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The Art of Conversation in Adaptation: Three Heritage Examples

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INTRODUCTION

When Emma Thompson accepted her Award for Best Screenplay for her adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility* in 1996, she concluded her speech with these few words: 'With gratitude and apologies to Miss Austen, thank you'. This tribute to the famous English female writer sheds light on the ambivalence of the adaptation of the novel on screen. Adapting a novel to a screenplay is not an easy task and conveys both a sense of gratitude for the original novel, as well as a sense of humility. If the original novel did not exist, the film adaptation would have never been created either. However, the apologise made by Thompson underlines another aspect of the condition of the adaptation: its qualitative dependence on the original novel and its inevitable comparison with it. To go beyond this basic analysis of the film adaptations subordinated to original novels, one can wonder what this process can bring to the original medium. Hence, to reflect on the possibility of the film adaptation and its relations to the original novels, this work will deal with the following subject: 'The Art Of Conversation in Adaptation: three Heritage Examples'.

The phrase 'art of conversation' has been chosen as a reference to the role of conversation in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, which was perceived as a social performance and subject to rules. In this research project, the term 'conversation' will be understood as a social practice of engaging with other people on various topics. Hence, the choice of dealing with the conversation and three adaptations of novels from the 19th and 20th centuries has been motivated by a desire to understand the particularities of this social practice and its film representation. The choice of the corpus has been made regarding the context of production and the fact these three films are adaptations of fictional novels. For *Pride and Prejudice*, directed by Joe Wright in 2005, the choice was motivated by the aesthetics of the film, which seem different and more modern than the other adaptations made, for example, the one from the BBC. Concerning *Sense and Sensibility*, directed by Ang Lee in 1995, the choice was made regarding the major influence the movie had had on the studies of Jane Austen and adaptation studies. As for *A Room with a View* by Merchant-Ivory in 1985, this adaptation rather than *Howards End*, which is more popular, can be justified by the fewer academic interest in this film. As a consequence, the choice of the corpus was motivated by the plots, and the characters, but most importantly by the dialogues and the wits they convey, which go perfectly along with a study of the notion of 'conversation'. The corpus chosen illustrates the importance of rumours, the dangers of people talking and

conversing about someone else, and so the importance of following a precept of established rules. Indeed, *Pride and Prejudice* is an excellent example of the use of irony, the implicit and how to master a conversation. It also illustrates the difference between classes and how conversation can overcome it. Concerning *Sense and Sensibility*, careful attention must be put to how the two paradigms lead the conversations for the two main characters. The question of reputation and rumours is essential, and the importance of the discrepancy between implying and saying. As for *A Room with a View*, the analysis will focus on how the main character empowers and detaches herself from society by finally saying out loud what she feels. Academic works on the film adaptations of Jane Austen's and E.M. Forster's novels have been important over the past few years, due to the numerous films produced between the 1980s and the 2000s. The popularity of the adaptations of Jane Austen's novels has been analysed as part of a sort of Austen-mania of the 1990s, when several of her novels, and sometimes the same, were adapted into films or series in a short period. For some authors, this popularity may be explained by the cinematic aspects of the novels of Jane Austen, which seem to fit the process of adaptation. In other words, the novel techniques used by the author in her novels can be translated easily on screen with film techniques. Despite the difference in the context of production and the change of medium, the adaptations of Jane Austen's novels are perceived as having to draw the attention of a contemporary audience. As for the adaptation of E.M. Forster's novel, it is part of other adaptations made by the duo Merchant-Ivory in the 1980s and 1990s. But while the adaptation of *Howards Ends* for instance has been subject of numerous analyses, *A Room with a View* has fostered less interest from the authors. This lack of written sources on this adaptation may be due to the feebler public interest in the original novel, but one can wonder how the adaptation of this misunderstood novel can be apprehended.

While a century separates the film adaptations and the original novels, conversations from the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries still convey meaning and understanding. The social interactions are still relevant despite the change in historical context. If the issue does not lie in the English language and syntax, one can wonder how a modern audience can grasp the social and economic stakes of that time, namely the importance of marriage, reputation and what was forbidden to do and say. Hence, the implicit becomes more interesting as it applies to an audience that was not the original one. It should be essential to analyse if and how the adaptations responded to this challenge, by conserving or changing the original conversations. On top of that, it should be noted that the Heritage Film has been the core of many adaptations from the Georgian and Edwardian periods, showing a growing and popular

interest in this period at the end of the 2000s can play a part in it. Studies on the Heritage Films have pointed out the interest in this heritage culture showing an English past as part of the national history. Those films were even accused of displaying 'a nostalgic and conservative celebration of the values and lifestyles of the privileged classes'[1]. And yet, other critics have claimed that those Heritage films about a nostalgic past were able to correspond to the social changes of the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries. The genre of the Heritage Film complexifies as it not only depicts by using aesthetics codes an English version of the past, but it also offers a reflection on the context of the cinematic production of the 90s and 2000s. Hence, the films of the corpus will be analysed not only as film adaptations but also as corresponding to a particular context of production and to film aesthetics.

As a consequence, the interest of this research essay lies in the way the 'art of conversation', understood as a social practice of the past, becomes an element to adapt to a different medium and another era. Furthermore, from novels to movies, changes are involved, one of them being the passage from conversation to a dialogue. It implies the analysis of different elements, including the body language, the intonation and the soundtrack. Hence, one of the aspects of my study will rely on the use of adaptation studies. I will ponder on the transformation from a telling mode to a showing one, and how it affects the notion of conversation. As already suggested, the notion of dialogue will be an essential part of this enquiry. Nonetheless, the classic aspect of film studies must also be taken into account, namely the specific techniques to film a conversation and adapt a novel. The main interest lies in the capacity of those chosen adaptations to render the implicit aspect, and how the change of media affects it. The focus of enquiry will be directed to the various aspects of conversations, understood as a social practice and a narrative element, which I will try to oppose to other terms that will be exposed, such as the dialogues or the discussions. However, while the subject will not rely on conversation analysis from a linguistic point of view, it will tackle linguistic notions related to the importance of politeness, the concept of turn-taking in conversation and the implicit.

Hence, my research essay will be based on the theory of adaptation of the novel to film, and studies led on the adaptations of Jane Austen's and E.M. Forster's novels, as well as studies on the Heritage Films. The theory of adaptation goes from early theories focusing

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[1] Andrew, Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama Since 1980*, Oxford, OUP, 2003, 12.

solely on the questions of faithfulness and differences between novel and film to recent essays that question the different types of adaptations. Indeed, the first attempts to theorise the adaptation from novel to film were dedicated to comparing both works by analysing the fidelity of the choices made. It followed that a film adaptation was pejoratively perceived as a copy of the original novel, unable to cope with the challenges offered by the written medium. But as suggested by McFarlane in his essay *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*: 'The insistence on fidelity has led to a suppression of potentially more rewarding approaches to the phenomenon of adaptation'[2]. While the question of faithfulness may be pertinent for the first approach to a film adaptation to put into question the differences, one must wonder what goes beyond this change of the medium. Hence, the following theories tended to focus on the specificities of the adaptation. For instance, with this change from novel to film came questions related to the focalisation, the narration and most importantly, the question of perspective: who is the narrator in a film? As the narrator in a novel may be easily identified, it is not the same with a film, and most importantly it is not the same to adapt a first-person narration and a third-person narration on screen. In a sense, the theory of adaptation sheds light on the transfer from the telling mode to the showing mode, and what the changes from one mode to another imply. As a consequence, the recent studies on film adaptation tend to develop on the specificities of the film adaptation rather than opposing the two mediums. Nowadays, academic works on the theory of adaptation try to identify different types of adaptations, not based on the principle of faithfulness, but more on how the film adaptation uses the original novel to create its own work. Different categories of adaptation have been established by different authors, regarding the methods used and choices made. For instance, Thomas Leitch considers that an adaptation may correspond to ten categories, from being 'curatorial' and celebrating the original novel, to being just an 'allusion' to the original work[3]. Those different categorisations of the adaptation underline the complexity of this process that tends to respond to its own rules and goes beyond the simple comparison between novel and film based on literary criteria. Hence, the theory of adaptation proposes new perspectives, namely on the ability of the film to adapt with its own techniques a novel. As pointed out by Linda Hutcheon in her essay *A Theory of Adaptation*, 'as a creative and interpretive transposition of a recognizable other work or works, adaptation is a kind of extended palimpsest and, at the same time, often a transcoding into a different set of

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[2] Brian, McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1996, 10.

[3] Thomas, Leitch, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents - From* Gone with the Wind *to* The Passion of the Christ, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins UP, 2007, 96-123.

conventions'[4]. It appears that the adaptation has acquired an important place in the academic field, as it is not just considered a copy of original work, but a new form of art that must be analysed as such. For Robert Stam, the theory of adaptation becomes linked to the question of intertextuality and dialogues between works of art, because

> Filmic adaptations, then, are caught up in the ongoing whirl of intertextual reference and transformation, of texts generating other texts in an endless process of recycling, transformation, and transmutation, with no clear point of origin[5].

The concept of fidelity is even reintroduced in the debate: what is being faithful to a novel? Is it because the film adaptation replicates the story, or because it shares the same message? Thus, the theory of adaptation has extended to take into account the specificities of film adaptations and illustrate how adaptations must be studied from different angles and points of view. This research project will rely on these recent arguments on the theory of adaptation, as the purpose will be to study how the 'art of conversation' is appropriated by the adaptations under study, from the changes made to the specific film techniques used.

To conduct this study, I will analyse the corpus chosen, based on an analysis of the three adaptations as films and a comparative analysis between the original novels and the film adaptations. By doing so, I will underline the specificities of those adaptations as adaptations, while also analysing them as film representations of the conversation. My main argument will be that, through the film adaptation of the 'art of conversation' from another historical period, the didactic dimension is maintained and addressed to a contemporary audience. As a consequence, my focus of inquiry in this research project will be: how does the adaptation of the art of conversation guide the audience on the question of implicitness by teaching them the various aspects of it? My research project will be developed in three parts:

In part I, entitled 'The Importance of Social Manners in the Art of Conversation; a social and public exercise that must be adapted on screen', I will present 'the art of conversation' as understood as a social practice during the Georgian and Edwardian eras in the three films chosen. The 'art of conversation' can be defined as the way a person can perform in front of an audience a certain talent for orality, for conversing with others and for exchanging ideas. In my analysis, the 'art of conversation' will refer in the first place to the importance of social manners, politeness and conventions at that time. During those eras, a

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[4] Linda, Hutcheon, and Siobhan, O'Flynn, *A theory of adaptation*, New York, 2nd edition, Routledge, 2013, 33.
[5] Robert, Stam, 'The theory and practice of adaptation', *in* Robert, Stam and Alexandra, Raengo, eds., *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation,* Oxford, Blackwell, 2005, 31.

social 'etiquette' had to be respected to be accepted by society and even more to be considered highly valuable. More than in our contemporary era, the first salutations and conversations between two persons were essential, as they could determine future relationships. This art, or talent, was singularly different between men and women because the expectations were not the same. Indeed, the two sexes did not have to converse on the same subjects of conversation and could or could not speak about specific topics. What is interesting to note is that the 'art of conversation' can be understood as a performance in front of a public audience, in a public sphere, and understood as well as confidence in a more private sphere. The corpus under study offers an interesting contrast between public conversations and private ones, from the subjects tackled to the tones and manners used. To go further, I will argue that conversations, because of good manners and politeness, can be perceived as artificial, and so they can lack sincerity and honesty. Hence, a distinction must be made between formal conversations, and more emotional ones, a distinction that must be made regarding the context of the conversations and the effects produced on the characters. But one can wonder if this distinction is not too strict, in the sense that formal and emotional conversations can melt. In this case, I will ponder on how social conventions and rules can enable a character to better express his or her feelings. The notion of adaptation raises a new challenge to the conversation, which is the change of medium, from a written and static one to a film and moving one. Indeed, theories of adaptation have dealt with the differences between the two media and how they fostered changes in sign systems and techniques, from the literary to the film medium. I will go further by emphasising the change from written dialogues to film dialogues and how, in films, dialogues have a more important role to play. Thus, one can wonder how the three film adaptations responded to the problem of adapting the original conversations, from the choice of keeping or deleting some sentences or scenes, to the change of conversations as a whole.

In part II, entitled 'How to Perfect the Art of Conversation. From the art of speaking well to manipulation and rumours', I will deal with the conversation as a social and linguistic tool. The conversation could play an important part in the narrative development of the characters as evoked above. But one may wonder how the characters react to it, not in terms of social manners, but how they act in conversations. Some characters know how to turn the conversation to their advantage, or are submitted to others in conversations. After underlying the importance of conversation and its different contexts, I suggest focusing in this part on how the characters react to it. It is interesting to note that the characters of the corpus offer a wide range of reactions when facing the 'art of conversation'. I will argue that, despite the

weight of social manners and rules, the characters who are more at ease with the conversation are not necessarily those following the codes; conversely, following the codes may not be the solution for a character to become a good speaker. Thus, I will demonstrate that the 'art of conversation' does not lie in social manners and how to follow them. Instead, it lies in the way characters learn how to emancipate from it and how to use the 'art of conversation' to turn to one's advantage. As a consequence, what is at stake in most conversations of the corpus is the aspect of manipulation. Conversations are perceived as a tool to manipulate someone, either by influencing or using this person. Thus, I will argue that an aspect of the 'art of conversation' lies in the way characters know how to use social manners and etiquette to obtain what they want. At this point in the analysis, it should be noted that conversation fosters a key notion introduced in the corpus of films, and most importantly in the original novels: rumours. Indeed, rumours can be defined as 'information, often a mixture of truth and untruth passed around verbally'. This definition brings on the one hand the untruthfulness of those rumours, and on the other hand how they can be spread out through conversations. At that time, rumours bear the intention to harm one's reputation by speaking poorly of his or her, or on the contrary to elevate someone in society by boasting about his or her actions. As a consequence, it was important to be careful about rumours, in the sense not to be subject to negative ones but at the same time to know how to respond to them. I intend to argue that rumours in the corpus are widely used by women, more than men, and can be qualified as a 'womanly power'. This can be justified by the place of women in Edwardian and Georgian societies, a place that was subject to constraints and less freedom of speech as seen in the first part. Rumours are used as a weapon in the corpus by the different female figures, either to defend their interests or to ruin someone's position without being seen as responsible. In fact, a key element of the notion of rumours is its ephemeral aspect; rumours seem to come from no one in particular and are transmitted orally, preventing from finding out who the author of a rumour was. However, one can wonder how the corpus under study develops those notions. One must note that the change of point of view in the adaptation raises a new issue. In the original novels, the narrator could indicate to the reader the good speakers, the manipulations at stake, and the rumours and consequences of it. At the end of this part, I will apply the theories of adaptation regarding the differences between telling mode and showing modes, in the corpus under study. This will lead me to ponder on the adaptation of the notions of manipulation and rumours on screen, and what this adaptation process reveals.

And lastly, in part III entitled 'The Art of Conversation, Communication and the Importance of the Implicit', after demonstrating how the 'art of conversation' could be used as

a means to manipulate and take advantage of someone or a situation, I will focus on the notion of communication, and more specifically why conversation is not synonymous with communication in the corpus under study. Indeed, one can argue that the main linguistic point of conversing with someone else is to communicate with this other person. And yet, one can wonder if the conversations of the corpus are always clear, as one may notice the various examples of interrupted conversations, moments of silence, hesitations, misunderstanding between the characters, and so on. While the corpus of this research subject is based on fictional conversations, those conversations are written or filmed to correspond to 'real' conversations. And yet, one can note exceptions that are relevant to understanding the different aspects of the 'art of conversation'. Indeed, the analysis of good manners in part I and the notion of manipulation in part II will lead me to discuss a phenomenon fostered by those conditions: the implicitness in conversations. I will ponder on this notion and analyse how it is represented throughout the corpus. I will argue that the adaptation process not only represents this aspect but reinforces it. Indeed, in this part, it is important to underline what the adaptation gives to the originally written conversation. While the implicit could be transmitted by the narrative process of writing, or the narrator, in an adaptation only the film techniques can render what is hidden. Adaptation enables us to represent what was presupposed, what was considered implicit meaning in the conversation, and what was not supposed to be said out loud because of the social manners we saw. This will lead me to discuss the notion of irony, widely present in the written novels and the adaptations of the corpus. However, one can wonder if the implicit does not put into question the notion of communication, as well as the receptiveness of the audience. I will reflect on the context of production of the adaptations, different from the original novels. Indeed, the context of production of the three adaptations has been qualified as the era of 'Heritage Films', terms that convey the idea of a film based on novels from the 18th, 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. The 'Heritage Films' have been associated 'with a powerful undercurrent of nostalgia for the past conveyed by historical dramas, romantic costume films and literary adaptations'[6]. What I find interesting in this genre is the focus on a period that is almost a century ago from the contemporary audience. Thus, I will argue that this change of era could play a part in the understanding of irony and the implicit for the audience. In other words, I will analyse how the three adaptations try to keep the irony of the novels while updating them to a contemporary audience, who may not have all the codes and cultural references. As a

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[6] Belén, Vidal, *Heritage Film, Nation Genre and Representation*, New York, Wallflower, 2012, 1.

consequence, my last point will focus on how the 'art of conversation' in the three adaptations must be taken into account regarding the place of the audience. I will ponder on how the terms 'art of conversation' apply from social manners to manipulation, but most importantly to the comprehension of the audience and its receptiveness. Based on reception theories and the place of the spectator, my main argument will be to consider how the audience can acquire the 'art of conversation', while it is from another era and another medium, and because it is from another medium.

PART I: The Importance of Social Manners in the Art of Conversation; a social and public exercise that must be adapted on screen.

