Fidelity* movie, its form might be considered to fall under the *Fidelity of Transformation* category, since it is altered and cannot be seen as *Intersecting*, yet still, it seems not different enough to be labelled as *Borrowing*. As such, its proper classification is to be further analysed in the practical part of this thesis.

#### 1.3.4. The General Concept of Adaptation

In the preceding parts, elementary information about adaptation was given as well as a number of its possible types. Following on that, I would like to present a basic concept in relation to the adaptive process, which would give some understanding as to what parts of the literary source should be paid attention during the development of an adaptation. Notably, for the purpose of this thesis, this subchapter is based on the concept depicted by McFarlane in his *Novel to Film* as it offers a clear and practical approach to the issue of adaptive process.

Perhaps the most evident aspect, which both novel and film have in common, is narrative. However, not all of its parts can be easily transmitted between the two distinctive systems of the novel and the movie.

In reaction to this, McFarlane draws on the work of Roland Barthes who distinguished two sets of functions in the narrative, first being called *distributional functions* relate to the simple concept of “actions and events” and are generally concerned with the “doing” process, and the second named *integrational functions* are related to the process of “being,” passively and constantly affecting the reader of the story.<sup>33</sup>

Moreover, Barthes further breaks these sets into greater details, the first into *cardinal functions*, which create critical points in the story and offer a possibility of different options, and *catalysers* that accompany and support the cardinals by forming a path leading to them, and the second into *indices proper*, referring to items such as atmosphere or character of the story, and *informants*,

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<sup>32</sup> DUDLEY Andrew: from Concepts of Film Theory. *Film theory and criticism: introductory readings*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, pages 377-378. ISBN 0195365623

<sup>33</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Redefining Issues and a New Approach: Narrative Functions: Novel and Film. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 13. ISBN 0-19-871150-6



that can be described, as quoted by McFarlane, as a "*ready-made knowledge*" including information connected with names, jobs or certain details of the environment. However, only the *distributional functions*, due to their nature being generally independent of the language, and *informants*, due to their supportive position similar to catalysers, are transmittable.<sup>34</sup>

McFarlane then supplements this with a theory of *enunciation*, which is concerned with the methods of presentation of the narrative content, a topic that is strongly connected to the specific system of each genre, e.g. a literature and film, and as such cannot be simply transferred and requires an alteration.<sup>35</sup>

On the base of this information, McFarlane distinguishes the components of the narrative into two separate categories: those that can be *transferred*, seen as able to move freely without change, and those in need of finding a suitable equivalent, a process defined as *adaptation proper*. The specific components are then grouped together as either *narrative*, relating to the transferable parts, or *enunciation*, relating to parts which are dependent on the *adaptation proper*.<sup>36</sup> In order to better demonstrate some of the sources and influences behind these categories, a brief summary of each class will follow.

#### 1.3.4.1. Narrative

As already mentioned, this category relates to those parts of the text that are susceptible to easy communication from one system to another, for example from novel to a film.

In relation to this, McFarlane offers a number of points on some of the types of narrative elements. He mentions to distinguish the difference between story and a plot, because the story itself is mostly able to be moved between two mediums as it is not entirely connected with any system, e.g. language, whether in the question of the plot, novel and film use different strategies and therefore the use of a different system can make a difference.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Redefining Issues and a New Approach: Narrative Functions: Novel and Film. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 13-14. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>35</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Redefining Issues and a New Approach: A Note on Terminology. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 20. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>36</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Redefining Issues and a New Approach: The Centrality of Narrative. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 13. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>37</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Transfer. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 23. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

Similarly, a proper distinction between the *distributional* and *integrational functions* is set, with a primary focus on the former as those are able to be transmitted. Special attention should be paid to the *cardinal functions*, as a first sign of the movie's fidelity towards the novel.<sup>38</sup>

Another item he proposes are the *chief functions* of characters, such as antagonist or a supportive character, their generality giving them the opportunity for transfer. And lastly, the study of *mythic or psychological patterns* that are widely known, since they relate more to the narrative parts that are independent of a specific form of display.<sup>39</sup>

Notably, as McFarlane points out, it is also worth to mention that the author can intentionally change the order or form of these transferable components in order to "*put his own stamp*" in his work.<sup>40</sup>

#### 1.3.4.2. Enunciation

Being stated earlier, this class is concerned with those parts of the literary source which are unable to be freely moved between novel and film without the need of a proper appropriation to match the expressive system of the targeted form.

Simply put, a failure to adapt these items may lead into an entirely different meaning or understanding of the original image, therefore creating a gap between the text and the movie in question of fidelity. To compete with this issue, McFarlane presents a few topics to which attention might be paid.

Beginning with the *signifying systems* set against each other, i.e. the system of novel against that of film, it is describe that, in order to create a truthful movie, author has to keep in mind the difference of the *conceptual* nature of literature towards the *perceptual* essence of film as both work in an opposite ways, from little iconicity and an abundance of symbolic material in novel to the exact opposite in movie. Thus the creator must maintain balance between the visual presentation of the movie and the possibilities for viewers own imagination.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Transfer. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 24. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>39</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Transfer. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, pages 24-25. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>40</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Adaptation proper. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 26. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>41</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Adaptation proper. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 27. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

Following is the distinction of the *novel's linearity and film's spatiality*, this topic relates to the common fact that while the *verbal system* of text is read one word after another, piece by piece, film presents us with frames that are filled with a variety of different material, whether *aural, visual or verbal*. This poses a challenge in the matter of centring the viewers' attention on a proper part and lies heavily on the author's ability to adjust the settings of a scene, in other words, *mise-en-scène*.<sup>42</sup>

Third item he discusses is the matter of the specific *codes*. Although these are quite set in the literary text, for example in tenses or commas which refer to form of time and pauses, the film lacks this type of set structure and relies on the *codes* being defined by the periodic use of certain techniques to express them, e.g. the fade out/fade in used to express a gap in time, yet it is not a fixed matter and the techniques can be used in a different manner. Even more, for some literary codes the proper equivalent in film can be missing, for example tense cannot be properly expressed as the cinematic presentation is always happening "*now*." Combined with other types of *extra-cinematic codes*, such as *cultural* or *sound codes*, it requires a lot of hard work from the author to properly match literary codes to their equivalents as otherwise the final experience from viewing the adaptation might differ from the original.<sup>43</sup>

Relating to the preceding points, McFarlane's last mark concerns the contrast between *stories told* by novel and *stories presented* by movie. As a result of the diversity of both systems, the part of the novel's *metalanguage* is exchanged by the film's *mise-en-scène*, or settings of a scene, leading to the fact that many parts of the story are already told visually, in the picture, and need not to be further mentioned.<sup>44</sup>

To conclude this chapter, it is evident that the adaptive process is not a simple matter. If the author wishes his work to stay comparable and, at least to some extent, true to the original source, it requires a great deal of analysis of the original medium in order to properly distinct transferable parts from those that need alteration. In combination with a brief summary of the questions of fidelity, background and types of adaptation, this chapter gave a basic picture of that whole process and the theory of adaptation.

