

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	:	Literature and Adaptation
Course Code	:	ENG274
Recommended Study Year	:	2 nd & 3 rd Year
No. of Credits/Term	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Lecture and Tutorial
Class Contact Hours	:	2 hours Lecture/week 1 hour Tutorial/week
Category in Major Programme	:	Disciplinary Elective
Prerequisite(s)	:	N/A
Co-requisite(s)	:	N/A
Exclusion(s)	:	N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	:	N/A

Brief Course Description

This is a practical course designed to raise awareness of the nature of literature by comparison with other media and to enhance students' oral and visual communication skills. It consists of mainly workshop sessions to develop in students the awareness, skills and motivation to adapt samples of English literary texts into other genres and other media. A key part of the course is to develop in students a practical orientation to understanding the way that texts are constructed by transforming them into other forms and/or other media. The development of language skills under stimulating and creative circumstances is also very important.

Aims

1. To explore the nature of a variety of literary texts and other media in the context of their adaptation from one form to another;
2. To give students practice in writing and speaking (and also acting and performing) in the English language in order to enhance language awareness and language proficiency;
3. To consider and practice the adaptation of one literary medium into another (e.g. poem into short story);
4. To consider the techniques for translating the literary aspects of representation into the audio and visual media and to practise such techniques (e.g. radio play and short video/film).

Learning Outcomes

The students are expected to: 1) demonstrate an understanding and competence with basic principles and theories of literary adaptation; 2) display the ability to transpose texts working collaboratively from an original literary mode/ form to a performance-based one, whether live or electronically recorded; 3) demonstrate the ability to develop ideas for a project and deliver the finished product after rigorous reflective creative process; 4) express ideas, both creative and critical, in fluent, accurate English orally and in writing; 5) display literary sensibility and empathy, technical judgment and competence and heightened intertextual awareness of relationships between and across texts.

Indicative Content

1. A brief review of the theory and a potted history of adaptations with a follow-on discussion of the various types of adaptation: e.g. novel/short story to film; short story to radio drama; poem to song; poem to short story; novel to musical. Examples to be provided by the instructor [2 weeks].
2. An introduction to adapting a story into a song or a poem, a poem into a song or a poem into a short story. A class exercise in the latter, focusing on the differences between poetic and prose representations. Students to choose a poem or song and to adapt it into a short story. The song *Wuthering Heights* by Kate Bush based on the Emily Bronte novel, which students should read either in the full or an abridged version, will be used as an example. [3 weeks].
3. An introduction to adapting a short novel into a radio play (with background presentation of a rock musical opera). For instance, students will read H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, listen to the Orson Welles radio version, and listen to Jeff Wayne's CD of the same name (in part narrated by Richard Burton). After an initial lecture and follow-up discussion, students will write a short essay outlining what they see as some of the differences between the versions. In groups, students will then choose a short story and adapt it as a short radio play. The script may be performed in our recording studio (time and interest permitting) and produced either as a tape or a CD. [3 weeks].
4. An introduction to adapting fiction into film. For instance, students will read and view *Animal Farm* or *The Graduate*. An instructor-led discussion of the nature of the two media will occur, focusing only on a few of the most salient distinctions between written and visual media. Using these few distinctions, the students in groups will adapt a shorter-length short story into a film format. That is to say, they will prepare dialogue, consider the setting, plan the action, and arrange the action into a limited number of shots, (i.e. prepare a simple film script based on samples they will be shown). Time, enthusiasm and ability permitting, students may produce their short film using our TV studio. [5 weeks].

Teaching Method

The whole course will be of a student-centred, workshop nature, with students learning empirically from texts partly chosen by the course-designer and partly chosen by the students themselves. In view of the inevitable pressure on time, the course instructor will pre-prepare a bundle of appropriate texts for students who are unable to find their own examples. Much practical work will be done using (subject to the pressures of time and the inclinations of the students) DV cameras, computers, sound tape-recorders. Full use will be made of our state-of-the-art multi-media facilities in the Teaching and Learning Centre (TV and sound recording studios). However, the course is not intended to train students in technical aspects of adaptations and highly polished productions are neither required nor expected. It is very much hoped that students will have the time and the inclination to produce their group work in our studios as this will introduce an element of learning and fun that is likely to prove powerful.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Students' progress towards the learning outcomes above will be measured by continuous assessments on the students' engagement with the lectures, workshops, tutorial discussions and brainstorming, readings and written assignments. Performance/ presentation/ screening will provide summative indication of successful outcomes in the area of collaborative process in group assignments.

Assessment

All assessment will be continuous assessment and there will be no examination. In courses like this where there is only one section and one instructor, assessments will be double marked so as to ensure fairness. Samples of student work and marking criteria will be forwarded to External Examiners for their comments. Students will present 4 pieces of work, including a Portfolio, which will highlight reflections by students on the processes of adaptation. Whereas students may produce their group work in our studios, they will be assessed on the written adaptations they produce and not on aspects of performance.

1. An individual adaptation of a poem into a short story [20 marks];
2. One group adaptation of a short story into a radio play script [30 marks];
3. A group adaptation of a short story into a film script [30 marks];
4. A portfolio on the processes of adaptation, including:
 - a log book of all activities undertaken in the course

- a report on what was learned about the differences between different media (choosing either *The War of the Worlds* and the radio production or *Animal Farm* and the film production)
- an evaluation of one group production based on feedback from the entire class or from the audience (if any), with a critique of how the production could have been improved. [20 marks].

Required Readings / Viewing / Listening

Bronte, E., *Wuthering Heights*, Any available paperback edition.
 Nichols, M., Feature film of *The Graduate*, DVD, 1968.
 Orwell, G. *Animal Farm*, Any available paperback edition.
 Animated and digitally enhanced feature film versions of *Animal Farm*,
 Wayne, Jeff, *War of the Worlds*, Sony CD Audio, 1997.
 Webb, C., *The Graduate*, Any available paperback edition, 1962.
 Welles, Orson, *The War of the Worlds*, The Mercury Theatre on the Air, October 30th,
 Audio tape, 1938.
 Wells, H.G., *The War of the Worlds*, Any available paperback edition, 1898.

Supplementary Readings

Cantril, Hadley, *The Invasion from Mars: a study in the psychology of panic*, Includes the script of the Orson Welles broadcast, New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
 Friedland, J., *From Books to Film: A Study Guide*, Learning Links Incorporated, 1991.
 Gifford, D., *Books & Plays in Films, 1896-1915: Literary, Theatrical & Artistic Sources of the First Twenty Years of Motion Pictures*, New York: McFarland & Co., 1991.
 Marill, A. H., *More Theatre: Stage to Screen to Television*, Scarecrow Press, 1993.
 McFarlane, B., *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation, 1934-*
 Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
 Giddings, R. Selby, K. and Wensley, C., *Screening the Novel: The Theory and Practice of Literary Dramatization*, London: Macmillan, 1990.
 Seger, L., *The Art of Adaptation: Fact & Fiction into Film*, New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1992.
 Vardac, A. N., *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Origins of Early Film: David Garrick to D.W. Griffith*, Da Capo Press Incorporated, 1987.
 Wagner, R., *The Novel and the Cinema*. London: The Tantivy Press, 1975.
 Wheeler, David. Ed., *No, But I Saw the Movie: The Best Short Stories Ever Made Into Film*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1989.