1. Conversations subject to different rules

A. Nowadays, when someone is in a conversation with someone else, there are no established 'rules' to follow. Depending on the context or the person one is conversing with, tones and manners change, from formal to informal. But established rules on the topics chosen or the length of the conversation do not exist anymore. And yet, in the Georgian and, later on, Edwardian societies, rules regarding conversation were part of the education and part of their daily life. Rules were made different regarding your social class, your age, your sex and the context in which one was conversing. As to perfect the education of young girls into properly young women, fitting for the life of society, conduct books were very popular in the 19th century. In 1806, James Fordyce published his conduct book entitled *Sermons to Young Women*, in which he exposed several sermons written against the 'corruption of the age'[7] and for the 'improvement of the most agreeable part of the creation'[8], namely women. In 1872, the author Florence Hartley published her book on social manners entitled *The Ladies' Book of Etiquette and Manual of Politeness*. This conduct book had been thought of as 'a complete hand book for the use of the lady in polite society containing full directions for correct manners [...]'[9]. She dedicated the first chapter to the 'art of conversation', emphasising the importance it had on society and education. She exposes several rules: avoid topics that may

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[7] James, Fordyce, *Sermons to Young Women* (1809), Internet Archive University of Michigan, 2008, http://archive.org/details/sermonstoyoungw00fordgoog (last accessed 12 March 2022)
[8] *Ibid*. 2.
[9] Florence, Hartley, *The Ladies' Book of Etiquette and Manual of Politeness* (1872), Torrazza Piemonte, Facsimile edition, Amazon Italia Logistica, 2019.

be painful for the companion of conversation; do not engross all of the attention and do not be silent; do not interrupt anyone who is speaking, and so on. While those rules are related to basic politeness, still used today, others are more specific as to the etiquette one must follow. Indeed, it was considered improper to question gentlemen 'upon matters connected with their employment'[10]; to 'question the veracity of any statement made in general conversation'[11], and most importantly, it was advised to 'censure the habit of using sentences which admit of a double meaning'[12] or to report any rumours or remarks made on someone. It follows that conversations in this period were provided with a linguistic point, developed by the author Sidnell in *Conversation Analysis,* which is the notion of 'turn-taking'[13]. Indeed, in his essay, the author ponders social interactions and he explains that people use to take turns speaking, and it has been mostly established by linguistic studies as a matter of politeness and social manners. He argues that 'the turn-taking system defines the basic units out of which all conversations are built'[14]. If this linguistic theory is applied to the question of the 'art of conversation', it follows that the etiquette of conversation could be perceived as a way of expliciting rules already present.[15] To put it differently, conduct books took for reference this linguistic notion and applied specific rules according to it. At this point in this argument, it should be noted that conduct books, and so social manners and the etiquette of conversation, are illustrated in the corpus under study through different aspects. For Bharat Tandon, in his essay *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation*, the conversation is a vital part of the social encounters depicted in Jane Austen's plots[16]. He develops the idea that the novels of Jane Austen shed light on the importance of social manners as depicted in conduct books, and most importantly that the novelist relied on this etiquette in the conversations of her novels. Several examples can be found in the two adaptations of Jane Austen's novels: *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. For instance, in *Pride and Prejudice* by Joe Wright, the first encounter between the Bingleys, Darcy and the Bennets sheds light on the importance of good manners in a public event[17]. It is more than essential that the Bennets introduce themselves as the Bingleys and Darcy are considered wealthy and Mister Bingley may be in search of a wife. This first encounter is vital as it can assure the Bennets of being in the good grace of the Bingleys. During the scene of the encounter, Mrs Bennet quickly pushes her

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[10] *Ibid*. 15.
[11] *Ibid*. 16.
[12] *Ibid*. 17-18.
[13] Jack, Sidnell, *Conversation Analysis: An Introduction*, Croydon, John Wiley & Sons, 2011, 36.
[14] *Ibid*. 56.
[15] Peter, Burke, *The Art of Conversation*, New York, Cornell UP, 1993, 92.
[16] Bharat, Tandon, *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation*, New York, Anthem Press, 2003.
[17] Joe, Wright, *Pride and Prejudice* (2005), DVD StudioCanal, 2006, 7:19-7:52.

daughters and her husband to present themselves in front of the Bingleys and Darcy. Following the etiquette, Mrs Bennet presents herself and her husband, and their daughters by age. Responding to her politeness, Mr Bingley does salute every one of them, while Darcy and Miss Bingley do not, showing a discrepancy in manners and politeness between them. This scene is even more striking because Darcy does not respond according to the notion of 'turn-taking' as explained above. He stays silent, not saluting or acknowledging as he should the Bennets. This scene ends with a significant contrast between Darcy's attitude and Bingley's toward the Bennets. Another illustration of the importance of social manners is depicted in *Sense and Sensibility*, in which Elinor teaches Marianne several times how to behave properly. Indeed, Elinor reproaches Marianne for not acting with Willoughby as a young woman should. It is quite clear that Marianne does not follow the rules of the conduct books when meeting Willoughby. While her mother lets her do whatever she wants, Elinor sees that Marianne should restrain her better, by not being alone with Willoughby and not speaking about intimate subjects, such as love or poetry, to protect her reputation. As a consequence, conversations of the corpus must be examined by keeping in mind the influence and importance of social manners.

B. However, when dealing with the 'art of conversation', the point of contention is that there is a strong discrepancy between what society expected from men and women in terms of social manners. To put it differently, men and women were not expected to speak about the same topics, with the same manners. As explained above with the conduct books, society imposed on women more rules regarding social manners, from the tone of speaking to the subject they should avoid. Hence, it was not expected of a woman to speak about the works of men or politics. In the essays *Forms of Speech in Victorian Fiction*, Raymond Chapman analyses which rules ladies must follow in different Victorian novels. He argues that 'mixed company, 'the presence of ladies' modified speech and behaviour'[18] and that 'women are commonly presented as uninformed about public affairs, accepting their ignorance and receiving with docility the expressed views of men'[19]. He even goes further by exposing how women in novels tend to speak with a 'disorganised speech', due to their education or lack of emotional restraint[20]. What I find interesting in this depiction of women and their conversations in fiction novels is that it goes further than conduct books by conveying the idea that, for a woman, the 'art of conversation' should be limited to her ability to listen, and not to express

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[18] Raymond, Chapman, *Forms of Speech in Victorian Fiction*, New York, Routledge, 2014, 140.
[19] *Ibid*. 141.
[20] *Ibid*. 146.

herself. All this points to the fact that the 'art of conversation' was not supposed to be the same based on the sex of the person speaking. And yet, I would argue that women from the corpus under study convey a counterexample. This argument is best exemplified in the adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, and the conversation between Elizabeth, Darcy and the Bingleys about what an 'accomplished' woman is[21]. This metatextual scene is very interesting as it directly addresses what society imposed on women, and the discrepancy and inequalities they were facing. While Miss Bingleys assumes an accomplished woman should know music, singing and drawing, in languages, in her manners of walking, and to which Darcy adds she must have a sense of reading, Elizabeth reacts to it by arguing that she 'never saw such a woman' implying at the same time that this kind of woman would be considered too intelligent, and so a threat for men and society. While claiming this, Elizabeth breaks the rules established by conduct books, in which a lady must never contradict nor claim that an assumption is wrong when conversing with someone. Thus, both by her words and her way of expressing herself does Elizabeth put into question the etiquette of conversation put upon women.

C. To go further, there is no doubt that a 'social condemnation' was made on both sexes if a person did not respect those conventions. One can ironically note a sense of equality in this case because it was frowned both upon men and women for not being polite. It was not only a matter of politeness but following social manners and the etiquette of conversation. Most importantly it could lead from public condemnation to social exclusion, and by 'social exclusion', I mean being banned from society and excluded from social gatherings or events. Indeed, being considered odd or eccentric regarding manners was not well-seen by the established society, as it did not respect the codes previously mentioned. Kerbrat-Orecchioni, in her work *Le Discours en interaction,* explains that good manners are essential so as to preserve the harmony of the conversation. She defines politeness as 'l'ensemble des procédés conventionnels ayant pour fonction de préserver le caractère harmonieux de la relation interpersonnelle'[22]. Interestingly enough, the author considers that politeness has not been fully studied in linguistics fields. To refer to the notion of politeness, she refers to the term '*rituel*'[23], ritual in English, which implies 'un comportement répété stéréotypé, codifié' and 'le caractère plus ou moins sacré de l'objet du rituel'. Thus, the term ritual would perfectly define the 'art of conversation' as a whole. To ponder on the notion of harmony, I would go further

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[21] J., Wright, *op. cit,* 19:40-22:20.

[22] Catherine, Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *Le discours en interaction*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2005, 189.

[23] *Ibid*. 190.

by linking this idea to the notion of the 'art of conversation': good manners were essential so as to preserve one's social status in society. This element can be illustrated in different scenes of the films in the corpus. For instance, the Emersons, son and father, in *A Room with a View* perfectly symbolise how Edwardian society can exclude people who do not obey social manners. Indeed, this exclusion is visible in the first part of the movie, situated in Florence. While several English travellers are lodging at the Pension Bertolini, the Emersons are standing out from the crowd. Their first appearance is when the father Emerson tries to convince Charlotte to exchange rooms, as he does not wish to get a view. While Charlotte is outraged by this proposition, the reaction of the other lodgers testifies to this odd proposition, considered improper during Edwardian society. Throughout the film, the Emersons are the outcast of this socially mannered society, as they do not intend to correspond to it. Thus, their conversations depicted on the screen are always either surprising by the subjects chosen or the other characters are taken aback by it, such as Lucy. Another example can be drawn from *Pride and Prejudice*, and the introduction of Darcy as a character proud and impolite. As evoked above, Darcy's first introduction to the Bennets does not follow the etiquette of conversation. Following this scene, the Bennets, and most importantly Elizabeth, are considering Darcy as a self-important man, and will not search for his company. It even results in dislike from the Bennets because when Bingley finally comes to the Bennets' house to propose to Jane, accompanied by Darcy as a supporting friend, Mrs Bennet and Kitty almost complain that Darcy is here too. As a consequence, not respecting rules of conversation could not only lead to the interruption or absence of conversation but could have direct consequences on the social image of the person. This argument presupposes that conversations following those codes were easier and gave a better opinion of the participants. This leads to asking the question that if a conversation must be under the hegemony of good manners and respect, does that mean conversations of the corpus arise from honest intentions?

2. Conversation between honesty and hypocrisy

A. Although rules in conversation could be made a necessity for the 'art of conversation', it calls into question the notions of honesty, sincerity or hypocrisy and dissimulation. To put it differently, spontaneous answers and reactions seem not to have their place in a conversation subject to 'etiquette'. As evoked above, characters from the three adaptations under study

must follow social manners and the etiquette of conversation in order to be accepted and mostly be well-regarded. One can wonder if, in a sense, the 'art of conversation' is based on a certain lack of sincerity because of the social manners the characters have to follow. At this point in the analysis, it should be noted that two distinctions can be made in the term 'conversation': public conversations and more private ones. Public conversations could be considered as being closer to social manners than private conversations. By public conversations, I mean conversations happening in a social gathering, with different conversants, while by private ones I refer to conversations between two persons, already acquainted, in a more intimate space. Thus, there is a first variance in the choice of the conversation partners: are they from the same social background, do they have the same education, the same rank, or the same sex? Another dichotomy that must be taken into account is in the context of the conversation. Indeed, by differentiating public space and private space, I intend to argue that the 'art of conversation' is not the same whatsoever. For Burke in *The Art of Conversation* conversation can be 'associated with privacy [...], and opposed to oratory, or 'public speaking''[24]. If one follows this assumption, the different conversations of the corpus must be analysed with this notion in mind. To do so, I propose to analyse an extract from the adaptation *A Room with a View*, which emphasises this ambivalence between public and private conversations[25]. The extract under study is situated in the second part of the movie, the one located in England. As the intertitle suggests, Lucy and Cecil Vyse are 'Officially engaged', after he proposed to her for the third time. While they are publicly announced as being engaged, they have to present themselves to the rest of the good society. This occurs at a tea party organised by the neighbourhood of Barton Cottage. This scene is followed by a more intimate one, where Lucy and Cecil find themselves alone, at the Sacred Lake. This other scene, which corresponds to a romantic moment between the newly engaged lovers, lacks a feeling of intimacy and proximity. Hence, the extract under study is composed of three different types of conversations: a first one ruled by social manners and conventions, a second one under the signs of friendship between Lucy and Mr Beebe, and a third one at the Sacred Lake. However, one can notice that the conversation between Lucy and Cecil at the lake, which is supposed to be more intimate, is marked by an absence of communication, or an emotional bond. Lucy seems indifferent to what occurs and becomes an object of contemplation for Cecil. The extract opens with a tea party, gathering all of the 'good society' of the neighbourhoods. The scene is filmed in a large shot to establish

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[24] P. Burke, *The Art of Conversation, op. cit,* 114.
[25] James, Ivory, *A Room with a View* (1985), DVD Channel4, 2019, 44:25-50:20.

the setting, while different voices can be heard at the same time. The discussion is about 'bad people' coming to live in the neighbourhood, which worries the inhabitants. With this conversation, people appear snobbish and pretentious, while seeming not to listen to one another. At the same time, filmed in a close-up, Mrs Honeychurch is advising her daughter Lucy on how to act in this social event. She encourages Lucy to go and talk to another old lady about her health, not because she genuinely wants to be reassured about her health, but because it is the proper way to behave and talk as a young lady. Thus, nothing seems spontaneous nor sincere, but the conversation is according to what is 'respectable'. The medium close-up of her mother and Lucy derives from a close-up of Lucy: illustrating how she becomes more and more oppressed by those rules. This scene is opposed to the end of the extract when Lucy and Cecil are finally alone in the Sacred Lake. The setting and the editing are different, underlining the opposition between a public space and a private one. The outside of a garden party is opposed to the outside of a forest, and the stillness of the people conversing is opposed to the continuous movements of Lucy who goes back and forth in front of the camera. I would argue that the figure of Lucy yearns for escaping the weight of social etiquette imposed on her by her mother, Cecil or Charlotte, showing the ambivalence of such manners on young women who wish to assert themselves. To conclude with this extract, I find this conversation to be a good example of the 'art of conversation' as being a social and public exercise, but not enabling the protagonist to establish a profound and sincere connection. Indeed, this conversation seems more like a performance in which the characters must take on their roles.

B. Nonetheless, good manners should not be summed up as an impasse to an authentic connection between the characters through conversations. I would argue that sometimes emotions can be contained thanks to social manners, thus enabling a character to speak more clearly. In other words, while good manners appear as a facade of politeness and indifference, characters from the corpus can learn to express themselves with calm and moderation thanks to it. This assumption qualifies the analysis conducted above, in which I focused on conversation as an art of hypocrisy. While some characters tend to be ill at ease speaking with someone else, good manners are not for them a way of being detached emotionally from the conversation, but, on the contrary, a guide to follow so as to be able to express themselves. All this points to the fact that the 'art of conversation' should not be perceived only through the prism of politeness, giving the sense of conversation empty of meaning or even emotions. This argument can be based on the article *Dialogue with Feeling: A Note on Pride and Prejudice*, written by Howard S. Babb. This enlightening article underlines the importance of

dialogues between Darcy and Elizabeth. The author analyses how dialogues between the two main characters 'detail a whole reach of emotional, intellectual, and moral habits'[26]. What is interesting in this article is the study of Darcy's dialogues and the meticulous attention drawn to his way of conceiving his emotions through his sentences. Indeed, Darcy's attitude regarding social conventions is perceived by other characters as snobbism. And yet, it is partly due to his natural shyness and embarrassment when being in public. In a sense, Darcy uses social conventions to hide his natural tendency of behaviour, being described deliberately as pretentious and inaccessible, instead of being reserved and intimidated by unknown people. In the novel and the film adaptation, Darcy admits that he does not know how to converse with people and that he can see that he is not at ease with the 'art of conversation', as the following exchange between Elizabeth, Fitzwilliam and Darcy suggests

> Shall we ask him why a man of sense and education, and who has lived in the world, is ill-qualified to recommend himself to strangers?'
> 'I can answer your question,' said Fitzwilliam, 'without applying to him. It is because he will not give himself the trouble.'
> 'I certainly have not the talent which some people possess,' said Darcy, 'of conversing easily with those I have never seen before. I cannot catch their tone of conversation, or appear interested in their concerns, as I often see done[27]

This extract underlines the two different reactions people may have when facing Mr Darcy: he can appear either ill-at-ease in front of strangers, or he seems too proud to be polite to them. And yet, for Mr Darcy, it is because he does not possess the art of conversing with people he does not know. Interestingly, this reason sheds light on two aspects of social manners: the tone and the involvement that a person must have in a conversation. Another example of a character relying on social manners to 'hide' herself is Elinor in *Sense and Sensibility*. Indeed, while Elinor can be seen as the perfect example of a character who controls her emotions and does not show them, I will argue that social manners are a means for her to better regulate her emotions. For example, when Elinor has to deal with the visit of Edward to Mrs Jenning's house in London, while Lucy is still here, social manners are a means for her to hold on to her emotions and not cry. A visit to someone else's house had to respond to different criteria, such as the length of the stay, the questions asked between the host and the guests, or where to sit. In this scene, the Dashwoods appear to be the hosts, while Lucy and Edward are the guests. Elinor knows her position and obliges to the function she has to hold. Even if the visit of Miss Lucy Steele pains her, as she is sure to hear her brag

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[26] Howard, S. Babb, 'Dialogue with Feeling: A Note on *Pride and Prejudice*'. The Kenyon Review, 20:2, 1958, 2.

[27] Jane, Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, (1813), London, Penguin Classics Literature, 2011, 196.

about Edward and her secret engagement, she still composes herself to make conversation. Only a close-up on her face, while she seems to twitch at the arrival of Miss Lucy Steele, betrays that she does not want to talk to her. Hence, when Lucy starts to talk, Elinor politely begins the conversation by 'are you enjoying your stay with John and Fanny ?'. This question enables her to change the topic of the conversation, and not to talk about Marianne's health. Moments later, while the announcement of Edward Ferrars's visit has shocked both women, Elinor quickly gathers her spirits and welcomes him insensitively. By immediately asking 'you know Miss Steele, of course', Elinor introduces him, and at the same time saves him from saying a mistake. Hence, Elinor will not let her feelings go in the way of her duties as a host. Interestingly enough, it seems that it is precisely those duties that help her to face this situation. Indeed, she seems to hold to these 'rules' so that she has something to say that is neither sensitive nor painful to her. Thus, good manners do not always lead to flat conversations but can be a tool for a character to better express oneself, or to face a social situation with dignity.

C. It follows that a clear distinction can be made between different types of conversations with social manners. On the one hand, formal conversation in which no genuine conversation takes place and only good manners are important, and on the other hand, intense conversations that are kept polite and smooth thanks to social manners. I would argue that a third category can be conceived: emotional conversations in which the characters do not respect the rules imposed. As a consequence, this category goes beyond the opposition made between public conversations and private ones, and it results in that characters can transcend social manners and have a conversation dictated by emotions and spontaneousness. This assertion is based on the essays gathered in the book *Jane Austen in Hollywood*, edited by Linda Troost and George Sayre. In chapter 3, Dickson ponders on the evolution of Elinor, so that she learns how to share her emotions[28]. She explains that, contrary to the original novel where Elinor is repressing her emotions, the movie proposes an Elinor who cannot hold her cries in front of her family, hearing with emotions that Edward is not married after all. For the author of the essay, this transformation is a betrayal of Austen's views on her feminine (and feminist) character. This analysis sheds light on the 'art of conversation' being understood as a means to learn how to have a pure connection with someone, thanks to the conversation. I would argue that the evolution of Elinor throughout the movie enables the audience to witness a counterexample of her well-educated behaviour, and so contrasts with her attitude

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[28] Linda, Troost, et Sayre Greenfield, *Jane Austen in Hollywood,* Lexington, UP of Kentucky, 2000, 54.

as a young lady. The same argument applies to the characters of *A Room with a View*, in an article entitled 'Kissing and Telling: Turning Round in a Room with a View' by Health. The author develops on the fact that Forster wanted 'George and Lucy to have an entire conversation - one that is direct, open, reciprocal'[29]. In this article, the author makes a clear distinction between 'spontaneous response' and what he calls 'muddled response', namely when 'people ignore their deepest promptings and respond dishonestly and indirectly to experience as they are expected or told to do'[30]. In the example of *A Room with a View,* George belongs to the first category, while Lucy at first has a 'muddled response' to life, as she says and does what she is expected to do in a conversation. But in the end, she learns how to emancipate herself from those social manners, by finally expressing her feelings toward George and stopping lying to everyone and herself. As a consequence, characters from the adaptations under study should express themselves despite social manners. Throughout the corpus, this argument is illustrated in other scenes and extracts in which emotions are at stakes, such as the scenes of proposals or the scenes of revelations. For instance, in *Pride and Prejudice*, in the scene of the first proposal between Darcy and Elizabeth, the two protagonists speak plainly and emotionally to each other[31]. After having conversed with each other by following the established rules of politeness, the two protagonists finally expose their true feelings to each other: Darcy by revealing he loves her, Elizabeth by arguing against his behaviour and arrogance. In this scene, they do not restrain their words, cut each other off, and do not follow any of the established codes, for instance not raising their voices or not accusing the other person of something. They even go by noticing how they do not rely on social manners, as Darcy asks at the beginning why he is responded 'with so little endeavour civility' and at the end as Elizabeth exclaims 'and those are the words of a gentleman'. It is interesting to notice that the background of the conversation illustrates the passion and emotion at stake because they are conversing outdoors and not closed indoors as were the previous conversations. And yet, for the first time they are free from social conventions and this is exactly this conversation that is going to make them understand each other better. All in all, those examples emphasise how emotion can disrupt and emerge from conversations, wiping away rules imposed on them. Emotional conversations as we may call them provide a paradoxical meaning: are they emotional because of not following social manners, or do social manners lead to emotional connections by contrasting? I will end this part by asserting

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[29] Jeffrey, Heath, 'Kissing and Telling: Turning Round in *A Room with a View*', Twentieth-Century Literature, 40:4, 1994, 393-433, JSTOR, https://doi,org/10,2307/441598 (last accessed 25 March 2022), 7.
[30] *Ibid.* 5.
[31] J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 1:05:45-1:09:48.

that the conversations of the corpus correspond to various categories regarding the level of interest, emotion and social manners involved. But what makes them even more complex is that conversations of the corpus are a product of adaptation.