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<sup>42</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Adaptation proper. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, pages 27-28. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>43</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Adaptation proper. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 28-29. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

<sup>44</sup> MCFARLANE, Brian. Agenda for Further Study: Adaptation proper. *Novel to film: an introduction to the theory of adaptation*. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, page 29. ISBN 0-19-871150-6

#### 1.4. Analysis of the novel *High Fidelity*

Before moving to the practical part of this thesis, it is vital to go through the novel and analyse a number of the specific parts of the narrative of its story. This will be done in the manner beginning from most evident, such as setting or point of view, towards the less visible details, for example motives or various literary devices. The reason for this approach is to set a firm background, a model template, upon which the final comparing of the novel and its adaptation will take place. However, it is mentionable that the presented aspects are but a fraction of all the details contained in the novel, thus, a more in-depth examination could be the case for further study.

As already mentioned, the analysis will be done on several components of the novel ranging from the most general towards the specific:

##### 1.4.1. *Story and Plot Structure*

For the purpose of this thesis, the general knowledge of the content of both plot and story is presumed, however, basic definitions will be provided as well as their application on the structure of the novel since these aspects are susceptible to change in the process of adaptation.

*Story*, or *fabula*, is described as a linear sequence of events and their causes that are arranged in a successive order, relating mostly to its content level.<sup>45</sup> When applied on *High Fidelity*, it is evident that the story follows this simple pattern: Rob and Laura split up which creates an opportunity for Rob to reminisce about his past break-ups and compare it to the recent one, because of their separation, Laura leaves which serves as a cause for Rob to contemplate his new life as single, continuing through many other events back to the eventual reunion of the couple.

Presented in this manner, the content of the story line seems rather simple, however, in the final form of novel it is subject to the imperative attitude of the *plot*.

*Plot*, or *syuzhet*, refers to the composition of the important parts of the *story* in the novel and through it the various parts and their meanings can manifest themselves. The order of events can follow the linear form present in the story or the author can shape the structure in different ways to further accentuate or suppress the expression of the various aspects.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> NÜNNING, Ansgar, Jiří TRÁVNÍČEK a Jiří HOLÝ (eds.). *Lexikon teorie literatury a kultury: koncepce / osobnosti / základní pojmy*. 1. vyd. Brno: Host, 2006, page 877. ISBN 80-7294-170-4.

<sup>46</sup> LEDERBUCHOVÁ, Ladislava. *Průvodce literárním dílem: výkladový slovník základních pojmů literární teorie*. Vyd. 1. Jinočany: H, 2002, page 325. ISBN 8073190206.

This alteration in the way as to how the narration is constructed becomes evident from the very beginning of Hornby's book due to the placement of the retrospective, the return to past<sup>47</sup>, section to a separate first part although chronologically it would fit to follow Laura's departure at the beginning of the second part. The intention of the author was to highlight and explain Rob's attitude towards women as well as his personal insecurity, based on his previous experience, and perhaps to indicate a pattern as to how he will behave in the future, further down the story line.

On the other hand, there are no greater changes as the rest of the second part corresponds with the consecutiveness of the *story*, with only small time lapses between the chapters.

#### 1.4.2. *Point of View*

The narrative of the novel is mediated to the reader through the use of the *first person point of view*, which can be defined as narrative told as seen by one of the characters of the story, usually the protagonist. What is typical for this kind of perspective is that the information gathered and presented to the reader is narrowed down by the limited knowledge of the character and it is heavily subjective to him, due to being affected by his personality.<sup>48</sup>

In *High Fidelity*, the story is perceived through the eyes of Rob Fleming and therefore the reader is subject to his interpretation of the events and actions that take place around him. Moreover, most of the data relating the other characters is inaccessible as this point of view offers only the option of seeing, hearing and knowing merely the bits and pieces Rob manages to gather.

In practice, there is not much information as to what happened to Laura after their break up as the only things that are presented to the reader are the fragments of her life Rob collects from other characters, such as Liz, or through the direct speech to her.

Another evidence of the limits of this view can be the contrast between his memories and those of his former girlfriends. When Rob visits Charlie for example, he finds out that she left him due to his low self-esteem, which is something the reader can only guess from the initial narration of their past relationship at the beginning of the book.

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<sup>47</sup> PAVERA, Libor a František VŠETIČKA. Lexikon literárních pojmů. 1. vyd. Olomouc: Nakladatelství Olomouc, 2002. page 304 ISBN 80-7182-124-1.

<sup>48</sup> PAVERA, Libor a František VŠETIČKA. Lexikon literárních pojmů. 1. vyd. Olomouc: Nakladatelství Olomouc, 2002. page 145 ISBN 80-7182-124-1.

However, the restricted view has a positive effect on the reader's imagination and stimulates his ability to think about the characters and events in order to figure out the missing information or to contemplate the alternative possibilities of its meaning.

#### 1.4.3. *Setting*

In *High Fidelity*, the general setting of the story takes place in north *London*, which is made visible through various references that are being mentioned on a number of occasions throughout the whole story. Therefore, examples are being given to the reader such as the *Holloway Street*, Rob speaks about in the first chapter of the second part of the book: "*We're in a quiet street in Holloway...*"<sup>49</sup>, the placement of their fictive *Harry Lauder* pub: "...it's a run-of-the-mill north London pub,"<sup>50</sup> or *Seven Sisters Road*, mentioned when giving directions to Rob's shop to Marie LaSalle: "*just up the Seven Sisters Road,*"<sup>51</sup> in order to reveal where the story takes place. Among other places, there are also references to locations such as *Wood Green*, where Rob travelled to inspect a record collection for sale,<sup>52</sup> and *Crouch End*, which he mentions while reflecting on his life, that are all parts of north London as well.<sup>53</sup>

As already evident from the examples above, the story moves between different pieces of north *London* as it follows its narrator, Rob Fleming. However, there are a few parts of the setting that are given a substantially more attention due to Rob spending plenty of time at them. These are the *Championship Vinyl*, his record store, and his apartment.

As stated above, first of these two is placed on the *Holloway Street*, yet it is intentionally in a place with a low traffic of people and only musical enthusiasts, similar to Rob and his co-workers, spend their time travelling there to make a purchase.<sup>54</sup> This hints on an isolationist attitude of Rob in his life. To further accentuate it, the shop "...smells of stale smoke, damp and plastic dustcovers and its narrow and dirty and dingy and overcrowded..."<sup>55</sup> showing that his owner lives the same kind of life for a long time, afraid of change. Therefore, it outlines the state of existence in which

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<sup>49</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 30. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>50</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 47. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>51</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 51. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>52</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 59-60. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>53</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 59. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>54</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 30. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>55</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 32. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

Rob is currently located, detached and lost in repetitive life. Rob is not able to “*get it together to clean or redecorate it*”<sup>56</sup> in the same way he is unable to sort out his life.

The second is located seemingly somewhere on the *Crouch End* and although his apartment is only described in small bits, it is the place where Rob spends most of his time reminiscing and reflecting on his relationship with Laura or deals with actions that are connected to it, such as phone calls.

But the most important part of his flat is his record collection. It offers him a sense of security because it is something only he understands as it is ordered in a way only he knows. This is related to the collection being a comprehensible system under his control, in contrast to the confusion of the outside world. In addition, the music composing the collection offers Rob a chance to escape from his problems and emotions to the imaginary world of sound, lyrics and their stories.