3. The conversation, a narrative element that must be adapted

A. At this point in the analysis, I intend to focus on the 'adaptation' aspect of the 'art of conversation' and to work on that notion while bearing in mind the different points highlighted above. Indeed, the corpus under study must be considered through the prism of adaptation studies, and so does the 'art of conversation'. This third and last part will focus on the notion of adaptation and how it is an important narrative element in the three movies of the corpus.

1) First, the 'art of conversation' is important as no character from the corpus can escape from it. As I evoked above with the analysis of Darcy's and Elinor's behaviours, the protagonists tend to position themselves regarding social etiquette in conversation. I will go further by arguing that this view on social manners appears as an element to distinguish between characters who approve of and respect social manners and those who do not. Indeed, several reactions when facing social manners can be drawn. First, some characters respect and approve of them: it is the case of the mother of Lucy in *A Room with a View* or Lady Middleton in *Pride and Prejudice*. Then, there are the characters complying with it, while not showing any sight of approval or rejection, such as Jane in *Pride and Prejudice*, Elinor in *Sense and Sensibility,* or Lucy at the beginning of *A Room with a View*. And finally, there are the characters opposed to it, or at least not making any effort to comply with it because it is not in their nature. In this category, one can count the Emersons of course, from *A Room with a View*, Elizabeth, and to a lesser extent her sister Lydia, from *Pride and Prejudice*, and Marianne from *Sense and Sensibility*. It is interesting to note that, in the three adaptations under study, the same 'types' of characters can be found. Some protagonists have similar reactions and beliefs to others from a distinct adaptation. Hence, a clear dichotomy is shaped between the characters of the three adaptations under study and links can be made between them. For instance, Charlotte in *A Room with a View* approves and applies the etiquette, just like Mr Collins does in *Pride and Prejudice*. In a sense, Charlotte is embodying the rigorousness of social manners and is this 'chaperoning' figure who tries to educate young women about the necessity to respect those

rules. In parallel, Mr Collins seems to be a caricature of the weight of social conveniences. As Bharat Tandon underlines in his essay *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation*, Mr Collins conveys throughout the plot the ideas of social manners while being ridiculous. He explains that Mr Collins is on the verge of becoming a caricature, as his sentences are suiting the social manners but are empty of any sense of interest. The author even claims that 'a reader perceives simultaneously a polite society for which manners held serious importance, and the lunacy which is the *reductio ad absurdum* of those manners, as Collins confounds 'usual practice' with universal rules'[32]. Hence, Mr Collins is defined solely by his attitude towards the rules and how he expresses himself, symbolising the absurdity of social manners when applied without reflection. In a sense, this argument developed by Bharat Tandon can even be applied to the 'art of conversation' as understood in this part of my research project, meaning that Mr Collins does not possess this art because he does not understand beyond the social manners and the codes of it.

2) While characters tend to react to the social conventions imposed on them by society, one can notice that some characters are defined and characterised solely by this reaction, either by embodying social manners or by rejecting them. Thus, I would argue that the various reactions of the characters facing social manners in conversation play a part in their characterisation. This characterisation can rely, as I evoked above, on the way the protagonists respond to the social manners in conversation. But characterisation can correspond to another aspect. Indeed, in my opinion, conversations enable the characters to express who they are, or appear to be. One character may appear impulsive, another one very reserved, or being austere. According to the authors of the gathered essays in *Jane Austen on Screen,* dialogues enable the characters to reveal their reactions, motivations and emotions. Hilary Schor ponders in her essay 'Speaking Jane Austen in fiction and film' how the voices of the various characters have been adapted to films[33]. She develops the well-known argument that Austen was able to convey a large prism of characters and their characterisation thanks to dialogues because she knew how to make her characters speak differently. In a sense, this illustrates the first motivation of conversation in a story, namely revealing the attributes of a protagonist without having to rely on a narrative voice-over or sub-textual information. And yet, I will advance that the role played by conversations goes beyond this prime characterisation, but truly serves to identify the character's motivation

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[32] B. Tandon, *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation, op. cit,*102-103.
[33] Hilary, Schor, 'Speaking Jane Austen in fiction and film', *in* Gina MacDonald, and Andrew F. Macdonald, eds., *Jane Austen on Screen*, Cambridge, CUP, 2003, 150-152.

regarding the 'art of conversation' and its rules. Hence, in *Sense and Sensibility*, the behaviour of Marianne and Elinor illustrates this assertion. I based my analysis on an article entitled 'Conversation, characterisation and corpus linguistics: Dialogue in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*' in which E.H. Hubbard develops a fascinating theory regarding Marianne's and Elinor's conversation and presents a linguistic study to link dialogue to characterisation. The author draws our attention to how Elinor speaks with moderation, with cognition verbs and tends to put others before herself; on the contrary, Marianne uses verbs of perception, personal pronouns such as 'I' and 'me' and tends to ask more questions, showing an eagerness in everything[34]. I propose to apply his theory on the adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*, with an analysis of an extract. This extract is situated in the second part of the film when the Dashwood sisters stay at Mrs Jenning's house in London[35]. This is the first time Elinor is put in the same room as Lucy and Edward, and Marianne arrives a bit later on. Marianne's and Elinor's reactions are very contrasted, due to their characters but also due to the fact Marianne knows less than Elinor. And yet, for the audience, Marianne appears more extroverted than ever because of that. There is one character in this extract that does not abide by social manners and does not try to, and it is Marianne. Indeed, she stands as the opposite of Elinor concerning the protocol to follow when one is receiving guests. When she enters the room, she instantly welcomes Edward, not even addressing her politeness to Lucy. She appears fresh, innocent and warm to Edward, asking him direct questions and remarks. For instance, she is not afraid of reproaching him for his late visit, or commenting on Elinor and forcing him to acknowledge her well-looking. Hence, Marianne appears to change the positions of the characters in the room, and the frame, when she comes in. Indeed, when the three first characters are together, each of them is filmed in a medium close-up, suggesting that they are all trapped in their feelings. But when Marianne arrives, she broadens the frame, crossing the room to go near Edward. By doing so, she forces Elinor and Lucy to share the frame again, while she is close to Edward, making him more comfortable. In a way, Marianne seems to move faster across the room than the others, showing her absence of reserve and manners. On the contrary, Elinor appears strict and reserved and follows what she must do and say without showing her feelings. All in all, this extract visually symbolises the opposition of the sisters when dealing with good manners and social conventions in a

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[34] E. H., Hubbard, 'Conversation, Characterisation and Corpus Linguistics: Dialogue in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*', Literator, 23:2, 2 août 2002, 67‑86, literator.org.za. https://doi,org/10,4102/lit,v23i2,331 (last accessed 25 March 2022).

[35] Ang, Lee, *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), DVD Sony Pictures, 2004, 1:30:06-1:34:20.

conversation. The film adaptation enhances this contrast and gives the audience a good example of how adapting a conversation can serve the characterisation of the protagonists.

B. As a consequence, one can note that the film techniques used to adapt the original novels play an important part in the representation of the 'art of conversation'. And yet, I now intend to focus on the difficulties raised by adapting a conversation from a written one to a speaking one. Indeed, at this point in the analysis, it should be noted that the 'art of conversation' I am dealing with is from adaptation works and so is not quite the same as the original written works from the novels of Jane Austen and E.M. Forster.

1) On the one hand, what is most striking in the process of adaptation in the films of the corpus is the notion of voice. When dealing with the written conversation, the question of the voice of the characters is not so much asked, the reader focuses more on how the character speaks and not how he sounds. On the contrary, in a dialogue of a film, the voices of actors are as much important as what they are saying. Even on occasions voice takes precedent over the words said. The notion of voice in cinema has been the subject of many academic works, such as Michel Chion in *La Voix au Cinéma.* In his essay, voice is described as being the central element of a film, a voice of an actor could even be decisive over his or her successful future. Hence, the 'art of conversation' could be perceived also as a character with a nice voice or a characteristic tone. For instance, the actor Alan Rickman playing the Colonel in *Sense and Sensibility* had a particular voice, that enabled him to embody the Colonel, as Ariane Hudelet suggests

> Alan Rickman uses a different technique to express Colonel Brandon's emotion. [...] His delivery is slow and calm, and his exceptionally deep and low-pitched voice fills the soundtrack completely. This voice contributes to endow the character with a heroic and poetic dimension which does not exist in the novel[36].

Rickman's voice becomes not only the central element of the soundtrack but gave to his character a new dimension, proving that the adaptation of conversations from novel to film sheds new light on it. To be more precise on the changes between novels and films for conversations, I intend to use the academic works written not only about the notion of voice but also about the notion of dialogues in films. A very stimulating work is the gathered essays *Film Dialogue* published by Jeff Jaeckle, which is one of the rare academic works focusing solely on dialogues and their problematics. While the different chapters focus on various

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[36]Ariane, Hudelet, 'Beyond Words, Beyond Images: Jane Austen and the Art of Mise en Scène', *in* David, Monaghan, et al. *The Cinematic Jane Austen: Essays on the Filmic Sensibility of the Novels,* Jefferson, McFarland, 2014, 53.

aspects of the film dialogue, one of them is making the difference between dialogues and conversation, and that 'dialogue in Hollywood movies abides by conventions that do not pertain to regular conversation'[37]. The author then lists conventions of the film dialogue as a narrative element that must be respected[38]: sentences with narrative purpose, efficient communication, flawless speaking… A dialogue going against those conventions would be otherwise perceived as an exception that must be commented on. Hence, the 'art of conversation' must also be understood as being composed of dialogues in films. In a sense, the 'art of conversation' could be linked to the notion of voice as follows: it designates how a character respects the social manners, from the etiquette of conversation to the meta-filming aspect of respecting the established conventions in film dialogues. Thus, conversations in film adaptations seem to be confronted with more diverse constraints than written conversations.

2) On the other hand, there is no doubt that changes related to the contents of the conversations had to be made between the different media. What is interesting are the choices made by the directors or the scenarists concerning those changes. Indeed, if all of the conversations had been kept as the original ones, the length of the movies would have been quite superior. For instance, the series *Pride and Prejudice* from 1991 developed by the BBC kept almost all of the original dialogues and tended to be as faithful as possible; the show run of the series is almost 7 hours. Hence, the directors had to take this fact into account to adapt the conversations on screen. This argument is directly linked to questions raised by the theories of adaptation, such as the notion of faithfulness, what a good adaptation is, what must be taken and what must be abandoned. Numerous academic works on faithfulness had been written, from the author Brian McFarlane to Linda Hutcheon and her *Theory of Adaptation*. While the comparison between the original works and the adapted ones based on criteria of fidelity and differences may be a good starting point, the latest academic works are focused on the adaptation first and foremost as a work of adaptation, meaning a process that must be considered and studied on its own. Thus, a film adaptation should not be limited to the changes made regarding the original work, but those changes should be analysed and questioned. Perry Levine pondered in her article 'Two Rooms with a View: An Inquiry into Film Adaptation' that the changes made in the adaptation of Ivory serve the plot of the

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[37]Todd, Berliner, 'Killing the Writer: Movie Dialogue Conventions and John Cassavetes', *in* Jeff, Jaeckle, *Film Dialogue*, New York, Columbia UP, 2013, 121.
[38] *Ibid*. 122-124.

original novel[39]. For instance, in *A Room with a View*, the changes in the conversation between Lucy and Cecil at the Sacred Lake are made for the 'energic movement of the plot'[40]. This argument underlines that the change of medium requires new solutions in order to 'match' the new medium. In this example of *A Room with the View*, the conversation between Lucy and Cecil is shortened, the kiss being introduced faster in the film than in the novel. And yet, when compared to the other adaptations of the corpus, Ivory's film is the one with as many dialogues as the original novel. In comparison, Emma Thompson made several changes to the dialogues in Jane Austen's novel. Indeed, most of the dialogues were shortened, some lines said by different characters, or even invented ones. And last but not least, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Joe Wright intended a few changes to the different conversations. But I would argue that, beyond the changes in the dialogues, the main difference between the two media is the 'mise-en-scène' of the conversations. Indeed, the conversations on screen are not in the same setting, or with the same intonations as it is described in the novel. For instance, during the first ball scene, Elizabeth overhears Darcy and Bingley speaking. In the novel, this scene is described as follows[41] :

Elizabeth Bennet had been obliged, by the scarcity of gentlemen, to sit down for two dances; and during part of that time, Mr. Darcy had been standing near enough for her to overhear a conversation between him and Mr. Bingley, who came from the dance for a few minutes, to press his friend to join it.

"Come, Darcy," said he, "I must have you dance. I hate to see you standing about by yourself in this stupid manner. You had much better dance."

"I certainly shall not. You know how I detest it, unless I am particularly acquainted with my partner. At such an assembly as this, it would be insupportable. Your sisters are engaged, and there is not another woman in the room whom it would not be a punishment to me to stand up with."

"I would not be so fastidious as you are," cried Bingley, "for a kingdom! Upon my honour, I never met with so many pleasant girls in my life as I have this evening; and there are several of them you see uncommonly pretty."

"*You* are dancing with the only handsome girl in the room," said Mr. Darcy, looking at the eldest Miss Bennet.

"Oh! she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld! But there is one of her sisters sitting down just behind you, who is very pretty, and I dare say very agreeable. Do let me ask my partner to introduce you."

"Which do you mean?" and turning round, he looked for a moment at Elizabeth, till catching her eye, he withdrew his own and coldly said, "She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt *me*; and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men. You had better return to your partner and enjoy her smiles, for you are wasting your time with me."

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[39] June, Perry Levine, 'Two Rooms with a View: An inquiry into Film Adaptation', University of Manitoba, vol, Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal, 22:3, Summer 1989, 67-84, https://www.jstor,org/stable/24780527 (last accessed 02 April 2022).
[40] *Ibid*.
[41] J. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 11-12.

Mr. Bingley followed his advice. Mr. Darcy walked off; and Elizabeth remained with no very cordial feelings towards him. She told the story, however, with great spirit among her friends; for she had a lively, playful disposition, which delighted in anything ridiculous.

One can note that Jane Austen chooses to make Darcy appear very impolite because, in the novel, Darcy perfectly sees Elizabeth listening to him while he is insulting her. He does not make any excuse nor invite her to dance as he should. If one goes back to the notion of politeness and social manners, it significantly appears that Darcy does not respect any of the rules imposed here, while at the same time insulting Elizabeth even more. On the contrary in the adaptation by Joe Wright, Elizabeth is put in the position of an eavesdropper, without Darcy noticing that she is listening to him. It is only at the end of the ball scene that Elizabeth wistfully hints that she heard him.
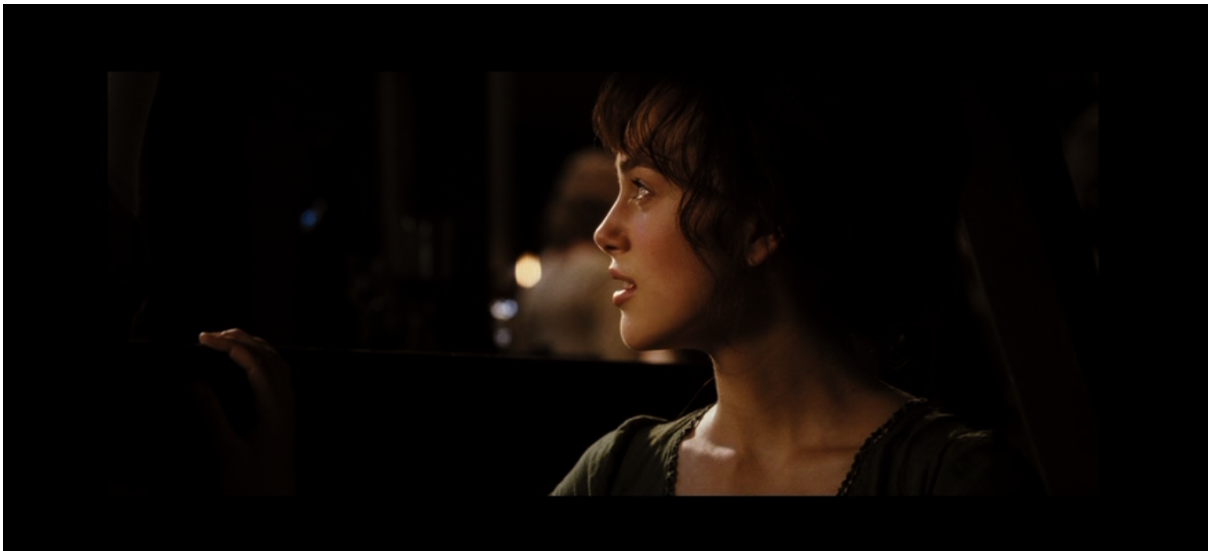

Fig. 1, Elizabeth listened to Darcy speaking about her

J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 00:10:01.

To adapt this conversation, the director Joe Wright decided on an original composition of the frame, in which Elizabeth and her friend Charlotte seem to be the audience of the conversation between Darcy and Bingley while being invisible to them.

Fig. 2, Elizabeth and Charlotte sitting while Darcy and Bingley are speaking

J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 00:09:53.

While the camera pans to the right, following the conversation of Darcy and Bingley, the camera stops when the two protagonists stop, without knowing they are interrupting another conversation, the one between Charlotte and Elizabeth. This frame-within-the-frame setting symbolises how Elizabeth tends to judge Darcy by this first conversation, and how this will lead her to disdain him. It is interesting to note that, contrary to the novel where Elizabeth is alone to hear Darcy's words, in the film she was also conversing with Charlotte and they both comment on those words directly after. Thus, there are two levels of conversation in this extract, with one in the foreground and one in the background. As a consequence, it is the film techniques that enhance this aspect of the conversation, while making some changes.

To conclude this part, I focused on 'the art of conversation' as first and foremost the manners and social conventions that had to be followed during the 19th and 20th centuries. More than in our contemporary era, the first salutations and conversations between two persons were essential, as they could determine future relationships. But in a way, each conversation holds the importance of respecting the codes established for each occasion, and each sex. Indeed, this art, or talent, was singularly different between men and women because the expectations were not the same. Furthermore, I established a distinction between various types of conversations, from public to private ones and from conventional to emotional exchanges. While it is a vast and interesting subject, what lies at the core of this research project is the fact that this 'art of conversation' is adapted into films in this corpus, while those

conversations were written in the original novels. Thus, I reflected upon the difficulties and choices made by the directors to respond to this notion of adaptation. As a first draft of what the 'art of conversation' was intended to be in the corpus, I propose in the second part of my research project to deal with the conversation as a linguistic and social tool for the characters of the corpus.

Part II: How to Perfect the Art of Conversation. From the art of speaking well to manipulation and rumours.

The conversation could play an important part in the narrative development of the characters as evoked above. The corpus under study offers various situations where the characters either know how to master conversation, learn how to do it, or are victims of it. Indeed, after underlying the importance of conversation in different contexts, I suggest focusing in this part on how the characters react to it and how they evolve based on their relation to the art of conversation.