#### 1.4.4. Main Character

*Character* is any fictional entity that appears in the novel and as such is one of the crucial parts in the realization of the story's plot. *Main character*, or *Protagonist*, then plays a leading role of the said realization and thus it is the most important actor of the plot.<sup>57</sup>

The main hero of *High Fidelity* is undoubtedly Rob Fleming, as the story itself mostly revolves around his personal life and breakup with Laura, even more, he is the narrator of the story and therefore all is described through his point of view. Nonetheless, the most important aspect of him is his inability to get his life under control. Scarred by the many failures in relationships, he finds it difficult to maintain a meaningful relationships and even though the one with Laura was by far the longest one, he eventually cheated on her, leading it into an end. Although in his thirties, he is unable to let go of his youth and is scared by the adult life that awaits him and the number of commitments that goes with it.

This is due to his lack of understanding of all the actions that take place in the outside world and their complexness, driving him into a quite secluded life with only his co-workers as friends. He is stuck in a passive and repetitive life, as declared by Laura he “...*haven't changed so much*

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<sup>56</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 32. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>57</sup> VLAŠIN, Štěpán. ÚSTAV PRO ČESKOU A SVĚTOVOU LITERATURU. *Slovník literární teorie*. 1. vyd. Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1977, s. 326.

LEDERBUCHOVÁ, Ladislava. Průvodce literárním dílem: výkladový slovník základních pojmů literární teorie. Vyd. 1. Jinočany: H, 2002, s. 257. ISBN 8073190206

as a pair of socks in years..., ”<sup>58</sup> committing the same mistakes, especially concerning the women, and following the same pattern of failure that had been set in his mind from his youth, as depicted in the “*then...*” part of the novel. Therefore, he is unhappy and hopes to find relief in his collection of music through which he can visit “*a whole world...nicer, dirtier, more violent, more peaceful, more colourful...more loving than the world I live in,*”<sup>59</sup> a world of music he knows and understands, and in which a person would have to be “*a doctor of Flemmingology*”<sup>60</sup> in order to have an insight into how it works, showing that it is a world he controls.

On the other hand, he knows about these drawbacks and constantly thinks about them, which is presented to the reader through his inner monologues. This keeps the possibility to change open for him but it is not until the death of Laura’s father that he, influenced by the witnessing of the inevitable that one day also awaits him, begins to move forward, of course, with a bit of a helpful “push” from Laura, for example when she sets up Marie LaSalle’s performance at Rob’s shop.

#### 1.4.5. *Secondary Characters*

As stated before, characters are generally an important part of the plot, however, apart from the already mentioned *Protagonist*, there are number of other types of characters and their roles in the story. The talk is about the *Secondary Characters*, which can be defined as persons with various level of importance for the resolution of the conflict of the literary work.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, they support the main character in his realisation of the story’s plot. Four most valuable, in terms of their influence on Rob, secondary characters were picked, in relation to the above mentioned: Laura Lydon, Marie LaSalle, Barry and Dick.

*Laura Lydon* is depicted as a hardworking woman around the same age as Rob. In contrast to Rob, she is not afraid of commitment as she works in a successful law firm, a job that certainly requires this kind of trait, and is not afraid to go forward in her life. She is a realist counterpart to Rob’s escapist attitude and therefore she changes, meets new people, has more money and as Rob himself described her, she became “*tougher.*”<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 207. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>59</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 65. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>60</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 44. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>61</sup> LEDERBUCHOVÁ, Ladislava. *Průvodce literárním dílem: výkladový slovník základních pojmů literární teorie*. Vyd. 1. Jinočany: H, 2002, s. 215. ISBN 8073190206

<sup>62</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 207. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.



In terms of the plot, she serves as a catalyst which starts the process of Rob's transformation, beginning with her initiating the breakup thus starting Rob's critical thinking about himself and his attitude to women and ending, at least in the terms of book's length, with motivating him to change his life, for example when she sets up the Marie LaSalle concert, as already said in the subchapter about Rob as protagonist, or his performance at the *Groucho Club*.<sup>63</sup>

*Marie LaSalle* is yet another important character in Rob's journey through the story as she plays a role of his feminine counterpart, being troubled by the same relationship issues as him due to a recent parting with her lover.<sup>64</sup> Through their affair, they both came to the same conclusion that their lives are filled with loneliness as can be seen in their thoughts when Rob becomes scared of the idea that there is not a "*better, safer, more friendly place*"<sup>65</sup> for him and she learns that she "*was real lonely*."<sup>66</sup> In this way, she serves as mirror for Rob to help him see his own situation.

*Barry and Dick* are a duo of Rob's co-workers that give the story a large portion of its humour. Beyond that however, they serve as two extremes that frame and mark out Rob's personality.

*Barry* is an almost aggressively active opposite to Rob's passivity as he is not afraid to express his attitude towards many things, especially if connected to music, as he for example "*bulldozes customers into submission*"<sup>67</sup> and makes them buy albums they might not want but which are good according to his standards. On the other hand, he thinks only in "*simple enumeration*,"<sup>68</sup> showing that his knowledge is only shallow and not deeply thought about.

In contrast, *Dick* is the one who gives great thought to the music he listens and topics he's interested in. He is constantly looking for some new kind of music rather than "*waste his time listening to anything the second time*"<sup>69</sup> and, in relation to customers, "*knows intuitively what they should buy*."<sup>70</sup> Yet, due to his immersion into the world of music he fails to have a better social life and becomes extremely isolated and shy, drawing a picture of how Rob might end should he continue to run away from the real world. Notably, Dick is still an active character, though strongly oriented to music, as he progresses further in his effort to find new songs and bands to listen to.

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<sup>63</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 228-229. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>64</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 102. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>65</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 100-101. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>66</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 101. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>67</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 75. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>68</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 34. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>69</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 31. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>70</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 75. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

#### 1.4.6. Theme

For the purpose of this thesis, one main theme will be chosen for the evaluation and final comparison.

The main theme that spans the whole story of *High Fidelity* is Rob's inability to maintain a meaningful relationship which is also the issue of many men of his age. This is connected with their general fear of commitment as well as the repetition of a pattern of mistakes and failure to change that leads men such as Rob into an end of their relationships. Rob therefore depicts an imaginary hero, an example of a common man, who eventually slowly overcomes these imperfections.

#### 1.4.7. Motives

In this part, three motives which maintain a high level of importance in the story are to be examined. These are: *music*, *commitments* and the *musical cassettes*.