1. Mastering conversation either by following the social codes pre-established or by emancipation from themselves.

A. After dealing with the relation characters tend to have with the 'art of conversation' as a set of established social manners, one must consider how a character can 'master' this art. In this case, 'mastering conversation' will have several meanings. By the term 'mastering' I mean how a character can lead a conversation or be able to shine thanks to it. In a sense, mastering a conversation could be understood as being considered a good speaker, or as knowing how to respond in every situation. The notion of wistfulness and witticism can directly play a part in it. Through a panel of the different characters present in the three adaptations, I intend to conduct a comparative study of the eloquent and good-speaking characters, as opposed to those who do not possess the art of conversation. The characters can be classified into two categories: on the one hand the characters following the social rules, and so the ones considered good speakers with the characters who are at ease in conversation, either by shining or by responding with wit. On the other hand, the characters who do not respect the

codes and who are considered rude or unsocial, or the ones who do not respond with wit and intelligence and are perceived as awkward. For instance, it was established in the first part of this essay that both Elinor from *Sense and Sensibility* and Elizabeth from *Pride and Prejudice* are considered good speakers. One can argue that Elinor knows how to converse and what to say, and so she is mastering the art of conversation. And yet, she does not always have the upper hand when dealing with other people in public events. In parallel, Elizabeth has a lot of wits and is considered agreeable to speak with. During her first dialogue with Mr Darcy, she not only appears smart and rational, but she also manages to make Mr Darcy understand that she heard him speaking poorly of her[42]

> ELIZABETH (IMPATIENTLY)
> And so ended their affection. I wonder
> who first discovered the power of poetry
> in driving away love?
>
> DARCY
> I thought that poetry was the food of
> love.
>
> ELIZABETH
> Of a fine, stout love it may. Everything
> nourishes what is strong already. But if
> it is only a thin, slight sort of
> inclination, I'm convinced that one good
> sonnet will starve it away entirely.
> Darcy looks at Elizabeth with surprise. A glimmering of
> interest.
>
> DARCY
> So what do you recommend, to encourage
> affection?
>
> ELIZABETH
> Oh dancing, of course. Even if ones
> partner is barely tolerable.
> She gives him a dazzling smile. Darcy looks startled. He
> has no idea she heard him. He blushes.

While at first, the camera pans around the characters, all of them speaking in a circle, the camera is fixed upon Darcy's and Elizabeth's faces in a shot/reverse-shot when Darcy asks her this question. After her answer, there is a short moment of silence, in which Elizabeth smiles wistfully at Mr Darcy while the music starts again. Elizabeth then turns around and leaves the group with no other words, the camera following her and showing in the foreground a speechless Mr Darcy. With this sentence, she confirms to him that, not only did

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[42]original script of *Pride and Prejudice,* https://imsdb.com/scripts/Pride-and-Prejudice.html, (last accessed 02 April 2022), 00:12:18-00:14:50.

she hear him earlier in the scene, but that she does not stay silent when facing an affront. However, her pride sometimes blinds her and she can express judgement where social manners prevent it. Thus, this classification goes beyond the previously established one in part I related to the characters and their relations to social manners. Indeed, here the 'art of conversation' is broadened to take into account characters who know how to direct the conversation and how to take a certain pleasure by conversing with others. In a sense, the art of conversation does not solely rely on social manners and how to accept and embrace them. To go further with this idea, I intend to deal with the idea of the ethos, developed by Kerbrat-Orecchioni in her essay *Le Discours en interaction* so as to propose a linguistic portrayal of the characters and their use of conversation. Indeed, the author defines the ethos as 'les qualités morales que l'orateur 'affiche' dans son discours, sur un mode généralement implicite'[43]. Simplistically, the notion of ethos can be applied to the characters of the corpus if one considers that it is related to their way of speaking and expressing their inner selves in a conversation. In a sense, some characters do not have the same ethos but possess the same ability to use it in conversations: for Elizabeth, it is her wits and for Elinor or Jane, it is their discretion. For instance, in the small dialogue between Elizabeth and Darcy, one can note that her qualities may be visible: her quick answers and her assertiveness through the short answers and choice of verbs. Indeed, she does not hesitate in her words, or is she cautious about speaking with good manners in what she declares, but defends her opinion as being the one correct, compared to what conduct books taught young ladies. In opposition to these characters who know how to converse in various ways, one can find the ones considered rude, impolite or who cannot converse with ease and wits. Those characters tend not to speak out during public events, or face humiliation when they try to do so. Moreover, as evoked in part I, some characters do not respect social manners on purpose, or just because they do not understand it, such as the Emersons. But for some characters, it is because their conversations are not interesting to the other characters, meaning that they may be considered boring. For instance, Mrs Jennings and her daughter annoy Elinor, Marianne and others because their conversations evolve around trivial subjects in *Sense and Sensibility*. The same applies to Mrs Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* who is considered superficial by Mr Darcy and Miss Bingley. And in *A Room with A View*, on several occasions, Cecil is also not being heard, or rather ignored, by Mrs Honeymoon and his son, who find him annoying.

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[43] C., Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *Le discours en interaction, op. cit,* 302.

B. Hence, it is interesting to note that following the codes does not necessarily make you a good speaker. Indeed, the adaptations of the corpus depict distinct characters who confront the same difficulty of being considered boring and not good at speaking, despite respecting the rules. This type of character does not correspond to any categories explained in part 2.1. a and offers an interesting counter-example: social manners are not sufficient to become a good speaker. As evoked in part I, Mr Collins is not considered a good speaker while relying heavily on social manners. As a consequence, the adaptations of the corpus shed light on other 'techniques' to master the art of conversation. In the article 'Closure and Disclosure: The Significance of Conversation in Jane Austen's 'The Watsons'', the author exposes that young ladies can improve their social skills through the practice of conversation[44]. If one follows this advice, it means that if a character is not the best at conversation, he or she can become so, if one practises. It is interesting to note that it is precisely what Elizabeth advises Mr Darcy to do in *Pride and Prejudice* when Darcy informs her that he is not at ease speaking with people he does not know[45]. I would go further by arguing that this advice can be applied to every situation giving experience to a character. For instance, Marianne learns at her expense how to become more like her sister because she almost dies of grief. Indeed, at the end of *Sense and Sensibility*, Marianne has changed and she now speaks with measures and good manners to her new pretendant, the Colonel. During the scene in which the Colonel reads poetry to her, Marianne listens with attention. Contrary to her passionate conversations with Willoughby about poetry, here Marianne is calmer and more self-controlled. One can note that she is still different from her sister when the Colonel has to leave and she exclaims that he must come again the next day, showing that she did not lose her spontaneity. Another example of a technique is given by Babb in her article 'Dialogue with Feelings: a Note on *Pride and Prejudice*' that I have already quoted. The author emphasises Elizabeth's manners and how she learns not to speak too hastily[46]. This article gives a perfect example of the various ways of mastering conversation. Even if Elizabeth is full of wits and intelligent reply, she is so blinded by her pride and her judgement that she thinks she is unmistakable. At the end of the novel and the film, she speaks judiciously, not because she is following social manners but because she has evolved in her personality and way of speaking. In a sense, social manners were not perceived as a necessity for her but learning how to master conversation was. A different example can be found in the character of Lucy in *A Room with*

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[44] Kathleen, James-Cavan,'Closure and Disclosure: The Significance of Conversation in Jane Austen's 'The Watsons'', in Studies in the Novel, 29:4, 1997, 437-52.

[45]J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 1:02:03

[46]Howard S, Babb, 'Dialogue with Feeling: A Note on *Pride and Prejudice*', *op. cit.*

a View. Lucy is told throughout the movie how to behave well, as a young lady should, from Charlotte to her mother and on certain occasions from Cecil. For instance, she is regularly silenced by Charlotte in Florence, from the beginning of the movie, when the Emersons offer to exchange rooms. With Cecil, she is encouraged to read and educate herself on different subjects that Cecil chose. Hence, only the Emersons seem to perceive Lucy as a woman able to converse with them. Moreover, they are the only ones encouraging her to think and speak for herself, especially when she has to marry Cecil. In this case, mastering the art of conversation is for Lucy a means of affirming herself and her wishes, despite what society imposes on her, through speaking her mind out and stopping lying to people around her and herself. This starts when she breaks her engagement with Cecil and is achieved when she is with George Emerson in Florence on their honeymoon.

C. Then, it appears that mastering the art of conversation seems to be essential for the characters to shine in social events, to be thought highly of by society or to be able to be satisfied. To go further, what can be drawn from this is that knowing how to use rules of conversation is a necessity, but can also be a tool to dominate a situation. Indeed, it is quite clear that some characters of the corpus convey the impression that, because they know how to express themselves and be on their best behaviour in a conversation, they have the upper hand in any situation. This linguistic view is developed by Burke in his essay entitled *The Art of Conversation*, in which he asserts that conversation can be used to control others, and so to control any situation. Burke explains that language is a 'means to control others or to resist such control'[47]. As a consequence, mastering conversation could be seen as a means to master the entire situation in which the conversation is happening. To exemplify this assertion, I propose to analyse a scene from *A Room with a View*, in which Charlotte takes advantage of Lucy over the conversation, and so has the upper hand in the situation. The extract is situated after the kiss between Lucy and George[48]. Lucy and Charlotte returned to the pension and, for Charlotte, they should do something about this kiss. She first wants to silence George, before deciding that they will leave the next day. In this scene, Charlotte embodies the values of Edwardian society, meaning that it is improper for a young woman to kiss men, and to be seen kissing them. Hence, Charlotte speaks a lot, leading the conversation to what she wants. On the contrary, Lucy is quite silent during the exchange, showing her lack of experience and her naiveté. At first, the subject of the conversation is 'what is to be done' regarding the kiss that has occurred. While Lucy doesn't seem to notice the problem, it is an emergency that

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[47] P. Burke, *The Art of Conversation, op. cit,* 26.
[48] James, Ivory, *A Room with a View*, *op. cit,* 00:37:14-00:40:00.

should be dealt with for Charlotte. Indeed, for Charlotte, George will talk about it, ruining her reputation. For Lucy, there is nothing to worry about, as she knows him and he will not talk. From the beginning of the conversation, there is an opposition between the two women. It is interesting to note that Lucy's argument is based on her acquaintance with George, while Charlotte's is based on her experience and knowledge of men in general. Thus, while Lucy is filmed in a close-up, having her hair brushed, Charlotte appears in a low-angle shot, dominating the situation, and the conversation, as if she had more knowledge. To oppose her arguments, Lucy symbolically rises, and gets away, turning her back on her. This change of position shows that the two women are not going to find an agreement easily. While Charlotte seems to leave Lucy a choice about the situation, she positions herself as the 'chaperon', and so the one in charge. From her position 'above' Lucy at the beginning of the extract to her strict outfit, Charlotte appears like a rigid woman, caring about social manners and reputation. Hence, from her speech to her attitude, Charlotte tries to be the figure of authority for Lucy. When Charlotte realises that her authority is not working on Lucy, she changes her methods. Indeed, one can wonder what is more important for Charlotte: the silence of George or the silence of Lucy? If Lucy talks about this kiss, Charlotte would be blamed as she was supposed to take care of her. Hence, in the second part of the extract, it is quite clear that Charlotte seems more worried about her reputation than Lucy's. While discussing with Lucy, Charlotte leaves the frame to go to the other room, symbolising a change in the conversation. Lucy doesn't realise that, at the same time, Charlotte is slowly manipulating her. Indeed, Charlotte does not blame Lucy for the kiss, but herself. She argues that Lucy's mother will never forgive her. It should be noted that, while blaming herself, Charlotte uses the mode of the hypothesis: 'she would never forgive me', 'you tell her everything, don't you?', and 'she will think so if you tell her'. Charlotte subtly gives to Lucy the idea of not telling anything about this kiss to anyone. To conclude, this extract represents an opposition between old and youth, between authority and emancipation, and between silence and talk. One can argue that Charlotte 'wins' the conversation, as she succeeds in making Lucy do what she wants. She uses the new aspect of rebellion and emancipation that Lucy just acquired to silence her and make her keep a secret. Lucy may realise in the end what Charlotte is doing, but it is too late and Lucy must follow her lead, starting to lie to her mother, and then to herself. All in all, this extract illustrates the argument of Burke regarding language and how it can be used to manipulate and take advantage of someone. Mastering conversation shifts from following social etiquette to manipulating others.

<u>2. Manipulation and appearances in conversation</u>

A. As a consequence, one can notice that the 'art of conversation' may not be only related to polite and socially ruled conversations. Indeed, after dealing with the various ways of mastering the art of conversation, one can ponder on the implications of it, meaning what could be the advantages of doing so and what could be the consequences of it. As evoked, mastering conversation could be used to dominate a situation or a person, thanks to different qualities. One can go further by arguing that good manners and social norms may be the tool for a character to master, and so control, a situation. By displaying polite etiquette, a character may appear as someone he is not or uses it to deceive and take advantage of someone else. At this point in the analysis, one aspect of the conversation, not yet evoked, should be introduced: the aspect of seduction in the 'art of conversation'. Indeed, seduction illustrates this dichotomy between social manners on the one hand, and deceitfulness or control on the other hand, as it requires that the gentleman knows how to do both. In the Georgian and Edwardian eras, seduction was strictly restrained by social manners and only affected the interactions between men and women and between certain social classes. In the corpus under study, seduction is one of the main parts of the conversations, as the three adaptations have in common the importance of romance, marriage proposals and romantic plots. It calls into question the notion of courtship and how it is done. Courtship traditionally induces the man to be a good speaker and follow established codes. In the gathered essays of *Jane Austen in Hollywood*, the authors focused on the importance of courtship in Jane Austen's adaptations. Cheryl L. Nixon ponders in her essay 'Balancing the Courtship Hero, Masculine Emotional Display in Film Adaptations of Austen's Novels' on the role of men in courtship, in that :

> courtship offers the hero a paradoxical challenge in that he must follow normalizing rules of public behaviour in order to create uniquely personal emotional connections. Courtship forces the hero, not only the heroine, to negotiate the demands of a long list of dichotomous behaviours: the private and public, personal and social, physical and mental, emotional and reasonable, sentimental and rational, expressive and repressive [49].

To elaborate on this idea, the analysis of the three different proposals in *Pride and Prejudice* gives good examples. The first proposal is by Mr Collins to Elizabeth: this scene is situated after the ball at Netherfield. While M. Collins wanted to marry Jane, Mrs Bennet convinced

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[49] Linda, Troost,et Sayre Greenfield, *Jane Austen in Hollywood*, *op. cit*, 25.

him to courtship Elizabeth instead, as Jane is almost engaged to Mr Bingley. Mr Collins accepts, as he is in search of a wife but does care about whom he is going to marry, as long as it is a properly educated young woman. While Elizabeth is unaware of Mr Collins' plan, she notices his insistence on dancing with her at the ball and escapes his conversation on several occasions. Hence, during breakfast the morning after, Mr Collins asks for a private audience with Elizabeth, showing his wish to courtship her. While this event appears as a blessing for Mrs Bennet, Elizabeth is horrified by this proposition and tries to escape the audience but in vain. It is interesting to note that, while Mr Collins does not explicitly express his wish for courtship, and even proposes to Elizabeth, it appears quite clearly to the entire family that it is the purpose of the audience. This conversation happens in a private sphere, as Mrs Bennet and the other daughters leave the room, followed by the father. The proposal begins with Mr Collins asking for a private audience. One can note the importance of looks in this scene: even if no one speaks except Mrs Bennet who makes everyone leave the room, the other characters are exchanging looks, from Jane to Elizabeth, to Mr Bennet, to Lydia. When everyone is out of the room, Mr Collins offers a single flower to Elizabeth, filmed in a close-up. While this gesture seems to be romantic, the face of Elizabeth in the background and the long close-up of the flower illustrates the irony of the scene, as she is not touched but horrified by this gesture. While Mr Collins starts his proposal, both characters are filmed in a medium shot, side by side. They are not looking at each other, Mr Collins looking straight in front of him so he will not forget his speech, Elizabeth sometimes glancing at him or trying to make him stop. At the end, when Mr Collins goes on one knee, the frame changes, with Elizabeth filmed in a low-angle shot and Mr Collins in a high-angle shot, with a classic shot/reverse shot. This choice of editing underlines how Mr Collins is following what he thinks is the proper way of proposing to a young woman, while Elizabeth tries to speak openly to him by refusing and explaining her reasons. But because he does not look at her, or listen to her, Mr Collins repeats himself and his reasons for proposing to her, reasons more practical than sentimental. Thus, one can argue that this proposal is solely focused on following social norms and codes, while no emotions are displayed. The second one is by Mr Darcy and turns out to be a scene of confrontation between the two main protagonists. Contrary to the first proposal, Elizabeth was not expecting this one from Mr Darcy. As a consequence, she is ruder and does not reject him as she should. Both characters seem to be offended by the reactions and words of the other. This proposal turns into a scene of revelation and confrontation between the two main characters. While Elizabeth argues about Mr Darcy and his past actions, one can say that Darcy does not respond to all of them,

preferring to cut the conversation and leave. When one compares both proposals, it appears clear that they are built parallel to each other, but are opposed in their motivations and feelings. For Mr Collins, seduction is subject to social manners and a proposal must follow a series of rules, in which emotions are not perceived. For Mr Darcy, the proposal also responds to rules but he lets his emotions flow over social manners. While both have prepared and repeated a speech, Mr Collins exposes all the reasons why Elizabeth and he should marry, while Mr Darcy exposes the reasons why he tried in vain not to propose to her. And yet, one can argue that both men, with their different motivations, think that Elizabeth will accept their hand without question, one because he exposes the logic of his proposal, the second because he has been so endorsed by his feelings that he did not think about hers. In both proposals, Elizabeth seems to be trapped, as a young unmarried woman, to accept one of these convenient matches. As a consequence, when Darcy proposes for the second time at the end of the adaptation, he makes it clear that she has the choice to say no, and he does not refer to any codes or manners, but just expresses his honest feelings. This last proposal then goes beyond the social appearances and conventions in seduction by displaying true emotions.

B. Hence, it appears that the use of social manners, with the aim of deceitfulness or at least dishonesty, may lead to people pretending on their feelings or words. In a sense, people can display false appearances in conversations. By appearances, I mean people who tend to use good manners so as to appear as a good person, society valorising those who know how to appear agreeable and polite in every conversation. And yet, characters with good speaking skills are not always trustworthy. Indeed, while good manners are not sufficient to enable a character to become a 'good speaker', a person who knows how to express oneself is not always a good person. Besides the fact that manipulation in conversation is frowned upon, some characters of the corpus tend to appear at first sight very eloquent and enjoyable, while they further reveal themselves to be liars or unreliable. It is interesting to note that the three adaptations under study illustrate the archetype of the character who deceives everyone thanks to his oratory talents[50]. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Wickam is at first perceived as the victim of Mr Darcy and, because he is handsome and at ease in public events, he makes everyone believe him[51]. In *Sense and Sensibility*, Willoughby appears in the first meetings as

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[50] Ariane, Hudelet, 'Deciphering Appearances in Jane Austen's novels and films', *in* David, Monaghan, et al. *The Cinematic Jane Austen: Essays on the Filmic Sensibility of the Novels, op. cit,* 60-78: on 'deceiver characters' who hide themselves behind their charming appearances.

[51] And contrary to the novel in which Elizabeth established the truth, at the end of adaptation Wickam is still perceived as a distinguished gentleman by Mrs Bennet in the end.

the perfect suitor, almost for the same reasons as with Wickam: he is young and handsome, he knows how to read poetry, and he speaks very well in public. And in *A Room with a View*, this characteristic could be attributed to Cecil, with slight differences. Indeed, contrary to the two other men, Cecil does not appear in the end as untrustworthy or manipulative, but Lucy finally opens her eyes and realises that she does not love him, despite him being the perfect embodiment of an Edwardian gentleman. Thus, one can note similarities between those three male characters: they both know how to converse with young ladies, they are eloquent, they are well educated and they know how to perform the art of conversation. And yet, they are manipulating the women around them because of those appearances. They do not always consider a woman as a person they are conversing with, but more as a way of appearing on their best days. For instance, Mr Wickam appreciates speaking with Elizabeth, but one can notice that it is mainly to give him a good reputation and to speak badly of Mr Darcy. When Elizabeth finally discovers the truth, Wickam tends to avoid her and appears less agreeable: during the dinner celebrating Lydia and Wickam's wedding, one can notice that Wickam is not at ease and does not speak as he used to at the beginning of the movie[52]. In *Sense and Sensibility*, Willoughby also seems to like Marianne, but when he discovers that he has to marry for money, he does not consider her at all anymore[53]. And for Cecil, as established in the previous analysis, he sees Lucy as a work of art and not as a woman with whom he can converse equally. And yet, it is through conversation that the true personality of those characters is revealed. At this point in the analysis, one should note that the differences between conversation and dialogue in films play a part in it. Dialogue may have a narrative purpose, which means that the protagonists, and the audience, may learn information through dialogue. This is one of the 'conventions' developed by Todd Berliner in his essay 'Killing the Writer: Movie Dialogue Conventions and John Cassavetes'[54] about the characteristics of the film dialogue, compared to a conversation. He argues that, while in dialogue the protagonists may have different points of view or arguments, their dialogues have a narrative purpose. In this case, when a character discusses one's behaviour, it enables the character to learn about his or her true behaviour, but also it enables the audience to learn narrative information. This argument would explain why after speaking with others, some characters may be considered differently. Indeed, thanks to the conversations with other protagonists, women of the corpus can see beyond those appearances. Elizabeth learns the true nature of Wickam thanks to Mr

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[52]J., Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 1:32:05
[53] While in the original novel, Willoughyb tries to see Marianne when she is ill, the film adaptation chooses to make Willousghby see the wedding of Marianne from far away, but he never speaks to her again.
[54] J. Jaeckles, *Film Dialogues, op. cit,* 119-122.

Darcy, Elinor and Marianne know about Willoughby's past thanks to the Colonel, and Lucy finally acknowledges her feelings thanks to George Emerson and his father. On the role of conversation in Jane Austen's novels, Ellen Belton, in her essay 'Reimagining Jane Austen: the 1940 and 1995 film versions of *Pride and Prejudice*', recalls that 'George Bluestone points out that Jane Austen's novel 'possesses the essential ingredients of a movie script,' namely, 'a lack of particularity, an absence of metaphorical language, an omniscient point of view, a dependency on dialogue to reveal character'[55]. This argument sheds light on the dialogue and its narrative dimension. Thus, the conversation has this ambivalent role of making someone appear what he or she is not, but also helping the other characters to truly learn about him or her.

C. As a consequence, it appears that the characters of the corpus need to be cautious about the art of conversation, as it can go from seduction and appearances to manipulation and entrapment. There is no doubt that there are various ways to manipulate someone through conversation. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, 'manipulation' can be defined as the act of 'controlling someone or something to your own advantage, often unfairly or dishonestly'[56]. Interestingly, this definition echoes the arguments made when dealing with honesty and hypocrisy in conversations thanks to good manners. One can note that good manners may be a means to manipulate someone. Power and control, as evoked in part II.1.C, are linked to language and how to use it. As evoked above, Burke exposes in his essay *The Art of Conversation* that 'speaking is a form of doing, that language is an active force in society, a means for individuals and groups to control others or to resist such control'[57]. I would go further by applying this argument to the characters of the corpus, meaning that the 'art of conversation' appears as a means for characters to control others, through different forms. As it is exposed in conduct books, during conversations one must 'possess at the same time the habit of communicating and of listening attentively'[58]. Interestingly, the last point shows that control through language may appear because the person must politely listen to the other one speaking. Hence, control may be found because the person has no choice but to listen and be controlled by someone. I would argue that one of these conversations might be one of confidence and secrets. Indeed, I propose to reflect on the importance of secrets in conversation, and how this act of confidence can also turn into an act of manipulation and

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[55] A. J., MacDonald, et al. *Jane Austen on Screen, op. cit,* 187.
[56] definition of manipulation: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/fr/dictionnaire/anglais/manipulation, (last accessed 10 February 2022).
[57] P,. Burke, *The Art of Conversation, op. cit,* 26.
[58] F., Hartley, *The Ladies' Book of Etiquette and Manual of Politeness, op. cit,* 11.

entrapment. A secret is supposed to be a piece of shared information between two people, based on trust and an emotional bond. However, secrets can be used to manipulate one's trust or to take advantage of someone, as someone may not choose to listen to a secret. To illustrate this argument, I propose the analysis of an extract from *Sense and Sensibility*, in which Lucy tells her secret to Elinor[59]. The extract is situated in the middle of the film and constitutes a turning point for Elinor's romantic life. Before the scene, The Dashwoods have been introduced to Miss Lucy Steeles, cousin of Mrs Jennings. Miss Lucy does not wait to express to Elinor her desire to be close to her, as a friend. The scene under analysis epitomises this desire as Miss Lucy confesses to Elinor one of her secrets: she has been secretly engaged for 5 years[60] with Mr Edward Ferrars, the love pretender of Elinor. Without asking for it, Elinor becomes the confidante of the woman engaged to the man she loves. Hence, this scene embodies the notion of secret confessions, privacy, and gossip. Most importantly, it should be noted that, by confessing to Elinor her secret love, Lucy forces the young lady into a relationship of secrecy and trust. Because Elinor's nature does not bear betrayal, she will keep this secret even if that means suffering in silence for her. And while Lucy seems perfectly unaware of Elinor's feelings, the audience cannot deny the manipulations underneath this innocent conversation. The scene starts with Miss Lucy approaching Elinor so that they can have a 'private discussion'. This choice of terms underlines what is at stake in this scene: while conversation and discussion may have common points, a discussion implies an argumentative dimension[61], as two people discussing a subject try to convince each other with their arguments. In a sense, Miss Lucy announces to Elinor that this exchange will not be spontaneous, but that she will ask her something. The editing and the frame establish a distinction between Miss Lucy and Elinor, whispering and close to each other, and Lady Middleton with her daughter, chatting and gossiping. Hence, when Miss Lucy decides to join Elinor, she forcefully interrupts her activity and engages her in a private conversation, without letting Elinor refuse it. There is no overview of the room until the scene ends, when Lady Middleton breaks the distinct groups, both physically and by the frame. The camera follows Miss Lucy and Elinor as they stand up and 'walk by the room', to escape the scrutiny and inappropriate questions of Lady Middleton. The close-up on their faces insists on the intimacy of the conversation, as they are close to each other. As they continue to walk around the room, their voices are less and less audible, until they start

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[59] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 1:02:36

[60] 4 years in the original novel.

[61] Astrid, Berrier, *La conversation, la discussion, le débat… et les autres,* Québec français, 118, été 2000, 39–41, 4.

whispering to each other. This change of tone sheds light on the importance of what Lucy is trying to tell, or rather make Elinor guess, her confidence. Indeed, Miss Lucy encourages Elinor to ask her private questions about her relations with the Ferrars so that she can slowly reveal her secret: she is engaged to Edward Ferrars. Elinor respects Miss Lucy's privacy and wants her to be at ease. However, when Miss Lucy admits her engagements with Edward, Elinor is 'trapped'. Indeed, she cannot burst out, or even end the conversation as it would be rude. And because there is no other witness to understand her, she must remain silent about her feelings. This insistence is amplified by Miss Lucy, who fixes Elinor intensively, waiting for her reaction. For the audience, Miss Lucy's attitude is ambiguous: she decides to confess to Elinor because she seems to trust her and she suffers from her situation. But she appears manipulative as if she wanted to send her a message and to make Elinor suffer. For example, she confesses to Elinor that Edwards has his way to make a woman love him. This assumption, which can appear quite innocent, is reinforced by the actress's performance, who glances at Elinor with an insistent look, putting her handkerchief with the initials of Edward Ferrars at the right time... Moreover, the film adaptation takes the liberty of adding to the original dialogue the question 'Are you quite well?'[62] that Miss Lucy asks Elinor. This question, which turns the tables as it is Miss Lucy who is supposed to suffer, invites the audience to reflect upon Elinor's emotion. But it also echoes the book in which the narrator asks the question:' What felt Elinor at that moment?' and then proceeds to answer it by describing Elinor's feelings. Thus, there is no doubt that this scene conveys the sense that Miss Lucy knows Elinor's feelings and she deceives her by making her the confidant of her secret engagement. In a few words, I would conclude this analysis by emphasising how the scene symbolises the role of conversation, from confidence to manipulation, as a powerful tool. The changes made by the adaptation, from a private conversation to private confidence in a public room, efficiently render why Elinor cannot speak about what she hears, and why Miss Lucy's confession is not as innocent as it seems. Being in a secret engagement could be dangerous at that time. Because Miss Lucy cannot tell Elinor directly that she is jealous of her and she must stay away from Edward, she decides to confess so that she has power over Elinor. As a consequence, manipulation and secrets are intertwined in this passage, and it gives a general idea of how some women also know how to use conversations for their own advantages.

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[62] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 1:02:36-1:06:30.

3. Rumours as a womanly power?

A. Sharing information with someone by conversing may then have a different meaning: is it either to inform this person, to manipulate, or to transmit that information? While secrets may be personal and may concern only the persons who speak, conversations to manipulate may evolve around a third person, without the person knowing it. As Jack Sidnell exposes in his essay *Conversation Analysis*, 'one of the things that people recurrently do in a conversation is tell stories [...]'[63]. Indeed, manipulation may appear in the form of lies, false information, gossip and rumours. When dealing with the art of conversation, rumours appear not only as a subject of discussion but as a means either to appear as keeping informed of what is happening in society or to harm someone. In a sense, rumours are linked to appearances, as they seem to be only on the surface of information and not related to proofs:

> Ce qui caractérise le contenu de la rumeur n'est pas son caractère vérifié ou non, mais *sa source non officielle.[...] Nous appellerons donc rumeur l'émergence et la circulation dans le corps social d'informations soit encore non confirmées par les sources officielles soit démenties par celle-ci*[64].

Nowadays, rumours still exist and can still give a bad opinion about someone. But in the 19th century, rumours could have the deepest consequences, especially for young women. Indeed, rumours can be defined as 'an unofficial interesting story or piece of news that might be true or invented, and quickly spreads from person to person' by the Cambridge Dictionary[65]. This definition brings on the one hand the untruthfulness of those rumours, as they can be invented, and on the other hand how they can be spread out through conversations very quickly. Rumours bear the intention to harm one's reputation by speaking poorly of his or her, or on the contrary to elevate someone in society by boasting about his or her actions. As a consequence, it was important to be careful about rumours, in the sense not to be subject to negative ones but at the same time to know how to respond to them. Interestingly, in conduct books, it is stipulated that a young woman or a gentleman should not speak poorly of someone else, nor should have 'any unpleasant speech'[66] to someone else about oneself. Rumours could be even more vicious as they could appear for pleasant and polite conversations while bearing judgement and scandal. But there is no doubt that women were

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[63] J. Sidnell, *Conversation Analysis: An Introduction, op. cit,* 174.
[64] Jean-Noël, Kapferer, *Rumeurs: le plus vieux média du monde*, Paris, Edition du Seuil, 1990, 24-25.
[65] Definition of rumour: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/fr/dictionnaire/anglais/rumour (last accessed 25 February 2022).
[66] F. Hartley, *The Ladies' Book of Etiquette and Manual of Politeness, op. cit,*18.

the most jeopardised by a rumour. Indeed, for a young woman, it was enough to just have a rumour about an affair between herself and another man for ending her social life and being unable to properly marry someone. In the three adaptations of the corpus, there are different examples of young women victims of bad rumours. For instance, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Lydia is almost pouring scorn on herself and on her sisters for running away with Wickam, unmarried, if the rumours would spread. It is thanks to the rushed marriage and the return of Lydia and Wickam that the Bennets become respectable again. Here one can note that the rumours could also endanger the marriages of the other Bennet sisters. In *Sense and Sensibility*, Marianne is the subject of rumours when she gets closer to Willoughby. While they were not engaged, they give the impression to the other Dashwood and even the parsonage that they were, leading to rumours of a future marriage[67]. But when it appears that Willoughby is going to marry another wealthier young lady, Marianne is publicly humiliated during the ball scene in London, while she shows her sadness. One could go further by arguing that Marianne was able to make a good marriage with the Colonel because he knows her and her family. Otherwise, the rumours may have been that Marianne was not chaste anymore. And in *A Room with a View*, it is Lucy who would have been the subject of rumours if the kiss between George and herself had been seen. As Charlotte advises her, no one must know about this kiss otherwise Lucy would be dishonoured. Thus, there are various levels and degrees of rumours in the corpus. But one may wonder if the context of those rumours is not appealing. Do they appear in casual and daily conversations or is there a shift that can be perceived? Two examples can be drawn from the corpus. One is situated in *Sense and Sensibility* with Mrs Jennings speaking with Elinor about the Colonel. Indeed, while the Colonel shows signs of affection for Marianne, Mrs Jennings 'informs' her, or rather repeats rumours she heard about his past and his previous lover. While the scene happens during a public event, with a garden party organised at Mrs Jennings' house, it is an intimate conversation between the two women[68]. One can argue that rumours bear this dichotomic aspect: while being about someone else and almost always being said and heard in public spaces, rumours convey a sense of intimacy (figure 1). This can be linked to the notion of the secrets as exposed above. Interestingly, it is the Colonel himself who does reveal to Elinor what is true and what is invented in those rumours later on in the movie. Another example of rumours can be found in *Pride and Prejudice*, in the scene where Colonel Fitzwilliam

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[67] Even Elinor and her mother thought they were engaged because of the episode of the hair: Willoughby asked Marianne to cut for a lock of her hair, which was at the time a custom between lovers.
[68] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 35.06.

informs Elizabeth that Darcy has prevented Mr Binglet from marrying Jane. This scene is situated just before the first proposal of Mr Darcy. While they are at the church listening to Mr Collins delivering a sermon, the Colonel Fitzwilliam informs Elizabeth that, recently, Mr Darcy has saved one of his friends, Mr Bingley, from 'an imprudent marriage', implying that the problem was with the family of the bride, considered 'unsuitable'[69]. Elizabeth understands immediately that it is about her own sister's reputation. While they are also at a public event, both characters whisper while being close to each other to speak, so that one will hear them (figure 2). Rumours do appear in casual conversation, but one can note a sense of proximity between the characters speaking about rumours, usually two people. Hence in this example, while Jane always had perfect behaviour, she is still the indirect victim of rumours because of the proper lack of manners from her family.

Fig. 3, Mrs Jennings and Elinor discussing the Colonel's past,
A. Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 00:35:28.

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[69] J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 1.05.00.

Fig. 4, Elizabeth asking questions about Darcy to the Colonel Fitzwilliam,
J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 01:04:34.

B. And yet, paradoxically, one can argue that rumours are more often used by women, and are more important to female power. Indeed, women are victims of rumours, but also spread and talk about rumours even more than men. The scenes of rumours or about behaviours are almost always led by women in the corpus under study or heard and repeated by them. In a sense, this can be linked to the notions evoked in part I of this essay about the various topics of conversations between men and women. It seems that, for women, rumours are more often a subject of conversations than for men. This difference cannot only be explained by the fact women were not supposed to talk about scholarly subjects between themselves, unlike men, and were not supposed to have control in conversations in society or with men. I would argue that it mostly lies in the fact that this was a way for women to control the situation. Indeed, as was evoked above when discussing language and control, in Burke and his essay *The Art Of Conversation*, rumours could be a means to control a situation or a conversation for women, while they usually do not have any grasp on the situation. Thus, rumours would be more used by women to have a form of power in conversations. In a way, rumours are used as a womanly power to compensate for the rules imposed on their sex by society. For instance, in *Sense and Sensibility*, Mrs Jennings embodies this matchmaker between the young people, very inquisitive about others' private lives, while she wants to hear every rumour. When Miss Lucy is telling Elinor about her secret engagement, Mrs Jennings wants to hear their private conversation, even though it is impolite to do so[70]. Contrary to the novel, Lady Middleton is

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[70] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 1 :06 :14.

present in this scene, which cannot be forgotten by the two ladies, but mostly by the audience. Lady Middleton uses conversation as a means to know anything about anyone, to distract herself but also to have power. The parallel editing conveys the sense that the two groups glance at each other occasionally, Elinor and Miss Lucy to make sure that they cannot be heard, and Lady Middleton to understand what they are talking about. The camera tilts up as Lady Middleton stands up, after declaring 'I cannot stand it any longer'. Parallel to this, Miss Lucy also stands up, being filmed in a low-angle shot, whereas Elinor is still, filmed in a high-angle shot. This change in the situation is amplified by the fact that the two ladies have been filmed at the same level for the entire discussion. As Lady Middleton joins the discussion, it is interesting to note that she breaks the physical limits imposed by the room, and by the frame. At the end of the scene, she is now filmed in a close-up, contrasting with the medium shot. She physically cannot stand not knowing what is happening and what information she is missing. By doing so, she interrupts the conversation and the information given to the audience. As a consequence, it appears that women were able to turn to their advantage the weight of rumours. To go further, female characters could also learn how to grow from this oppression of rumours. This argument is based on the essay *Filming Forster, The Challenges of Adapting E.M. Forster's Novels for the Screen* in which Earl G. Ingersoll studies the different film adaptations made by E.M. Forster's novels. He ponders on *A Room with a View* by Ivory and he analyses how Lucy's development and behaviour throughout the adaptation is an illustration of her emancipation from the constraints of Edwardian society[71]. Another example can be drawn from *Pride and Prejudice* and the evolution of Elizabeth. Indeed, in the article 'Dialogues with Feelings: a note on *Pride and Prejudice*', H.S. Babbs argues that conversation is a technical counterpoint for Elizabeth's prejudiced view of Darcy. For the author, conversations between Darcy and Elizabeth enable the audience to better understand Darcy and not through the prism of Elizabeth's prejudices against him and his pride. And it is because she converses with Darcy that she finally sees beyond her beliefs and truly understands him. I would assert that it also illustrates how Elizabeth grows out of the rumours against Darcy. Moreover, it is interesting to note that, at the end of the novel, Elizabeth does not judge people hastily anymore, contrary to what she did at the beginning. When she meets for the first time Mr Darcy's sister, she recalls the rumours she had heard about her, the same way she did about Darcy being proud, but she builds her own opinion:

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[71] Earl G, Ingersoll, *Filming Forster: The Challenges in Adapting E.M. Forster's Novels for the Screen.* Maryland, Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2012, 119-120 : Lucy as a woman 'struggling to balance freely expressed love with the repressiveness inherent in 'manners''.

> Miss Darcy and her brother appeared, and this formidable introduction took place. With astonishment did Elizabeth see that her new acquaintance was at least as much embarrassed as herself. Since her being at Lambton, she had heard that Miss Darcy was exceedingly proud; but the observation of a very few minutes convinced her that she was only exceedingly shy. She found it difficult to obtain even a word from her beyond a monosyllable[72].

One can note that the rumours are underlined by the verbal form 'she had heard', with no agent or names. Rumours seem to be personified as they are not told by anyone but heard by everyone as if they had their own lives. And yet, with a fine observation, Elizabeth can realise that those rumours were just based on a misunderstanding of Miss Darcy's behaviour. As a consequence, mastering conversation can also be linked to the ability to keep rumours in perspective, especially for women. In other words, characters should apprehend rumours for what they are and not trust them as being the truth. Knowing how to recognise a rumour, and being able to not listen to it to build a personal judgement on a person or a situation, is a sight of being experienced in conversations.