*Music* follows Rob throughout the whole story as well as his whole life. It is one of the few things he enjoys and understands. It mediates his life experience and shapes his view of the world as well as helps to express his mood. This is pointed out at the beginning of the novel when Rob asks the question: "*Did I listen to music because I was miserable? Or was I miserable because I listened to music? Do all those records turn you into a melancholy person?*"<sup>71</sup>

Moreover, he uses musical references to describe the world around him, for example when he refers to Ian as "*Mr Sixty Minute Man*,"<sup>72</sup> an old song from *Billy Ward and the Dominoes* and makes lists similar to those in pop music magazines when naming multiple reasons or topics. Examples can be seen in the enumeration of his past girlfriends in the beginning of the book or in his opinion in relation to what said Laura to Liz about her relationship with him.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, Rob's narrative is filled with a number references to a vast number of songs or music bands. For example there are songs such as "*Happy Go Lucky Girl*"<sup>74</sup> or "*Got To Get You Off My Mind*."<sup>75</sup>

*Commitments* and especially the fear of them is yet another important motive in the *High Fidelity* novel. It is the reason of Rob's unsatisfying life as well as of the failure of his relationship

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<sup>71</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 18-19. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>72</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 87. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>73</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 72. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>74</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 75. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>75</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 68. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

with Laura. Rob is constantly afraid to commit because of his overthinking of what might happen, emphasizing mostly the bad side of things. This is connected to his lack of confidence which can be seen in his initial withdrawing from his wish to have a love affair with Marie when he sees how good-looking is her friend T-Bone and leaves the pub.<sup>76</sup> However, this is not simply Rob's issue as there is a great number of people in Rob's age, who have the same or similar problem in the world.

*The musical cassettes* are the only way how can Rob freely express his feelings. As he states in the story, making a cassette is *"like writing a letter"*, showing how much personal involvement he puts into it and how much interest he has in the person for which it is made. For example, he used the tape to impress Laura when they first met because he *"hadn't met anyone as promising as Laura."*<sup>77</sup> This is made more evident further in the story when he offers to make a tape for a young newspaper editor Caroline, stating that *"it will feel like a betrayal"*<sup>78</sup> because he is back with Laura at the time.

In conclusion of this chapter, an analysis of the novel was made and a number of specific parts of the book were examined in order to present a model set of aspects which are to be compared with their equivalents in the practical part of this thesis. These are: story, plot, point of view, setting, main and secondary characters, themes, motives and allusion.

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<sup>76</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 65. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>77</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 69. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

<sup>78</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 237. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

## 2. PRACTICAL PART

Following on what has been presented in the earlier, this part is centred on the final comparison of the novel and the movie on the basis of the template that have been set in chapter 1.4.

### 2.1. The Concord of the Story

As stated in the chapter 1.3.4. in, one of the first signs of movie's fidelity to the novel is the precision in which the *cardinal functions* of the latter have been successfully transmitted into the adaptation. These represent the critical points where the story took a different turn towards the way depicted further down the story line. Thus the content of this chapter is centred on these specific points as well as their *catalysts* that prompted them.

Opening the whole story, the first critical point is the initial parting of Rob and Laura. If omitted, the whole remaining content of the story would be meaningless as there would be no reason for Rob to reflect on himself and to try to get Laura back since they would still be together. It begins the whole narrative and as such is an important part of the story and should it be missing in the adaptation the movie could not be considered truthful. The catalyst to the above mentioned is presented at the very beginning of the book in the retrospective "*then...*" part through which the series of events and unsuccessful relationships is described in order to portray a picture of what influences in Rob's life led him to the contemporary situation.

Second important cardinal function is Rob's visit to Charlie. This an important part of the story, since Charlie is the ex-girlfriend whose breakup with him had the most influence. By visiting her, Rob finds out that although she has a better life she turned out for the worse, becoming less interesting as well as losing her charming humour. This changes Rob's view of himself and helps his self-esteem. Moreover, it is accompanied with the revelation that she broke up with him merely due to his passivity, which gives Rob a better view of what to improve on himself and turns down his fears of the reason being his looks or abilities.

The reason behind Rob's wish to contact Charlie is his own reflection and wish to find out what were the reasons behind his past failures in order to reveal the pattern of mistakes he is repeating.

Thirdly, another crucial point is the return of Laura which changes Rob's life as she begins to pressure him into being active and progress further in his existence. This opens up a path for Rob's improvement as he was unable to do it himself.

The most important event that leads both Laura and Rob to get together again is the death of Laura's father and the reality of their mortality that leads them back to each other.

Last essential cardinal function is Rob's performance as a DJ at the end of the novel. Through this he successfully moves from his previous passive existence into an active style of life by doing something by himself and not sitting home merely listening to somebody else's music. He changes and therefore takes the first step on the road to a happier life.

This is prompted by Laura in an attempt to activate Rob and force him to move on with his life and change. She does all the necessary preparations for the event in order to put Rob before a set matter, making it hard for him to refuse.

In comparison with the novel, the movie adaptation of *High Fidelity* upholds strictly to the above mentioned points as all of them are present in the movie's story. It begins with the breakup of the main couple which is supplemented by Rob's narrative of his past affairs. Continuing further down the story line, both Rob's visit to Charlie and its catalyst in the form of Rob's reflection is shown, followed later by the death of Laura's father and her return to Rob. The adaptation is then ended in the same way as the novel, with Rob's music performance at the Groucho Club as a DJ.

As for the importance and meaning of the above mentioned points, they still maintain their functions in the adaptation. The beginning breakup and retrospective keeps on starting and setting up the story, the Charlie's part also serves as a revelation to Rob and the last two both maintain their importance in setting Rob to the right path. With Laura's return as serving as the opening of that process and the final performance as a definite exhibition of Rob's presence on the said path.

In conclusion, the transformation of the cardinal functions of the novel was successful since all the above mentioned are present in the adaptation with unchanged purpose and therefore the first condition of fidelity is met. However, there is a slight difference in the order of the first two events, the breakup and retrospective, in which they appear in the novel and the movie. The retrospective is set in the movie after Laura's leave which is quite opposite to the book. Nonetheless, it is a matter concerning the plot of both of these works and is discussed in the following chapter.

## **2.2. The Comparison of the Plot**

This chapter analyses the plot structure of both the *High Fidelity* movie and the novel. As stated in the chapter 1.4.2. of the theoretical part, plot refers to the structure in which the story's different

components are arranged in the book. It can follow the linear consecutiveness of the story or the author can change it. Therefore, the attention is paid to the differences in this structure.

As presented above, the plot of the novel follows the continuity of the story, however, there is one distinction related to the initial retrospective. As shown in the chapter 1.4.2, the retrospective is positioned in a separate chapter of the book labelled as “*then...*” This position serves as an introduction to Rob’s life and the reasons behind the way he acts in relation to other characters. Since the reader is first presented with such content, it helps them to get a general perspective of what the book is going to be about. Furthermore, the position forces them to centre their attention to it and read it deeply.

On the other hand, the movie portrays this situation as it should be placed, in the scene following Laura’s departure from Rob’s flat as that is the time for his contemplation of the situation. This is also related to the movie’s inability to properly express the past, as stated in the chapter 1.3.4.2. in theoretical part. Where the novel can introduce past through the use of past tense, the film is dependent on presenting the past as a form of present narrative, as the film is in its nature always happening in current time.

In practice, the retrospective is displayed as a component of Rob’s initial monologue to the viewer in connection to his recent breakup with Laura. At the beginning, the film starts with Laura’s leave in contrast to the retrospective being the first in the book. This slightly alters the audience’s perspective of the main aspect of the story. Where the novel presented Rob and his relationship issues as its centre theme through the retrospective, the movie attracts the viewer more to the idea that it revolves more around Rob and Laura’s relationship.

Moreover, the attention of the viewer may not be fully committed to Rob’s following narrative as they might already be thinking about questions relating to Laura, such as why and to where is she leaving. In combination with the film’s spatiality, in other words its ability to show a number of various details at once as presented in the chapter 1.3.4.2, it can dissipate the attention of the audience and lead it astray from the important theme which is Rob’s life.

From another perspective, to aim the view of the audience more towards the relationship of the main couple rather than Rob himself might have been done on purpose by the creators since a number of parts concerning Rob himself are cut out from the movie. For example, the film omits the part at Marie’s flat before she spend the night with Rob during which he expresses his anxiety

as to if he will be a good lover for Marie and contemplates the differences of attitude towards making love between his generation and that of his father.

Similarly, the visit to *Wood Green*, where Rob refuses to buy a record collection from a wife who wishes to sell it in order to punish her cheating husband, is also cut out. This part shows a bit of Rob's good nature as he cannot buy the collection because he understands how a fellow collector would feel if his collection was gone.

Although the two above mentioned parts are not critical to the plot or the story, they both help to depict Rob's personality and help his reflection. However, since the movie moved the attention of the audience more towards Rob's relationship with Laura, these parts could be dropped easily as they relate more to Rob himself than the relationship.

In conclusion, it is evident that the novel's plot structure was modified in order to fit the structural abilities of the cinematic projection. Due to the lack of a proper expression of the past tense, the movie is forced to uphold the logical sequence of the story. Therefore it positions the initial retrospective after Laura's departure which diverts the viewer's attention from Rob himself towards their relationship. This is opposite to the novel in which the retrospective is set before the other parts of the plot structure and thus centres the reader's perspective towards Rob. This change might have also led into the omission of certain parts of the book as shown above and although it is worth to mention that some of these parts were presented on a DVD edition of the movie the general viewer is more likely to see the film in a TV where these are not available.

### **2.3. The Point of View**

This chapter compares the point of view used in both the *High Fidelity* novel and its film adaptation. As stated in the chapter 1.4.2, point of view is one of the important elements used in the novel's narrative and therefore it is also the crucial aspect to examine in relation to the books transformation into a movie. In connection to this, it is necessary to compare how the methods used in the movie contributed to the successful presentation of the novel's point of view.

As already described in the chapter 1.4.2, the narrative of the story is depicted through the perspective of the first person point of view. The main narrator through whose eyes the story is seen is Rob, thus the information presented to the reader of the novel is highly subjective and altered accordingly to his personality and state of mind. Moreover, it is limited in the manner of what can be seen as it follows Rob's own viewpoint.

On the other hand, it gives the reader a wide space for their own interpretation of the events that take place as the truthfulness of Rob's description is questionable due to being influenced by his own character. Furthermore, the limitation of this point of view offers the possibility to imagine what is happening or what happened outside of this perspective.

In comparison, the visual presentation of the movie is more precise as the point of view is mediated not only through Rob's narrative alone but also through the camera lens. In this way, the content of the scene is becoming more concrete as the viewer witnesses it in the same way as Rob does without much of the subjectivity of his narration, however, they lose the chance to imagine the setting of the scene in their own way.

As presented in the chapter 1.3.4.2, this is connected to the film's *spatiality*, the ability to present numerous data at once, which, at the same time, also offers the possibility to simply "show" many parts of the novel's narrative. In practice, there is no need for Rob to describe for example the looks of his record shop or the physical appearance of characters as the viewer can clearly see them in the presented picture.

Still, the audience is deprived of the emotionally coloured narrative and in a way relies on the portrayal drawn out by the author of the film. This, however, can be subjective to them in a similar way it was to Rob as discussed in the chapter 1.3.2. of the theoretical part.

Another subject related to the point of view is the use of inner monologues. Connected to the use of the first person, Rob describes his surroundings and his inner feelings or ideas through the method of inner speech which takes place inside his mind.

In relation to the movie, parts of these inner monologues are substituted by the picture of the camera. Connected to the topics of *informants* and the way stories are presented in the movie as shown in chapter 1.3.4, a number of data concerning the environment of the novel can be omitted from Rob's narrative as they are already a part of the *mise-en-scène*, the setting of a scene. Therefore, as shown above, there is no need for them to be described verbally by a narrative.

Nevertheless, this only concerns the monologues referring to Rob's surroundings and the question of those depicting his feelings or thoughts remains. While feelings are made visible through the acting of the actors, such as their body language or facial expressions, they still lack a precise explanation as provided by the novel's narrative. Even more, in the case of ideas, the lack of narrative may prove fatal since there is no other way to present them.



In *High Fidelity*, this issue is solved by an adaptation of the way Rob aims his inner monologues towards the reader. Offering space for his proper expression, the inner monologues concerning the above are mediated to the viewer by a method of direct speech to the camera through which Rob can speak to his audience in the same manner as he does in the novel.

In conclusion, the subtle alteration that took place during the transformation of the point of view is evident. The narrative of the film is no longer dependent solely on Rob's verbal expression and as such it is accompanied by the ability of the camera to describe visually and aurally the various elements that are part of the movie's *mise-en-scène*. Moreover, a presentation of Rob's inner monologues was achieved by a clever use of the direct-to-camera speech.

On the other hand, part of Rob's subjectivity is exchanged with the subjectivity of the film's author as it is his interpretation of the novel that governs his creation of the *mise-en-scène* which then influences the viewer through the camera lens.

## **2.4. Setting**

Another aspect of the novel clearly visible and susceptible to adaptation is the setting. Therefore, the attention of this chapter is centred on the topic of its possible change during the adaptation process. Should an alteration occur, the description of the manner in which such alteration was committed is provided, accompanied by an explanation of the influence it had on the general perception of the adapted text.

As depicted in the chapter 1.4.3, the setting serves to establish the novel's story in a certain time and space. In this relation, the novel is set in north London at the end of the twentieth century which is highlighted to the reader through a number of existing places mentioned by Rob's narrative.

Similarly, this is also done in the *High Fidelity* movie adaptation, however, the whole setting had been moved from English north London to an American city of Chicago at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Following on that, the various places mentioned in the novel also experienced change and as such we have references to places such as *North Milwaukee Avenue* or the *Lounge Ax*.

The reason for such change is evident. As seen in the chapter 1.2, the adaptation was filmed in the year 2000 in America and was therefore directed at contemporary American audiences. Thus

the alteration was done in order to recreate the familiar feeling of the locations for the American viewer in the same way the novel offers it to the English.

Apart of the change in the general setting, the appearance of the two most prominent locations Rob frequently visits, the *Championship Vinyl* store and his flat, also underwent some modification.

While Rob's record store, the *Championship Vinyl*, had been moved from north London to Chicago it is still located in the same area of low traffic of people as it was in the novel. On the other hand, it is certainly more spacious and open and as such does not appear to be so "*dirty, dingy and overcrowded*"<sup>79</sup> as described by Rob in the book. However, the shop is still not entirely neat and tidy and maintains the ability to mirror Rob's life, as presented in the chapter 1.4.3, although in a quite lighter manner.