4. The question of adaptation and the notion of manipulation in conversation.

A. While reading a book the reader may have the hints that one of the characters seems 'manipulative' or takes advantage of a conversation in a book, it can be less obvious in a film adaptation, meaning this information may not be given, but the audience may have to understand it. Indeed, in a book, some hints may be given by the narrator itself, or by the information given on the reactions of the characters. In a film adaptation, those elements must be visible to the audience. Hence, one must note that the change of point of view in the adaptation raises a new issue. In the original novels, the narrator could indicate to the reader the good speakers, the manipulations at stake, and the rumours and consequences of it. The adaptation into films of these three novels implies the transposition of codes, from novelistic ones to film ones. This relies on the theories of adaptation regarding the differences between telling mode and showing modes, in the corpus under study. Hence, in the end, I aim at considering the specific aspects of the notion of adaptation and its links with the notion of manipulation in conversations. One can argue that the act of identifying manipulative conversations in film adaptations can be close to the action in real life itself. It is not easily noticed, and even demonstrated, that someone is taking advantage of a conversation. And yet, there is no doubt that the adaptation process relies on film techniques specific to this medium,

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[72] J. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit*, 286.

and most notably the importance of real actors embodying fictional characters. While in this essay actors have only been considered from a film aspect, with the analysis of their characters, I propose in this subpart to analyse conversations from a metafilm point-of-view, with the analysis of the actors' plays and the impact it has on the conversations. Because the actors must perform their characters through various contexts, one of them being conversations, They must have the ability to shine in front of the camera, and at the same time reveal small aspects such as the looks, the expressions, the intentions, through their acting. While those elements are narrated and described in the original books by the narrator, in film adaptations they rely on the capacity of acting and the director's instructions. In *The Cambridge Companion to E.M. Forster*, David Bradshaw claims that, in *A Room with a View* by Ivory, 'the actors' use of facial expression and gesture are carefully calculated to convey their sense of social status and their personal idiosyncrasies'[73]. He argues that George Emerson speaks wildly and is loose, in his attitude and his beliefs about society; on the contrary, Cecil's behaviour is highly choreographed, from his manners to his way of moving around. As for Charlotte, her way of speaking conveys her objections, her obsequiousness and her veiled aggressiveness. This last argument can be exemplified throughout the movie in different scenes. For instance, when Charlotte manipulates Lucy to not tell her mother about the kiss, at first she lectures Lucy about her behaviour and risks. In this scene, Charlotte's gestures and look are rigid, from her way of brushing Lucy's hair to her packing their luggage. And this rigidness follows her throughout the movie, from when she walks into the streets of Florence to her way of taking the train to visit the Honeychurch in England. In the novel, when the Emersons offer to exchange rooms with Lucy and her, she is described as follows:

> Miss Bartlett, though skilled in the delicacies of conversation, was powerless in the presence of brutality. It was impossible to snub any one so gross. Her face reddened with displeasure. She looked around as much as to say, 'Are you all like this?' And two little old ladies, who were sitting further up the table, with shawls hanging over the backs of the chairs, looked back, clearly indicating 'We are not; we are genteel'[74].

Hence, in the original novel, Charlotte is also described through her physical reactions, with her face becoming red and her eyes looking for other respectable English tourists, while she is shocked by the manners of the Emersons. Another example can be drawn in *Sense and Sensibility*, in which the use of facial expressions is also essential for the actors. The scene I

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[73] Bradshaw, David, *The Cambridge Companion to E. M. Forster,* Cambridge, CUP, 2007, 245.
[74] E.M. Forster, *A Room with a View,* (1908), New York, Language English Publication, 2021, 4-5.

chose to analyse is situated in the second half of the movie and echoes the argument made about Rickman's voice in part I. Marianne has been rejected by Willoughby and has fallen into depression, which obliges her and Elinor to go back home. To do so, Elinor invites the Colonel to ask him to escort them. The conversation I intend to analyse happens between the Colonel and Elinor. While the Colonel is moving around the room, explaining to Elinor who Willoughby is, the camera following him, Elinor stands still, her eyes following the Colonel. From time to time, the camera is focused on her face even if the Colonel is speaking off-frame. It gives the impression that Elinor is like the audience: she passively listens to the Colonel, not doing anything more. It is interesting to note the choice of the backgrounds for both of the characters: for the Colonel, it is the room and the oversized windows for Elinor. It seems like the stillness is counterbalanced by the agitation from outside, reflecting her state of mind. On the contrary, the agitation of the Colonel is rendered by his gestures and words, contrasted by a motionless background. In the novel, the Colonel develops the details of his story, elaborating on his impossible love story with Eliza's mother, how he took care of her, how Willoughby took advantage of her and how the Colonel defied him. While the film adaptation does not give as many details as the original conversation, the film material gives another dimension to this revelation. Even if the Colonel does not express himself verbally, there is no doubt that a physical interpretation is given to the scene. The actor Alan Rickman plays perfectly well the inner conflict of the Colonel. For example, while the Colonel goes away from Elinor and starts to explain his story, the actor performs with his hands, showing his nervousness. The numerous medium close-ups on his face enhance his acting as he hesitates and keeps silent. For Ariane Hudelet in *The Cinematic Jane Austen, Essays on the Filmic Sensibility of the Novels*, Jane Austen 'uses this bodily grammar in a very precise manner and makes it resonate with verbal language'[75]. She argues that the expressions of the characters lie in 'these bodily signs' that are 'disseminated' throughout the conversations. If one looks at the original text of *Sense and Sensibility*, it is interesting to note that no bodily signs are related to the Colonel when speaking. Only mentions that he 'stops for recollection' several times to illustrate the confession. This goes back to the analysis of Rickman's voice made by Ariane Hudelet, to which she adds that

> the novel character seems verbally clumsy, whereas Rickman's phrasing, notably during his visit
> to Elinor in London, illustrates the oratorical talent of the film character and introduces silences
> and pauses which accentuate the dramatic power of his narrative[76].

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[75] A. Hudelet, 'Beyond Words, Beyond Images : Jane Austen and the Art of Mise en Scène', *op. cit,* 46.
[76] *Ibid.* 53.

In a sense, the choices made for the adaptation reinforce what the original conversation conveyed. Indeed, by relying on expression rather than words, the conversation becomes more intimate and gains emotions. As a consequence, the acting of Alan Rickman conveys the revelations and tensions of this conversation, while not expressing them in words. When linking this aspect with appearances it appears that the actor's talent, which can be conveyed through the accentuation or intonation of his or her dialogues, can be decisive in its representation. To finish on this point, the character of Lucy in *Sense and Sensibility* provides also an example of manipulation and untruthfulness that can be perceived from the beginning by the audience. Indeed, from the way she talks to her manners and looks, Lucy does not inspire confidence and is not supposed to bring the sympathy of the audience. The actress Imogen Stubbs succeeds in making her character manipulative while never being accused as such by the other characters. Her performance enables the adaptation to fully represent what is at stake when Miss Lucy speaks alone with Elinor and how she traps her by telling her about her secret engagement. All in all, the adaptation on the screen of conversations does not solely depend on the changes from written dialogues to spoken ones but involves the capacity of the actors to embody and perform those dialogues.

B. And yet, one can argue that the actions of the actors in the film adaptation are not sufficient to bring to the audience the notions of manipulation or appearances in conversations. To go further, I intend to deal with one of the main theories of adaptation, in which the film techniques and language are considered key elements. Indeed, I will argue that the framing, the movements of the camera and even the editing in each adaptation play an important part in the adaptation of conversations, and tend to give a new dimension to the notion of manipulation in conversations on screen. As evoked in part I, the adaptation of a conversation from a written novel to a film induces changes in some elements and the importance of the notion of voice. For Hutcheon, it appears that the film adaptations have their own 'cinematic equivalents'[77] to go from the original novels to film, from the telling mode to the showing mode. In other words, Hutcheon claims that what lies at the core of the movies under study is the way they use their status of adapted works to propose a new dimension. When dealing with manipulation and appearances in conversation, it appears that it is directly related to the issues raised by the adaptation process. Thus, I will compare the three directors' film techniques, to see what different strategies they used to convey the 'art of conversation' as discussed in this part II. Interestingly, each of the three adaptations exhibits a distinct film

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[77] L. Hutcheon, and O'Flynn Siobhan. *A theory of adaptation, op. cit,* 36.

technique to render the notion of appearances in conversation. For the director Joe Wright, the adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* relies on the use of long sequences, long movements of the camera and rapid cuts in the frame throughout the film. In the bonus of the DVD, the director commented on the film and the choices made for certain scenes. He declares that for the first ball scene, Mr Darcy appears progressively because Elizabeth does not see him at first. For him, 'the whole idea of the film is to make it as subjective as possible'[78] and through the eyes of Elizabeth, reaching the idea of appearances. Later on, for the first proposal of Darcy, Joe Wright explains that he used a camera on his shoulder because 'it is all about the actors'[79] and it empowers the actors because it enables them to move around; this argument emphasises the place of the actors as explained above. Hence, those elements illustrate how Joe Wright decided to adapt Jane Austen's novel. In *Sense and Sensibility*, the director Ang Lee intended to convey the aspects of interiority, emotions and romance through the use of close-ups and particular frame[80]. For instance, in the scene evoked above when Lucy tells her secret to Elinor, the movements of the camera shed light on her intimacy and emotions toward Elinor. Miss Lucy and Elinor are filmed in a medium close-up, accentuating the notion of intimacy, while Lady Middleton and Mrs Jennings keep chatting off-screen, or interrupting the private discussion, in a medium shot. The parallel editing underlines the constant back and forth between private and public conversation, between secrets and gossip. It is interesting to note that the editing establishes the composition of the room: Lady Middleton and her daughter playing cards, Marianne looking outside the window, Elinor and Mr Jennings reading. This editing suggests that each group is 'trapped' in its frame and so in its activity. In the end, the conversation between Elinor and Lucy is filmed in a classic shot/reverse shot, one must note that the camera remains more often on Elinor's face to capture her emotion. The different close-ups combined with the performance of the actress give the audience an understanding of those emotions. Moreover, the circularity of the movements of the camera renders the feeling that Lucy is slowly taking Elinor where she wants, both physically and metaphorically[81]. Thus, Ang Lee decided to render the notion of secrets and manipulation through the physical illustration of Elinor being trapped by Lucy and by the frame. And finally in *A Room with a View*, the director James Ivory's techniques is more static and offers a contrast between interiority and exteriority, in places and with the

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[78] J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* Bonus contents, 00:06:50.
[79] *Ibid.,* 1:07.:26.
[80] See comments of Emma Thompson in her diaries on Ang Lee's habits of filming.
[81] Laurent, Mellet, '*Sense and Sensibility* à l'écran : l'adaptation entre explication et consolation', *Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens*, 82, novembre 2015, journals-openedition-org,gorgone,univ-toulouse,fr, https://doi.org/10.4000/cve.2361 (last accessed 15 April 2022).

characters. By static, I mean fewer movements of the camera, when compared to the two other directors, but offers a composition inside the frame[82]. For example, the scene where Lucy and Charlotte talk about the kiss and try to find a solution is enhanced by the choices related to the framing and the editing[83]. When Lucy proposes to talk to George, Charlotte claims that 'I think it is for me to do that'. It is interesting to note that Charlotte uses modals in every sentence, showing her respect for the 'the rules': 'you would be seen from the outside', 'you cannot realise what men can be', and 'what would have happened?'. Symbolically, Charlotte is the one closing the window and the curtains, arguing that Lucy could be seen from the outside. Later on, Lucy is watching Charlotte packing their luggage in the other room. The shot represents Lucy in the foreground, being in the frame of the door, while Charlotte is in the room, in the background, with a frame-within-the-frame. There is no doubt that the frame of the door and the room conveys a symbolic aspect. Indeed, Charlotte is filmed in a rigid frame, the camera being still. On the contrary, Lucy moves in the room, going again to the window, while the camera follows her. Lucy is not framed by the rules imposed, as she still wants to see through the window. This scene exemplifies how James Ivory adapted the style of E.M. Forster through film techniques. And yet, at this point in the analysis, it should be noted that James Ivory received numerous criticism for his film adaptations set in the Edwardian era, which were widely discussed for displaying an English Heritage and accused of conveying a conservative and nostalgic vision of the English past. Indeed, those films were set in the past, while focusing on the upper-middle class and aristocracy, and so were accused of 'mythologising and misrepresenting the national past via a stable and conservative iconography'[84]. This misrepresentation can be analysed through the film techniques used. For Andrew Higson, an author who defended his critical view against Heritage Films in his essay *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama since 1980*, the editing of these Heritage Films was marked by long takes, deep staging, long establishing shots and a certain concern for the characters, the place and the atmosphere rather than the action[85]. Those elements can be illustrated in James Ivory's adaptation of *A Room with a View*. But rather than being a criticism, I would argue that those elements enable the audience to better grasp the elements of the 'art of conversation' at stake in this adaptation.

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[82] *Ibid.*
[83] J., Ivory, *A Room with a View, op. cit,* 00:37:40-00:40:00.
[84] Bélen, Vidal Villasur, *Heritage film: nation, genre and representation*, New York, Wallflower, 2012, 47.
[85] Andrew, Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama Since 1980, op. cit*. 48.

Thus, to adapt the aspects of rumours and manipulation on screen, the directors made several choices. One can note the recurrent use of close-ups on the faces of the actors to show the emotions at stake and to give the audience a sense of intimacy between the characters. At the same time, the setting of the conversations is very important. Rumours are always heard in a public space, with a frame composed of a foreground, with usually the main characters speaking, and a background with other characters evolving around. This choice gives some perspective to the frame, while also underlining the ambivalence of rumours: intimate, they have nonetheless a public dimension, being heard and talked about by everyone. It is interesting to note that, to represent appearances, the directors have no choice but to show on screen the underside of it: while appearances are supposed to be hidden and invisible, the adaptation has to make them understandable to the audience. All in all, one can argue that, despite manipulation and appearances in conversations being a non-visual element to adapt, the film techniques do not prevent its adaptation on screen. I would argue that, on the contrary, it can even reinforce those aspects.

Part III: The Art of Conversation, Communication and the Importance of the Implicit.

After demonstrating how the 'art of conversation' could be used to manipulate and take advantage of someone or a situation, I intend in this part to focus on the notion of communication, and notably the correlation between conversation and communication in the corpus under study. Indeed, one can argue that the main linguistic point of conversing with someone else is to exchange ideas clearly and concisely. And yet, the three adaptations of the corpus offer examples of interrupted conversations, moments of silence, hesitations, misunderstanding between the characters, and so on. There is no doubt that, in fiction, conversations are written so as to correspond to the natural way of speaking, while it appears quite clear that the conversations are fictional. And yet, this act of mimesis is subject to exceptions in this corpus. I will argue that those exceptions are essential, as they shed light on another type of communication that is at stake. Indeed, the analysis of good manners in part I and the notion of manipulation in part II will lead me to discuss a phenomenon fostered by those conditions: the implicitness in conversations.

<u>1. When a conversation is not easy, what does it reveal?</u>

A. Conversing with someone implies a 'smooth' conversation, which leads from one topic to another, depending on the context and the persons involved. As Ali Benmakhlouf wrote in his essay *La Conversation comme manière de vivre*: 'la conversation se fait ainsi à bâtons rompus, selon des 'devis pointus et coupés, 'pointus' et non nappés ou soumis à un ordre rhétorique du discours, 'coupés' car le décousu en est la règle'[86]. Interestingly, for Benmakhlouf conversation should not follow a set of established rules, while as evoked the conversation of Georgian and Edwardian eras has to follow rules. Hence, because of the context of this research study on conversation, I would consider an 'easy' conversation as one in which, while rules have to be respected, is enjoyable enough for the characters to go on. By definition, the conversation should be agreeable and simple between the characters. And yet, on several occasions in the corpus under study, the conversation appears to be difficult in its consistency, and so may not be 'easy' between the characters, or is subject to interruptions, temporary or definitive. In a sense, this can be linked to the connection between hypocrisy and good manners established in Part I, and how a burst of emotions may disrupt a polite conversation. In this part, by outlining conversation as 'not easy', I intend to analyse conversations that contain moments of hesitations, pauses, and misunderstandings. Kerbrat-Orecchioni characterises those conversations as 'ratés' or 'accident de parole'. A conversation can be subject to different 'ratés': 'ratés d'élocution (bafouillages, bégaiements et lapsus, marqueurs d'hésitation), ratés syntaxiques (faux départs et constructions qui restent en suspens […]'[87]. I would argue that this linguistic aspect of conversation in daily life may be linked to the specificities of the dialogues in a film adaptation. Indeed, as evoked above, there are conventions in film dialogues established in the gathered essays published in *Film Dialogue*. Todd Berliner exposes that movie dialogues must follow four conventions:

> i) Separate characters' individual contributions to a dialogue in a Hollywood film unify into an overriding narrative purpose.
> ii) Characters in Hollywood movies communicate effectively through dialogue.
> iii) Whereas real people tend to adjust what they are saying as they speak, movie characters tend to speak flawlessly.
> iv) When a film violates movie dialogue convention, the transgression serves the causal progress of the narrative[88]

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[86] Ali, Benmakhlouf, *La Conversation comme manière de vivre*, Paris, Albin Michel, 2016, 19-20.
[87] C., Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *Le discours en interaction, op. cit,* 42.
[88] J. Jaeckle, *Film Dialogue, op. cit,* 121-124.

The idea that movie characters speak flawlessly is linked to the argument of the importance of the voices of the actors, from the intonation to the acting. In a sense, speaking flawlessly for a character may be compared to the social manners and the rules regarding the eloquence in public: conduct books encourage men and women to speak clearly and distinctly when being in public. As I have shown, some characters do not respect social manners, violating at the same time movie dialogue conventions. He concludes by claiming that 'when a Hollywood movie violates movie dialogue convention, the violation means something'[89]. He ponders on the idea that, when dialogues in films do not correspond to pre-established conventions, it is on purpose and it must draw the attention of the audience. To illustrate this idea, I propose to analyse the conversations that are broken, spasmodic, when words are stuttered, or enunciated ill-at-ease. Those conversations tend to have the same characters involved, the ones who do not know how to express themselves, as established in Part II. But one can note that it can also affect the characters who usually know how to converse and are at ease speaking in public as if it was influenced by the conversation. I would argue that two main characters from the corpus can illustrate this argument: Mr Darcy and Mr Edward Ferrars. For instance, in *Pride and Prejudice*, when Darcy and Elizabeth meet again after the first proposal at Darcy's house, the conversation seems awkward and difficult to be carried out[90]. Both characters try to find subjects to speak about, such as the house or Elizabeth's visit to the countryside, but they keep speaking at the same time or stay silent when they should find other topics to converse on. Even Elizabeth, who is usually at ease in conversation, does not know what to do or say. This awkwardness is mostly because the last time they saw each other, Mr Darcy proposed to Elizabeth and she refused him. While Elizabeth was afraid to see him again at his house, which could be considered improper, Darcy is also stressed to speak to her again, as he wishes to appear less arrogant and proud. The script of the original dialogue illustrates this idea, as it shows they speak at the same time on different topics:

DARCY
Miss Bennet!

Elizabeth stops, appallingly embarrassed. Darcy catches
up with her. They both blush, deeply.

ELIZABETH
I thought you were in London.

DARCY (STUPIDLY)
No... I'm not.

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[89] *Ibid.* 124.
[90] J., Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 1:23:00-1:25:33.

ELIZABETH
No.

Another ghastly silence. Then they both speak at once.