In relation to Rob's flat, the authors of the movie had been presented with an open space for improvisation since its description in the novel is rather scarce. Still, its layout is an important background part of the film's picture as thus had to be created. In this matter, the authors did an excellent job as the decoration follows Rob's musical taste and orientation. More importantly, they preserved the presence of Rob's record collection as the most essential part of the flat by keeping it in the camera picture whenever possible.

To conclude this chapter, it is made clear that the setting of the novel underwent quite an alteration in regards to its physical appearance as well as its cultural position. However, this was all done in order to properly adapt it to the target audience. Furthermore, the depiction of the two most examined places, the *Championship Vinyl* and Rob's flat, still maintains its importance in relation to Rob although with a lighter atmosphere concerning the shop and with a greater number of details in relation to the flat.

## **2.5. Main Character**

As stated in the chapter 1.4.4, *main character*, or *protagonist*, is the most important part of the narrative as the story revolves around him. Therefore, this chapter aims to examine the *High Fidelity's* main hero, Rob Fleming, and his transformation from novel to film.

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<sup>79</sup> HORNBY, Nick. *High Fidelity*. 2000. Great Britain, 2000. p. 32. ISBN 0-140-29556-9.

The first most visible aspect considering Rob is the change of name of his movie counterpart from Fleming to Gordon. While the reasons behind such change are unclear, it can be argued whether such alteration was done in order to separate the movie adaptation of Rob from its original form, or perhaps if it represents a mere superficial adjustment. The truth behind it is, however, unknown and thus, for the purpose of this thesis, this detail is deemed less important.

When it comes to Rob himself, the most important element is his inability to solve his life and find personal happiness, accompanied by a lack of activity in his actions, he is subject to a constant repetition of pattern of failure. This behaviour is explained by a number of unsuccessful relationships he experienced during his youth and which greatly influenced his personality, as presented in the chapter 1.4.4.

In the movie adaptation, Rob Gordon is played by John Cusack, an American actor, who gave his role the best of his effort in order to portray Rob's character in the same way it is presented in the novel.

Beginning with a proper expression of Rob's feeling, the impression on the viewer is enhanced through the actor's body language, facial expressions and the strength of voice. These elements are connected to the movie's ability to support the verbal information with additional visual and aural data, as shown in the chapter 1.3.4.2. However, the most important detail that helps to maintain the faithful image of Rob is the use of the unchanged dialogue lines.

Also pointed out by Joe Leydon in *Variety Movie Reviews*, Cusack delivers dialogues which are punctual to those used in Hornby's novel.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, the audience is presented with plenty of unchanged text taken straight from the novel with the most notable being Rob's inner monologues. These are presented in the form of the direct-to-camera speech, as described in the chapter 2.3. of this practical part.

As a result, the viewers are presented with a faithful portrayal of Rob as a confused and passive man in his thirties, unable to change his life for the better and constantly reflecting on his past mistakes and their reasons. In comparison with the novel, the movie adaptation of Rob is in exceptional concord with its literary source.

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<sup>80</sup> LEYDON, Joe. High Fidelity: 'High Fidelity' Turns Up the Volume for Romantic Laffer. *Variety Movie Reviews*. 2000, (issue 57), 1p.

Additionally, the movie successfully depicts Rob's relation with his record collection and the music in general which is, as described in the chapter 1.4.4, an important part of his existence. It shapes his view of the world and offers him a way to forget the troubles of the outside world while at the same time helping him to deal with his emotions.

Many examples of this relation can be seen from the beginning of the movie, when Rob deals with the breakup with Laura by listening to a musical recording, through the whole story up until the end.

To conclude this chapter, despite the change of his surname to fit the American setting, the character of Rob is remarkably well recreated in the movie. Both his personal problems and thoughts are properly depicted through the acting of John Cusack and by the vast use of an unchanged pieces of text taken directly from the novel. Furthermore, the acting offers an enhanced experience of Rob's feelings since it is supported by the film's ability to provide aural and visual information. Moreover, the importance of Rob's music collection was kept in the movie further improving the characters faithfulness to its literary counterpart.

## **2.6. Secondary Characters**

As stated in the chapter 1.4.5, secondary characters play an important role by supporting the main character. Therefore, this chapter aims to compare a number of these secondary roles in the movie with their respective counterparts in the novel. The selected characters are the same as those already presented in the above mentioned chapter and thus the examination is concerning the roles of: Laura Lydon, Marie De Salle, Barry and Dick.

### **2.6.1. *Laura Lydon***

As described in the chapter 1.4.5, Laura serves as an opposite to Rob in the matter of their life perspective. While Rob tends to be passive and tries to avoid the problems of the outside world by listening to his record collection, Laura adapts a more realistic approach and deals with her issues as soon as possible. She is not afraid to go forward in her life and therefore is more successful in her life in contrast to Rob. In this relation, she is more decisive and unafraid to take on commitments.

In addition, she assumes the role of Rob's motivation or stimulant which forces him to change in order to break the same repetitive pattern which dictates his whole life. As shown in the chapter

1.4.5, an example of such behaviour can be, among others, her effort to arrange Rob's performance at the *Groucho Club* without his prior consent.

In connection to the movie, the role of Laura is played by Iben Hjejle and served as her debut in the American cinemas, as stated in the chapter 1.2. Following on that, her contribution to the character of Laura is clearly visible as she handled her role quite well. Similar to Cusack's portrayal of Rob, most of her dialogues also consist of a number of unaltered pieces of original text which helps her role to be properly depicted and to stay comparable to her original equivalent in the novel.

For example when she describes Rob as somebody who *"haven't changed so much as a pair of socks in years"*<sup>81</sup> it is the same as in the novel. In combination with her depiction of Laura's tough attitude and realistic point of view, she fulfils her role as Rob's opposite and his motivation.

#### 2.6.2. *Marie De Salle*

Marie De Salle is another character who, in the same way as Rob, experienced an unexplainable change of surname. From the former LaSalle in the novel to De Salle in the movie. Since the reasons for this alteration are as arguable as in the case of Rob, for the purpose of this thesis, any further explanation of this topic are to be omitted.

In the novel, Marie plays the role of Rob's feminist counterpart who suffers similar issues concerning relationships. She serves as a mirror for Rob to see his own situation from a different perspective and to realize his own loneliness, as depicted in the chapter 1.4.5.

Concerning the movie adaptation of Marie's character, she is well portrayed by her actress, Lisa Bonet. As already shown in the chapter 1.2, by being an African-American, Bonet gives the movie version of Marie an exotic feeling in a similar manner her character has it in the novel by being an American in England.

However, her role is not fully developed in the film and as such she lacks a proper expression to fulfil the position of Rob's counterpart and although it is visible that they have similar relationship-connected issues, her influence on Rob's self-reflection is not correctly portrayed and thus reduces Marie's role into a mere affair.

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<sup>81</sup> High Fidelity [film]. Directed by Stephen Frears. USA. 2000. minutes 26:31 – 26:34

### 2.6.3. *Barry and Dick*

As already discussed in the chapter 1.4.5, Rob's employees and co-workers, Barry and Dick, serve as a type of frame towards his personality. With Barry, the reader is presented with an extremely active yet shallow opposite to Rob's passivity but musical knowledge, however, Rob's knowledge of music is no match to Dick's who is on the other hand, intensely more shy and isolated than Rob.

Concerning the movie adaptation, these two characters are another example of a remarkably faithful adaptation. Played by Jack Black in the role of Barry and Todd Louiso in the role of Dick, as presented in the Background of the Movie chapter, both actors stayed true to their roles as depicted above.

For example, Barry's outspoken and often rude attitude is visible in the scene when he refuses to sell an album to a customer because it deemed bad by his taste. In relation to Dick, his shyness is evident each time he speaks but a typical example would be his dialogue with Rob during the first scene in the record shop. Moreover, due to the addition of the visual and aural aspects of the movie, the way of their acting enhances the portrayal of their roles. As stated by Cusack<sup>82</sup> the intense combination of Black's insanity and naturalism with Louiso's shyness, especially in close up scenes, bolsters the general impression of their characters as well as their humour.

In conclusion of this chapter, it is evident that the transformation of the characters examined in this section from novel to film had an impact on the position, appearance and the impression of these roles in the movie. Although the character of Laura is presented in a comparable manner to her original source, the role of Marie is subject to a rather simplified portrayal and loses plenty of her significance in relation to Rob's reflection. On the other hand, the characters of Barry and Dick are depicted in the same manner as they were in the novel with the additional positive effect of the movie's visual and aural elements to strengthen the impression of their roles.

## 2.7. **Theme**

In this chapter, the influence of the cinematic transformation on the main theme of *High Fidelity* is examined. In addition to the examination, the positive or negative effects of said transformation are stated.

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<sup>82</sup> CUSACK, John. Interview: Barry and Dick. In: *High Fidelity*. DVD. 2000

Drawing out on what had been already written in the chapter 1.4.6, the main theme of the novel is the inability to keep a healthy relationship which is the main aspect of Rob as well as many men of his age. In comparison with the movie, this theme is still well preserved. In spite of the possible misleading due to the altered plot structure, as depicted in the chapter 1.4.1, which falsely portrays Rob and Laura's relationship as the main topic, the major part of the film is still centred on Rob and his contemplations and reflections which positively guide the viewer to centre their attention to the above mentioned theme. However, it is worth mentioning that the influence of the different plot structure is still visible and therefore it slightly demeans the importance of the main theme.

In conclusion, the main theme of the story is kept unchanged. On the other hand, it is negatively affected by the different plot structure which degrades the theme's status in the movie.

## **2.8. Motives**

Another topic for comparison are the motives present in the *High Fidelity* movie and their relation to those contained in the literary source. Therefore, the main concern of this chapter is to properly compare and evaluate the motives examined in the chapter 1.4.7. of the theoretical part. The concrete motives are: music, commitments and the musical cassettes.

### *2.8.1. Music*

As already stated in the chapter 1.4.7, music follows Rob through his whole life and influences his opinions and general perception of the world. Many musical references are visibly used in the novel to hint on the mood of the specific part of the story or to serve as Rob's way of describing certain people.

In relation to the movie, this motive is vividly shown through the whole story. Both its meaning to Rob as well as the various references are present and as such it is faithfully depicted, in comparison with the novel. Even more, the film's possibility to display aural data, through the use of a background music, further enhances viewers enjoyment of the story as many of the songs formerly verbally mentioned in the book can be played out loud through which the music influence can be enjoyed even by those who are not familiar with the particular songs.

### *2.8.2. Commitments*

Rob's fear of commitments is one of the important motives as it is one of the aspects which govern his whole life and prevents him from achieving happiness. Connected to his lack of

confidence, Rob is constantly overthinking the consequences of his actions and for the same reason tries to avoid any long-term commitments which has a negative effect on his relationships, as stated in the chapter 1.4.7.

In comparison with the film adaptation, this motive is also adequately recreated. Thus, the movie Rob is suffering from the same fear to commit in the same way as formerly presented in the novel. Moreover, the negative impact of such behaviour on his relationships is also clearly visible.

### 2.8.3. *Musical Cassettes*

As shown in the chapter 1.4.7, Rob's special mixtapes bear great importance in the story as they serve as the only medium through which he can properly express himself and his feelings. Rob gave such musical cassette to Laura when they first met and he also offers it to the young reporter at the end of the story. Concerning the movie, this motive is also visibly presented along with its importance to Rob. This is most clearly seen especially at the end of the movie, in the scene where Rob begins to create a new tape for a young reporter but suddenly realises he should not be since he is back together with Laura. In a way, the scene depicts his feeling of betraying Laura in the same manner as it is written in the novel.

In conclusion of this chapter, a comparison of a number of motives has been done in order to evaluate the manner in which they were transformed from the novel into the adaptation. The proper recreation of these motives is evident as all of them share the meaning and importance of those in the film's literary source.

## 2.9. **Determining the Type of Adaptation**

As already discussed in the conclusion of the chapter 1.3.3, the *High Fidelity* movie appears to fall under the *Fidelity of Transformation* category of film adaptations. However, in order to confirm this possibility, it is necessary to draw upon the results presented in preceding sections and compare them with the individual types of adaptation laid out in the above mentioned chapter.

The chapter 1.3.3. depicted a trio of categories used for the purpose of classification of various adaptations: *Borrowing*, which uses only fragments of the former work and adds new material of its own, *Intersecting*, focused on recreating the source novel in an unaltered form, and *Fidelity of Transformation*, attempting to remodel the content of the book to fit the system of the movie.



Considering the *Borrowing* type, the *High Fidelity* film cannot be labelled as such since a large number of specific parts of its content are recreated in a way that is either the same or very similar to their counterparts in the source novel, in contrast to mere fragments required for this class. For example, the story remains practically the same and even the plot, although different at one point, follows the structure of the literary predecessor. Furthermore, the personalities of characters, theme and motives are also mostly unchanged and the dialogues contain pieces of the original text. As such, the distinction from this category is clearly visible.

On the other hand, classifying the movie as *Intersecting* is similarly inaccurate, as various pieces of the movie are altered, with perhaps the most apparent being the change of the setting from Britain to the United States. In combination with another subtle differences, namely the altered surnames of the characters or the modified position of the retrospective, this highlights the discord between the film and this category's need for precise recreation of the novel.

The last remaining section is the *Fidelity of Transformation*. In this relation, the adaptation meets the criteria for being a part of this division. The effort of the authors to adapt the novel to the scheme of the film is clearly observed in the transformation of the point of view in which the main character's speech directly to the camera greatly reconstructs the inner monologues used in the novel. Even more, the already mentioned relocation of the setting to the American Chicago successes in maintaining the atmosphere of the book and gives it a form which is easily recognizable for the American audiences for which the movie was intended, as shown in chapter 1.4.

In conclusion, on the basis of an examination of the various types of adaptation and their comparison with the *High Fidelity* movie adaptation, it has been confirmed that the film falls under the category of *Fidelity of Transformation* as presumed before. This has been supported with evidence in the form of examples such as the adaptation of the point of view in order to properly express inner monologues and the alteration of the setting to recreate its atmosphere for an American viewer.

## Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to present the differences which appeared during the creation of a novel's movie adaptation on the example of the comparison of the High Fidelity film and its preceding novel. This was done on the basis of an analysis of the selected important aspects of both the movie and the book and their comparison. As seen from the outcome of the practical section of this thesis, a number of specific differences and concords was found.

As visible in the chapter 2.1. in which a selected examples of cardinal functions were examined, the *story* of the movie successfully corresponds to that of the novel. All four cardinal functions which were analysed maintain the same meaning and purpose. Furthermore, their respective catalysers are also present in the film and correspondingly act in the same manner as they do in the book.

On the other hand, the same cannot be said about the *plot*. As depicted in the chapter 2.2, the plot structure in the movie is different than that of the novel. As a result of the movie being unable to properly express the past tense, the initial retrospective is positioned after Laura's departure, changing the plot structure. Thus the viewer might consider Rob and Laura's relationship as the main issue of the story and not Rob's problems as in the novel. This might also be a reason for a number of cut scenes, which further exposed Rob's personality.

Moving onwards, the third discussed topic was the *point of view*. As seen in the chapter 2.3, the former first person point of view of the novel is well recreated in the adaptation. The descriptive parts concerning Rob's surroundings are displayed visually or aurally in the form of the *mise-en-scène* and most of his inner monologues are expressed through the direct speech to the camera. However, part of Rob's subjectivity is exchanged with that of the author who created the *mise-en-scène*.

In relation to the *setting*, despite the alteration of its location and cultural background, it succeeds in providing the same atmosphere for the American audience as its counterpart in the novel did for the British. Moreover, the significance of the *Championship Vinyl* store and Rob's flat is well maintained, although with a more relaxed feeling. Rob's flat is also depicted in more detail but its most important part is still Rob's record collection, as examined in the chapter 2.4.

Concerning the *main character*, Rob is portrayed in the movie with a remarkable precision. As presented in the chapter 2.5, Both his feelings and thoughts are displayed faithfully

to the literary source through the acting of John Cusack and a great deal of dialogue lines taken from the novel and used in an unchanged form. Furthermore, the various visual and aural details provided by the movie strengthen the impression of this character on the audience.

Similarly, the depiction of the *secondary characters*, except for the character of Marie De Salle whose role became a simplified version of her counterpart, are also excellently reconstructed in the movie, as shown in the chapter 2.6. Same as in the case of Rob, the faithfulness of these characters is supported by quality acting and a number of unaltered dialogue lines. Even more, their influence on the viewer is equally enhanced by the camera.

As stated in the chapter 2.7, the film portrays the *main theme* of *High Fidelity* in the same manner as it is observed in the novel. Unfortunately, the attention of the audience might be initially misled from it by the different plot structure, and as such, its importance and visibility is slightly undermined. Additionally, the discussion of the chosen important *motives* on the basis of their position and status in the chapter 2.8. proved that their transformation into the movie was likewise successful.

Finally, in the last chapter 2.9, the High Fidelity movie adaptation has been classified as a part of the *Fidelity of Transformation* category of adaptations. This statement was based on the results of the comparison of the movie and a number of specific types of adaptations.

To sum up, a number of details have been presented in order to portray the differences which took place in the content of the adaptation. While the vast majority of the film remained faithful to the original novel, the authors were forced to change the plot structure of the former literary template thus altering the viewer's perception of the main topic of the story, leading them astray from the proper main theme. Furthermore, a change of the setting was needed in order to make it more relatable for the audience which led to a lighter expression of certain parts. On the other hand, the possibilities of the camera to show visual and aural material greatly enhances the overall experience of the viewer but at the same time makes them subject to author's personal ideas. Additionally, the impression is further strengthened by the acting but a number of scenes relating to Rob is cut out from the movie and the role of Marie De Salle is quite simplified.

However, it is worth to mention that this thesis presented merely a general evaluation of the presented topics. Therefore, many more differences might be found in each of the sections in case of further study.

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## RÉSUMÉ

Cílem této práce bylo na základě analýzy výchozího díla *High Fidelity* spisovatele Nicka Hornbyho a jeho stejnojmenné filmové adaptace, režiséra Stephena Frearse, vytvořit srovnání, z něžž by bylo patrné, v čem se adaptace odchylovala od svého vzoru a proč k těmto odchylkám pravděpodobně došlo. Byly analyzovány prvky výchozího díla a tyto prvky byly poté hledány v jeho filmové adaptaci, na základě čehož proběhlo srovnání. Těmito prvky jsou: příběh, zápleтка, úhel pohledu, prostředí, protagonista, vedlejší postavy, motivy a hlavní téma knihy. Výsledkem porovnání obou děl je stanovení prvků, ve kterých se obě díla liší a ve kterých se naopak doplňují. Bylo zjištěno, že film se ve většině zkoumaných prvků drží své předlohy, pouze v případě zápletky a prostředí, do něhož byl film zasazen, můžeme najít určité rozdíly.

## ANNOTATION

<b>Jméno a příjmení:</b>	Adam Huspeka
<b>Katedra nebo ústav:</b>	Ústav cizích jazyků
<b>Vedoucí práce:</b>	Mgr. Josef Nevařil, Ph.D.
<b>Rok obhajoby:</b>	2016

<b>Název práce:</b>	Všechny moje lásky – porovnání knihy a filmu
<b>Název v angličtině:</b>	High Fidelity – A Comparison of the Novel and the Film
<b>Anotace práce:</b>	Závěrečná práce se zabývá srovnáním díla Všechny moje lásky britského spisovatele Nicka Hornbyho, s jeho filmovou adaptací stejného jména režiséra Stephena Frearse. Toho je dosaženo srovnáním několika prvků společných pro obě díla, na základě kterých jsou ilustrovány změny v adaptaci, ke kterým došlo v průběhu procesu adaptace.
<b>Klíčová slova:</b>	Všechny moje lásky, Nick Hornby, Stephen Frears, srovnání, analýza, filmová adaptace, román
<b>Anotace v angličtině:</b>	The purpose of this thesis is to compare the novel High Fidelity by British author Nick Hornby with its film adaptation of the same name, directed by Stephen Frears. This is achieved by a comparison of various aspects common for both works, on the basis of which, the changes in the adaptation which occurred during the adaptive process are presented.
<b>Klíčová slova v angličtině:</b>	High Fidelity, Nick Hornby, Stephen Frears, comparison, analysis, film adaptation, novel
<b>Rozsah práce:</b>	47 s.
<b>Jazyk práce:</b>	Anglický jazyk

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**TÉMA ČESKY:**

Nick Hornby, Všechny moje lásky - porovnání knihy a filmové adaptace

**NÁZEV ANGLICKY:**

Nick Hornby's High Fidelity: Comparison of the novel and film adaptation

**VEDOUcí PRÁCE:**

Mgr. Josef Nevařil, Ph.D. - KAJ

**ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:**

- Stanovení a formulace cíle.
- Stanovení a vysvětlení metod, kterými bude práce disponovat a na jejichž základě bude analýza a komparace prováděna.
- Stanovení struktury práce.
- Vymezení zkoumaného díla a jeho filmové adaptace.
- Analýza odborné literatury.
- Komparace díla a jeho filmové adaptace.

**SEZNAM DOPORUČENÉ LITERATURY:**

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