DARCY ELIZABETH
I came here a day early - We wouldn't have come -

DARCY ELIZABETH
-- some business with my I'm so terribly sorry -
They stop. He gazes at her with great emotion.[91]

Due to their history and their previous conversations, both characters are ill-at-ease, as the dialogue illustrates. This dialogue transgresses two conventions at the same time: characters communicating effectively and speaking flawlessly. While they speak at the same time to each other, they do not seem to listen to each other. As the stage direction of the script underlines, physical reactions accompany the reactions of the characters, who react as 'real people' speaking. Hence, the violation of one of the movie dialogues conventions serves to underline the emotional bond between the two protagonists, as well as their evolutions. Another example can be found in the character of Edward in *Sense and Sensibility*. Edward shares similar features with Darcy, as he also seems to lose his words or stutters when he is feeling emotional or embarrassed. On several occasions, he appears speechless in front of Miss Elinor, to whom he does not dare admit his feelings or his secret engagement with Miss Lucy. He tries to speak to her about this when they are alone in the stables, but he hesitates too long and he is interrupted by his sister[92]. Another example occurs when he intends to visit Elinor and discovers that Miss Lucy is already here[93]. At the beginning of the scene, Edward seems determined to speak up his mind about his feelings, but he becomes almost silent when he sees Lucy and only manages to speak two or three sentences afterwards. While this violation of the conventions sheds light on the personality of Edward, who seems shy and insecure, it also has a narrative purpose. Indeed, it creates a sense of suspense as the audience wonders if Edward will finally admit his feelings for Elinor, or if he is engaged and in love with Miss Lucy instead. Hence, this illustrates the argument of Tood Berliner that, if a movie dialogue violates one of the conventions, in this case communicating effectively, it must serve the progress of the narrative. Paradoxically, it is because Edward Ferrars does not know how to communicate to Elinor that the audience sees his affection for her and his dilemma between Elinor and Miss Lucy. As a consequence, hesitations or troubles in the film

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[91] original script of *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit.*
[92] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 23:28.
[93] *Ibid.* 1:31:10-1:34:20

dialogues are never a mere coincidence, as they may have a narrative purpose. Just like regular conversations can participate in the characterisation of the characters in film adaptations, conversations with 'ratés' also play a part in it. Thus, conversations with 'troubles' can sometimes reveal more than polite conversations.

B. But what can happen when there is no conversation at all? Indeed, the conversation may be broken, or stopped, for several reasons that, usually, the participants tend to avoid. As Ali Benmakhoulf declared in his essai *La Conversation comme manière de vivre*:

> Il peut y avoir le sentiment d'un piétinement, d'un sur-place car nos phrases échangées dans une conversation n'accomplissent pas toujours un progrès, elles 'sont comme le cliquetis des ciseaux que le coiffeur doit maintenir en mouvement pour couper une mèche au moment voulu'. Le silence pesant, celui qui n'est pas pause dans la conversation mais celui qui la fait retomber dans l'abîme de la non-relation, arrête le 'cliquetis des ciseaux'. La parole se tarit. On peut dans ces situations avoir face à soi ou une personne en colère désirant couper court à l'échange, ou l'indifférence où nous met la parole de l'autre, parole qu'on décide comme une balle à laisser tomber[94].

In this essay, the author pointed out a crucial element in conversation: silence. While people conversing with each other try to avoid silence, as it may be considered awkward and uncomfortable, the corpus under study offers different examples of silence during a conversation. Ali Benmakhouf defines silence as being a phenomenon in which conversation runs out of subject or interest for the people involved. Thus, silence can be due to various elements at stake, from the topics of the conversation to the person conversing. For Peter Burke in his essay *The Art of Conversation* 'silence - accompanied by the appropriate gestures of facial expressions - may be warm or cold, intimate or exclusive, polite or aggressive.'[95] Hence, the author insists on the large diversity of those moments of silence in conversation. It is interesting to note that, contrary to Ali Benmakhlouf who envisioned silence as either being the result of anger or indifference, for Burke, silence may even be polite or intimate. He claims that

> In other words, the meaning of silence varies - like that of other forms of communication, as rhetoricians point out - according to the occasion where silence occurs, according to the silent person, and also according to the 'audience', if that is the appropriate word. The moment and the place are also important [...]. It is necessary to take into account the different uses of silence, its functions, its strategies' [96]

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[94] Ali, Benmakhlouf, *La Conversation comme manière de vivre, op. cit,* 84.
[95] P. Burke, *The Art of Conversation, op. cit,* 124.
[96] *Ibid.* 125.

Interestingly, the author insists on the importance of the context to fully understand what hides behind this silence. Hence, to ponder on this definition of silence, I propose to examine different conversations of the corpus in which silence occurs between the protagonists by following the precepts of Burke. In *A Room with a View*, silence occurs between the Emersons and Charlotte at the beginning of the movie, when she does not want to speak with them as she thinks they are disrespectful. Another distinctive moment of silence occurs when George and Lucy kiss for the first time: while Lucy joins George in the field, no word is exchanged, they only look at each other, and without saying anything, George kisses Lucy. This silence underlines the emotions and feelings unspoken between the two protagonists, the silence only broken by the arrival of Charlotte, just as in the novel

> George had turned at the sound of her arrival. For a moment, he contemplated her, as one who had fallen out of heaven. He saw radiant joy in her face, he saw the flowers beat against her dress in blue waves. The bushes above them closed. He stepped quickly forward and kissed her. Before she could speak, almost before she could feel, a voice called, 'Lucy! Lucy! Lucy!' The silence of life had been broken by Miss Bartlett who stood brown against the view[97].

In the novel, no word is exchanged between George and Lucy, as if the looks and the kiss almost speak for themselves about their love, the beginning of the scene only described through George's eyes. Interestingly, this 'silence of life' is interrupted by Charlotte herself, the chaperon and the embodiment of social manners in this work, not only by her physical appearance but by her words calling Lucy and preventing herself from speaking. Lucy is first reduced to silence by George's kiss, because of the passion and the impulsiveness, and then by Charlotte's intervention, which symbolises here a call for social manners and strict behaviour. In this context, the meaning of silence varies, to quote Burke. In the film adaptation, the 'silence of life' is symbolised by lyrical music[98], only broken by Charlotte shouting at Lucy. I would argue that the music does not prevent silence but on the contrary, reinforce through this film techniques this emotional moment of silence between the two characters. For the adaptations of Jane Austen, one must consider the essay of Ariane Hudelet and her reflection on silence in 'Beyond Words, Beyond Images: Jane Austen and the Art of Mise en Scène'[99]. The author rejoins Burke as she exposes that 'silence is also a sign to interpret, a clue to reveal agitation.' and takes the example of the ball scene at Netherfield, with the dance between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth. She declares that

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[97] E.M. Forster, *A Room with a View, op. cit,* 84.
[98] *Chi Il Bel Sogno Di Doretta*, Richard Robbins.
[99] A., Hudelet, 'Beyond words, Beyond Images: Jane Austen and the Art of Mise en Scène', *op. cit,* 45.

> Silence can therefore become a dramatic instrument when it stresses what language cannot or should not express. If silence in the novels is above all an absence of words, it is not, however, an absence of communication. It can on the contrary symbolize a form of expression. [...] There is thus a 'manner of being silent,' and silence becomes a way to enhance manners, attitude, looks, movements.[100]

Hence, silence must not be associated with 'an absence of communication'. In a sense, silence is similar to difficult conversations, in which the hesitations or chaotic process reveal more than the actual words. I propose to analyse the scene of the Netherfield ball in *Pride and Prejudice*, not only because it offers a metatextual reflection upon the role of silence and social conversation, but also because it offers a long moment of silence, absent in the original novel. The scene begins while the dance starts, as the dancers salute their partners. Elizabeth starts the conversation with polite remarks, to which Mr Darcy obliges by responding. The camera follows one another, with a movement of turn-taking that is illustrated both by their dance moves and by their words in the conversation. Indeed, Elizabeth's remarks on the fact they can now 'remain silent' underlines the conventional aspects of those conversations, codified as a dance. The two protagonists are filmed in a medium close-up, while other dancers keep passing by in the foreground. Other noises of conversations can be heard around them as well as the music of the dance accompanying them, which underline that they are conversing in a public space. And yet, after they argued about Mr Wickam, stopping the dance for an instant, the scene shifts as the other characters of the room disappear, leaving them alone to dance, in silence. The music goes louder, while the camera goes closer to the couple, turning around them and filming in a medium close-up as if it were a third dancer. Interestingly, while at the beginning of the scene they are surrounded by people and have to respect conventions, as Elizabeth pointed out they can speak about trivial subjects, here they appear utterly alone but remain silent while they could honestly open up their minds about Wickam. As evoked by Laurent Mellet and Shannon Wells-Lassagne in their analysis on this scene[101], the music becomes intradiegetic and seems to follow the isolation of the couple on screen: 'ainsi, lorsque l'espace devient espace mental, et que les deux danseurs se retrouvent seuls, la musique jusqu'alors *out* (car on imagine les musiciens hors-champ), devient *off* ou *over* (0'39''20)'[102]. Interestingly, just like in the analysis of the kiss between George and Lucy in *A Room with a View*, silence is also symbolised by the music growing louder. As the two protagonists pay only attention to one another and the world around them fades away, the

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[100] *Ibid.*

[101] Chapitre 9 'Analyses de scènes', *in* Laurent, Mellet et Shannon, Wells-Lassagne, *Étudier l'adaptation filmique: cinéma anglais, cinéma américain*, Rennes, PU de Rennes, 2010, 94-96.

[102] *Ibid.* 95.

silence of their conversation is enhanced by their dance movements, showing that there is indeed a 'manner of being silent'. In a sense, silence here is not a mere form of politeness after a conversation as Elizabeth joked about, but more importantly, it is a translation of the emotions of this scene that cannot be said out loud. As John Wiltshire claims in the gathered essays on *The Cinematic Jane Austen* about this ball scene, 'the sequence is a kind of apotheosis of film, since (in complete contrast to the novel) an attraction represented in the text largely through verbal exchanges is here rendered completely wordless'[103]. Hence, this scene illustrates the importance of silence and that it is an element in conversations that must be interpreted. The 'art of conversation' is not limited to the eloquence and words, but is also linked to the absence of those words and what is behind this absence.

C. In a sense, silence does not have the same value, depending on its context, and the person involved. In other words, some characters may speak easily with each other, and have meaningful silences or interruptions, while other characters converse with difficulties and long gaps. To go further, one can argue that conversation appears to be easier between some characters than others; that some characters seem to 'know' how to converse between them, while others do not. This idea is linked to the role played by the conversation in characterisation in part I. Yet, I would argue that this new element underlines how relationships are fostered through the way characters tend to speak to each other. Indeed, some conversations seem easier between the main couples of the adaptations, showing a sign of their compatibility. On the contrary, other relationships are judged insignificant because the conversation between the protagonists is not smooth. For instance, in *Pride and Prejudice*, the interactions between Elizabeth and Mr Darcy are always relevant for the establishment of their relationship, while the conversations between Elizabeth and Mr Collins have a comic effect. When Elizabeth refuses Mr Collins's proposal, she assures him that they would not be happy together as a couple, the absence of communication between them underlining this aspect. The conversations between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth enable them to construct their relationships as well as to evolve their personalities. In his essay 'Mr Darcy' smile'', John Wiltshire even argues that 'it is conversation, banter, the exchange of wit and wisdom, vigorous verbal exchange that encourages Darcy's feelings for Elizabeth.'[104] In *A Room with a View*, it is quite clear that the duo of George and Lucy are more suited to each other than the duo formed by Cecil and Lucy. The conversations occurring between Cecil and

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[103]John, Wiltshire, 'Mr. Darcy's Smile', *in* David, Monaghan, et al. *The Cinematic Jane Austen: Essays on the Filmic Sensibility of the Novels, op. cit,* 91.
[104]*Ibid.*

Lucy evolve around Cecil explaining art or life to Lucy, while she obediently listens. On the contrary, Lucy and George speak about their emotions and feelings as equals. During their first conversation, Lucy and George have just witnessed violence, and while Lucy is asking George not to tell anyone about this and just go back as it was, George declares: 'something tremendous has happened. [...] Something has happened to me and to you.'[105] This declaration sheds light on their connection, from the experience they just shared to their future. On the contrary, the first conversation between Lucy and Cecil that the audience witnesses is at the Sacred Lake and shows how little they know each other. As evoked in Part I.2.A, there is no connection or emotion shared between the two protagonists. Moreover, while George encourages Lucy to be true to herself and be honest, it is interesting to note that the only meaningful conversation between Lucy and Cecil is based on a lie. Indeed, Cecil finally sees Lucy as a woman when she breaks her engagement with him. But when he asks her the reasons, she lies about it, not evoking her love for George or her conversation with him. In *Sense and Sensibility*, Edward and Elinor go along very quickly, while Marianne does not understand what Elinor likes about Edward. With Willoughby, Marianne finds someone compatible with her passionate manners and emotions; and when her health issues and her suffering make her disposition calmer, it is with the Colonel that she finds the perfect match for her conversations about poetry and love. As a consequence, it appears that some characters seem not to understand each other, or do not know how to communicate. This leads me to discuss and argue how conversations can be so various and disparate between the different characters. To do so, I would develop the concept of 'heteroglossia' developed by Bakhtin in his essay *Discourse in the Novel*. Heteroglossia means the plurality of voices, points of view, discourses, and dialogues in a literary work. Bahktin applies the concept of heteroglossia to the novel in prose and argues that the author of the novel utilises different languages for the different characters.[106] Hence, one can apply this argument to the adaptations of the corpus, in the sense that the heteroglossia of the conversations of the original novels had been kept. In other words, through the film adaptations, one may find the different voices at work in the conversations. To go further on this idea, I would refer to the essay by Bharat Tandon, *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation*. In the chapter dedicated to 'flirting' in Jane Austen's novel, the author refutes the argument of Brower, namely that 'no speaking voice could possibly represent the variety of tones conveyed to the reader by such interplay of dialogue and comment'. Bharat Tandon claims that 'no speaking

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[105] J., Ivory, *A Room with a View, op. cit,* 00:24:55-00:26:05..

[106] Mikhaïl Mikhaïlovitch, Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays,* Austin, U of Texas P, 1994, 529.

voice could fully represent such speeches, it is true; but voices can be tensed creatively against what they cannot say to arbitrate in just those situations we witness in Elizabeth and Darcy's flirting.'[107]. While this argument is about the flirting between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice*, I would argue that this argument exemplifies how the adaptations may render the concept of heteroglossia in the novels. Indeed, as evoked in part II with the importance of voice, or mise-en-scène in the adaptations under study, film techniques can render the heteroglossia of the conversations. Thus, conversations in film adaptations convey the concept of heteroglossia by the plurality of it. They reflect the relationships between the characters and can be a clue to their intimate acquaintances, and most importantly the evolution of their relationships. In a sense, the couples of the corpus tend to develop their own way of speaking in conversation, as they become closer, creating their own 'art of conversation'. The variety of conversations conveys the idea that the audience needs to be able to grasp each one of them.

2. Conversation and sub-conversation; conversation with different layers and different addresses.

A. The conversation is displaying a large prism of situations, going from silence and misunderstanding to the utmost comprehension between the speakers. As a consequence, the 'art of conversation' then may be perceived through all of these situations, depending on the involvement of the characters as well as the context. In a sense, this shows how the audience has to be attentive to the conversations and what is at stake in each one of them. As Bakhtin exposes, language becomes autonomous between the characters: 'the language used by characters in the novel, how they speak, is verbally and semantically autonomous; each character's speech possesses its belief system since each is the speech of another in another's language.'[108] The conversation seems to become autonomous; while rules for social manners had been established to prevent misbehaviour, the arguments evoked in Part III.1 shed light on the spontaneity and instability of the conversation. In other words, conversation follows its own rules, which depend, as I have evoked, on the context, the characters involved, and the narrative process. Interestingly, this theory can be linked to the one developed by Nathalie Sarraute in her essay *L'ère du soupçon*, in which she ponders on the conversations and the

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[107] Bharat, Tandon, *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation, op. cit,* 104.
[108] M. Bakhtin,*The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays, op. cit,* 529.

'movements' that go through them in the novel. She exposes that, in a novel, conversations are penetrated by movements, which are 'toutes ces actions minuscules qui sous-tendent et poussent en avant le dialogue et lui donnent sa véritable signification'. For the author, the 'dialogue' designates the way an author of a novel makes the characters speak, while the 'conversation' indicates the whole exchange.

> Les mouvements intérieurs, dont le dialogue n'est que l'aboutissement et pour ainsi dire l'extrême pointe, d'ordinaire prudemment mouchetée pour affleurer au-dehors, cherchent ici à se déployer dans le dialogue même. Pour résister à leur pression incessante et pour les contenir, la conversation se raidit, se guinde, prend cette allure précautionneuse et ralentie. Mais c'est sous leur pression qu'elle s'étire et se tord en longues phrases sinueuses. Un jeu serré, subtil, féroce, se joue entre la conversation et la sous-conversation[109].

As Nathalie Sarraute underlines the place of the reader in this process of conversation and sub-conversation, one can wonder how this concept can be applied to film adaptations and how they reproduce those movements in the conversation on screen. I would argue that film dialogues can be linked to the analysis of theatre dialogues made by the author

> Car le dialogue de théâtre, qui se passe de tuteurs, où l'auteur ne fait pas à tout moment sentir qu'il est là, prêt à donner un coup de main, ce dialogue qui doit se suffire à lui-même et sur lequel tout repose, est plus ramassé, plus dense, plus tendu et survolté que le dialogue romanesque: il mobilise davantage toutes les forces du spectateur. Et surtout les acteurs sont là pour lui mâcher la besogne. Tout leur travail consiste justement à retrouver et à reproduire en eux-mêmes, au prix de grands et longs efforts, les mouvements intérieurs infimes et compliqués qui ont propulsé le dialogue, qui l'alourdissent, le gonflent et le tendent, et, par leur gestes, leurs mimiques, leurs intonations, leurs silences, à communiquer ces mouvements aux spectateurs[110].

For the author, the movements found in dialogues of novels can also be perceived in theatre dialogues, but not through the same techniques. Indeed, contrary to a novel in which the reader must perceive those movements, in theatre, it is the role of the actors who embody those dialogues to perform the movements. As suggested, the actors in theatre facilitate the comprehension of the spectators for those movements. And yet, more than the novel, it requires the attention of the spectator, otherwise, those movements may not be understood. This theory can be found in the adaptations under study because, as exposed in the previous parts, the adaptations rely on the same techniques with the actors' acting and the importance of the voice. Hence, conversations on screen may convey more than what they display at the first sign but can have subtle meanings, or sub-conversations. To illustrate this argument, I propose to analyse an extract of *Sense and Sensibility*, in which one can note that there is not

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[109] Nathalie, Sarraute, *L'ère du soupçon: essais sur le roman*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, 120.
[110] *Ibid.* 111-112.

just one conversation at stake[111]. The extract under study is situated in the second half of the movie. The Dashwood sisters are still in Mrs Jennings's house in London, and because Marianne is not feeling well, Elinor tries to go back home. While the precedent scene was about the misfortunes of Marianne with Willoughby, this scene appears to give new elements to the couple Elinor-Edward. Indeed, while Elinor has to hear other secrets from Miss Lucy Steele about her secret engagement with Edward Ferrars, it is no other than Edward himself who shows up to visit Elinor. Marianne then enters the room, convinced that Edward came to courtship Elinor. Hence, the scene I chose to analyse seems to be a scene of tensions and unspoken issues. It is interesting to note that the conversation between the different characters is brief and polite. However, it is remarkably dense regarding the narrative dimension. For the first time, these three characters are put in the same room and forced to interact with each other. But because of the social manners, and the secrets, neither the engagement between Lucy and Edward, nor the courtship between Elinor and Edward, can be said out loud. The arrival of Marianne emphasises the awkwardness of the situation, as she is unaware of the issues at stake. In a sense, this scene conveys a sense of tragic irony: the audience is the confidant of the sufferings of Elinor, who has to endure this conversation without the bearing of her sister. There is no doubt that the characters have more on their mind than they said out loud. To comprehend what is really at stake during this meeting, the audience has to carefully watch beyond the dialogue. Hence, facial expressions play an important role, as well as the looks exchanged between the characters. A rewatching of this scene enables us to catch the different reactions from the protagonists. For example, when Edward is announced, it is interesting to note the reaction of Lucy as opposed to Elinor's. While at first Lucy is filmed facing the camera, Elinor showing only her left profile, the editing enables the audience to see Elinor's reactions more deeply, with a facing medium close-up. Likewise, when Edward realises that Lucy is also in the room, a shot/reverse-shot is used to show both Lucy's reaction, who is smiling at him, and Edward, who is visibly embarrassed by her presence. By doing so, the reactions of the characters are separately identified and underlined. However, when Marianne arrives and broadens the frame, the reactions are not so easily visible. One has to be attentive to the exchanges of looks between Elinor and Edward, the angry glances of Lucy to Elinor and Marianne, and the interrogative ones Marianne addresses to Elinor. All of these elements enhance the feeling of awkwardness that prevail in this extract. It is evident to the audience that Elinor and Lucy share resentment as they both have feelings for Edward.

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[111] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 1:30:06-1:34:20.

And while this jealousy from both parties cannot be explicitly said, there is no doubt that it is visible in this scene. Indeed, the rivalry between Elinor and Lucy for Edward's love is enhanced by their positions in the room. Interestingly enough, it is not by words but by their postures and gestures that the two women seem to be opposed. Since the beginning of the extract, they have been sitting next to each other, in the same frame and same position. While Elinor is only wearing white colours, Lucy appears with a black petticoat and a black hat. Those minor differences are even more visible when the two women sit next to each other while facing Edward and Marianne. Moreover, it appears that they are opposed to Edward and his position in the room. Hence, when Edward enters the room, it is interesting to note that Lucy appears in the background, blurred, while Elinor is facing him. This frame renders the idea that Lucy belongs to a past that Edward wishes to forget, but that he cannot. As a consequence, when Lucy is introduced, he has no other choice but to face her and turn his back to Elinor instead. By doing so, Edward seems to choose one woman over the other one, a choice that is confirmed at the end of the extract. To conclude this analysis, the extract sheds light on the different conversations and sub-conversations that can be at stake. In a sense, the scene is almost pictural: while there is in the foreground a polite conversation about the visit of Edward and the stay of the sisters Dashwood in London, there are in the background various conversations being played. Indeed, at the same time, Marianne is trying to see if Edward still has feelings for Elinor, Lucy feels jealous of the attention Edward has for Elinor, Edward is torn between his duty for Lucy and his love for Elinor, and Elinor trying not to expose her feelings or the secret engagement (Fig. 1). In a sense, this scene may remind the audience of the 'Conversation Pieces', the paintings of the 18th century depicting groups of relatives speaking in conversations (Fig. 2). At first sight, those conversations appear to be intimate and casual, relying upon social manners and the etiquette of conversation.

Fig. 5, The conversation between Elinor, Miss Lucy, Marianne and Edward,

A. Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit*, 1:33:26.

Fig. 6, Example of a 'Conversation Piece',

The Rawson Conversation Piece, Gawen Hamilton (1697–1737), Pallant House Gallery.

And yet, one can wonder if this first appearance of polite conversation is not hiding a deeper meaning, as do the conversations in the film adaptation. This illustrates the argument made about conversation and sub-conversations, or conversations with subtle meanings that have to be understood by the different addressees. Most importantly, this illustrates how the actors can represent on screen the movements that come across the dialogues, the elements that Jane Austen wanted the reader to understand without explicitly indicating it. Thus, conversations can have a subtle meaning underneath the polite surface.

B. As a consequence, one can note the importance of the implicit in the conversations of the corpus. In a sense, I would argue that the main aspect of the 'art of conversation' lies in the implicitness: how to say something without being too obvious about it because of social rules and etiquette. The implicit in conversations can concern emotions and secrets, as seen with the last example, or can be related to threat and anger, or even mockery.

1) To deeply analyse what the implicit in conversations means, I suggest referring to the essay written by Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *L'Implicite*. In this linguistic study, the author ponders on the importance of the implicit and what it means. She claims that 'les contenus implicites (présupposés et sous-entendus) ont en commun la propriété de *ne pas constituer en principe [...] le véritable objet du dire*'[112]. With the 'art of conversation', the implicit has to be understood as being both in terms of language and in terms of manners and attitude. Indeed, the implicit in conversations may be induced by words, gestures, manners or tones. One can note that the concept of implicitness is directly linked to elements of adaptation evoked above, such as the notion of voice and the body language of the characters. The implicit may be understood by a way of accentuating a particular word, by the gesture accompanying certain phrases, or by looks which can enhance a revelation. Hence, implicitness is an important element to adapt, from the original novels relying on implicit messages to the film adaptations that must convey those messages by other techniques. For Ariane Hudelet, in film adaptations, 'words can remain trivial, but the look and the tone can make the addressee receptive to the implicit message, and therefore materialize an unspoken understanding.'[113]. For instance, in *Sense and Sensibility*, the famous scene between Elinor and Lucy in which Lucy reveals her secret engagement with Edward relies on implicitness[114]. While Miss Lucy declares to Elinor her secret, one can note her insistent look upon Elinor, her way of turning around her and showing her the handkerchief with the initials of Edward. Even if she does

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[112] Catherine, Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *L'implicite*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1986, 21.

[113] A., Hudelet, 'Beyond Words, Beyond Images: Jane Austen and the Art of Mise en Scène', *op. cit,* 49-50.

[114] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 1:03:31-1:06:30.

not say it out loud, she makes Elinor understand that she is going to marry Edward, and implies that she has been aware of the closeness between Elinor and Edward. Thus, after dealing with the ways the implicit can be conveyed, one can wonder why it may be needed in a conversation. In her essay, Kerbrat-Orecchioni goes further by claiming that the implicit is used for the pleasure of indirect formulations or social conveniences. This last argument is interesting as it is directly related to the etiquette of conversation and social manners evoked in part I of this research. Hence, the conversations of the corpus under study rely largely on implicit, as not everything could be expressed. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth conveys almost all of her real thoughts through the implicit mode, such as her conversation about Wickam with Mr Darcy[115]: she tries to tell Mr Darcy that she learned they fought, by claiming that Mr Wickam was very disappointed to lose his friendship. This euphemism is used not only to prove that Elizabeth had spoken to Mr Wickam, and to enable her to accuse Mr Darcy of having mistreated Mr Wickam not openly, which would be considered rude. In *A Room with a View*, a conversation between Lucy, George and Cecil offers an example of an implicit message being at stake in an ordinary conversation[116]. Cecil is trying to read to Lucy a novel he has just acquired and that he judged ridiculous, while the others are playing tennis. At the end of the game, Lucy goes to sit next to Cecil, with George following her. The three of them are sitting on the grass, filmed in three separate medium shots. As Lucy and George exchange remarks about the tennis game, Cecil tries to be heard by them, looking at their exchanges as if it was another tennis game in which he is not involved. The audience can note that different conversations are happening at the same time and in various modes: Cecil explicitly tries to read his book to Lucy, but Lucy does not listen to him and speaks with George about losing the game instead. But more implicitly, what is at stake here is the future of those two intertwined couples, Lucy with Cecil and Lucy with George. Lucy flirts more easily with George than with Cecil, as the looks exchanged between the two seem to implicitly bear the kiss they shared in Florence. And when Cecil reads the passage of the book by Miss Lavish evoking their kiss, it is almost as if the implicit conversation of this scene was explicitly said out loud, fostering another kiss between Lucy and George. Hence, one can note that the implicitness of this scene, meaning the love between Lucy and George, cannot be expressed in a conversation, especially in front of Cecil, but finds a way to burst in the kiss exchanged at the end. In the novel, the scene goes on with two conversations at the same time, like in the

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[115] J. Wright, *Pride and Prejudice, op. cit,* 38:44.
[116] J. Ivory, *A Room with a View, op. cit,* 1:16:03-1:19:35.

adaptation, with Cecil trying to be heard. As they evoke the book written by Miss Lavish, Lucy and George have the following exchange[117] :

> "Who may Miss Lavish be?"
>
> "Oh, a dreadful person—Mr. Emerson, you remember Miss Lavish?"
>
> Excited by her pleasant afternoon, she clapped her hands.
>
> George looked up. "Of course I do. I saw her the day I arrived at Summer Street. It was she who told me that you lived here."
>
> "Weren't you pleased?" She meant "to see Miss Lavish," but when he bent down to the grass without replying, it struck her that she could mean something else. She watched his head, which was almost resting against her knee, and she thought that the ears were reddening.

The words 'she could mean something else' reflect the implicit meaning of her reply, as Lucy is flirting with George almost unconsciously. Hence, the adaptation of the novel explores this implicit intimacy between George and Lucy by conserving it through the looks exchanged. In a sense, the 'art of conversation' would lie in the ability to make someone understand what you mean, or understand someone else, despite not saying it out loud because of social manners and conventions. Hence, another layer can be added to the 'art of conversation'. Thus, implicitness leads to different messages, either to warn someone, insult someone or mock this person.

2) In this case, making fun of someone or a situation can be associated with irony. Irony may be defined as a discrepancy between the meaning of the words and their literary meaning, creating a comic effect. Irony can also be more subtle, as someone can say something while meaning the contrary, but is understood by only a part of the audience, leaving the other completely oblivious of the ironic meaning. However, in any case, irony has to be understood as such to work. Indeed, the other speaker has to understand that the words are ironic, if not the comic effect is lost. Hence, the irony in a conversation has the same goals and struggle as the implicit in a conversation has: how to make someone understand it is irony without being too obvious about it, and while respecting social conventions? Just like implicit, irony may be understood thanks to tones, choice of words, and body language. The three novels of the corpus have long been analysed as literary works in which irony is more than present: Jane Austen and E.M. Forster are well-known for their styles full of irony that can be perceived in their various novels. Thus, to deal with irony, I will analyse how its apparitions in conversations are difficult to adapt and how the different adaptations under study responded to this issue, which can be broadened to the difficulty of adapting what is implied in a

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[117]E.M. Forster, *A Room with a View, op. cit,* 194.

conversation. Adapting irony corresponds to one of the 'clichés' about adaptation exposed by Linda Hutcheon in her essay *A Theory of Adaptation*: 'Cliché #4: Only Telling (in Language) Can Do Justice to Such Elements as Ambiguity, Irony, Symbols, Metaphors, Silences, and Absences; These Remain 'Untranslatable' in the Showing or Interacting Modes'[118]. She addresses the arguments against adaptations raised by other authors or critics throughout the years. As she argues that the showing mode is perfectly capable of adapting such elements, she claims that 'verbal irony presents a particular challenge for adaptation to performance media, not in a dialogue, obviously, but when used in the showing mode'[119]. Hence, she establishes a difference between irony in dialogues and irony that can be displayed in conversations depending on the context. In a sense, for the conversations, the irony could be perceived through words as well as the situation. As the corpus under study is composed of both forms of irony, one may wonder if this argument is relevant, and the different analyses of extracts will indicate if so. Regarding the adaptations of Jane Austen's novels, for Ariane Hudelet, 'a disjunction between body language and actual meaning or intention can also be seen as another manifestation of Jane Austen's irony. Even when body language and verbal language go together, they do not necessarily work in unison.'[120]. Then the discrepancy fostering irony could be between the conversation and its representation on screen for film adaptations. Ariane Hudelet in her essay in *The Cinematic Jane Austen: Essays on the Filmic Sensibility of the Novels* offers an argumentative point of view on the adaptation of irony in Jane Austen's novels, as she claims that

> In previous studies of Austen adaptations, her irony has been considered as one of the most difficult features to translate on-screen. Indeed, even though the irony is plural in Austen's novels - situational, dramatic, verbal- the latter often gets the most attention and is thus considered uncinematic, since it is endorsed by the narrator, who does not exist as such in the film. [...] It manages to establish an implicit connection between author and reader which creates pleasure and surprise. But this Austenian irony can also take a corporeal dimension, whether visual or aural, thanks to the discrepancy between the physical and the linguistic languages, between body and verbal expression. [...] This micro-intensity, this enhancement of details (as in a close-up), reactions (as in shots-reverse shots) or sound nuances through precise voice inflexions or hesitations imply a proximity that cannot but evoke those film techniques to twenty-first-century readers[121] .

With this quotation, the author sheds light on the 'implicit connection between the author and the reader', which may be linked to the question of the 'movements' in a dialogue that must be understood by the reader. To understand irony, the reader must be careful of the various forms

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[118] L. Hutcheon, et S. O'Flynn. *A theory of adaptation, op. cit*, 68-71.
[119] *Ibid.*
[120] A., Hudelet, 'Beyond Words, Beyond Images: Jane Austen and the Art of Mise en Scène', *op. cit,* 49-51.
[121] *Ibid.*

it can take in Austen's novels, and how it is illustrated linguistically and physically. Interestingly, the allusion to 'precise voice inflexions or hesitations' as 'sound nuances' can be related to the conventions in film dialogues: I would argue that it is through those sound nuances that the movements behind the dialogues are apprehended by the reader, and by the spectator for the film adaptation. As one can note, the question of the different forms of irony in Jane Austen's novels is directly addressed, as well as the ability to adapt it. For the author, the irony of Jane Austen appears almost cinematic, and so must be adapted. To deal with this argument, I propose to compare three scenes in the three original novels, and their respective adaptations, in order to analyse the film strategies used to adapt irony. For *Sense and Sensibility*, a conversation at the beginning of the novel between Mr and Mrs John Dashwood offers an interesting example of irony. While on his deathbed, Mr Dashwood made his son promise to take care of his second wife and his two daughters, John Dashwood decides to honour this promise by giving her three thousand pounds. However, when Mrs John Dashwood learns about that, she is not happy with it and encourages her husband to change his mind. Hence, this conversation between them about the legacy of Mr Dashwood is ironic, as Mr John Dashwood will not only be persuaded by his wife to give nothing to Mrs Dashwood and her two daughters but also that it is the right decision to make. In this extract, the irony is perceived through the comments of the narrator on the situation. In the film adaptation, this scene is also situated right after the death of Mr Dashwood's father[122]. The conversation between the couple about giving money to the Dashwood mother and daughters is represented as lasting throughout the journey of the couple, as they are at first at home, then taking various carriages. While the conversation contains the same information for the audience, meaning that John Dashwood and his wife are miserly toward their relatives, one may note that the scene is more comic than ironic: the film elements illustrating the avarice of the two characters do not have the same impact as the comments of the narrator in the novel. In a sense, this scene is an example of the argument made by Linda Hutcheon and the difficulties to adapt irony in situations and not in dialogues. In *Pride and Prejudice*, an example of irony can be drawn from the conversation between Elizabeth and Mr Darcy at Lady Catherine de Bourgh's house. As Elizabeth is playing the piano for Mr Fitzwilliam, Mr Darcy comes closer to them. Elizabeth playfully mocks Darcy for trying to intimidate her, and she recalls to Fitzwilliam how Mr Darcy only danced four dances at the ball they met despite young ladies waiting for a dance: 'I had not at that time the honour of knowing any

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[122] A., Lee, *Sense and Sensibility, op. cit,* 00:01:32-00:04:15.

lady in the assembly beyond my party.'/ 'True; and nobody can ever be introduced in a ballroom.' This ironic remark sheds light on the subtle reproaches Elizabeth is making toward Mr Darcy, as she was one of the young ladies whom he did not invite at that ball to dance with. In the film adaptation, the same conversation occurs between them, almost word by word. The ironic dimension of Elizabeth's reply is enhanced by her look, filmed in a high-angle shot, and her smile at the end of the scene, as Mr Darcy goes and she resumes playing the piano. Interestingly, no playful music can be heard, but the sounds of the piano that appear discordant and almost comic seem to shed light on the ironic motivation of Elizabeth's words. In *A Room with a View*, the irony can be perceived whenever Cecil speaks to other people than Lucy, as he considers himself better than the inhabitants of Windy Corner. For instance, he despises Mr Beebe, and during a conversation with Lucy and her mother, he ironically mocks Mr Beebe several times. Interestingly, Lucy notices those mockeries, as the narrator explains ' 'Lucy was slow to follow what people said but quick enough to detect what they meant'[123]. In the film adaptation, the same conversation occurs between the two protagonists, but the context is different: after the tea party, Cecil and Lucy walk alone in the streets and happen to pass by the parsonage of Mr Beebe. Contrary to the novel, Cecil is less aggressive in his mockery, as he just says 'there is your philosophist parson'. And yet, just like in the novel, Lucy quickly discerns the irony behind those words: 'don't you like Mr Beebe then ?'/ 'I never said so. I consider him far from the average'[124]. And indeed, Cecil never openly criticizes Mr Beebe in front of Lucy, but he does for the rest of her acquaintances. With this exchange, Cecil appears snob, the irony of his words enhanced by the actor's gestures throughout the scene. Hence, one can note that in these three extracts studied, the irony in conversation takes several forms, more or less adaptable on screen. Interestingly, irony is more easily perceived with film techniques, such as the actors' acting or the soundtrack, illustrating the argument that film adaptations have their cinematic techniques to render literary devices on screen.

3. Communication and audience: a new Art of Conversation.

A. The irony in conversation is a complex literary device to adapt on screen. Moreover, it supposes that the audience fully understands it. Indeed, as evoked through the analysis of the

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[123] E.M., Forster, *A Room with a View, op. cit,* 119.
[124] J., Ivory, *A Room with a view, op. cit,* 46:30.

implicit or irony, the audience is involved in this process, and one may even say that it depends on them. If the irony in conversation is not perceived by the audience as such but as its literal meaning, is it still irony? At this point in the analysis, one can wonder if the temporal gap between the original novels and the film adaptations may influence this comprehension. As pointed out by Brownstein in her essay 'Out of the Drawing Room, Onto the Lawn':

> Irony is characteristic of our time: there are ironic ads that mock advertising, ironic sitcoms that are in-your-face about being sitcoms.[...] But there is a significant difference between the ironic point of view from which Austen began writing in the 1790s and the ironic *style* that is widespread two hundred years later. Irony at its simplest, today, is not saying one thing and meaning another, but not being sure if you mean what you say. Austen's irony was a moralist's; postmodern irony refuses to acknowledge the moral[125].

This reflection suggests that the irony of Jane Austen may have been more dedicated to the use of social manners and polite etiquette in conversation than the irony in the film adaptations. It also questions the adaptation process and goes back to the theories implying that irony in literature does not have the same representation as in the film adaptations, or implying a value judgement that the irony displayed in the novel was more refined than one of the adaptations. Hence, one can note that irony can be a point of divergence between two periods, the period of the novels and the period of the film adaptations and sheds light on a new aspect of the process of adaptation. When dealing with adaptations, it is important to recall the context of the creation of the original novels and the context of the film adaptations[126]: the three adaptations under study have all been produced between 1985 and 2005, which corresponds to the era of the Heritage Films, situated from the 1980s to the end of the 2000s. As evoked in part II, the Heritage Films are defined as 'period films' or 'costume films' and share similar features: they are literary adaptations, set in 'a recognisable moment of the past' and depict romantic plots[127]. There is no doubt that the three adaptations under study correspond to this 'genre' because they share those same features. While studies have been made on the historical context of production in the UK at that time[128], what interests me in this part is to ponder on the place of the audience when facing those adaptations. In her essay *Heritage Film Audience, Period Films and Contemporary Audiences in the UK*, Claire

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[125]Brownstein, 'Out of the Drawing Room, Onto the Lawn', *in* L. Troost, et Sayre Greenfield, *Jane Austen in Hollywood, op. cit,*19-20.

[126] Hutcheon makes a difference between the context of creation and the context of reception.

[127] B. Vidal Villasur, *Heritage film: nation, genre and representation, op. cit*, 2.

[128] See Lester D., Friedman, ed., *Fires Were Started: British Cinema and Thatcherism*, New York, 2nd edition, Wallflower, 2006, which gathered different essays focusing on the historical context of the Heritage Film and the correlation with Tatcherisme at that time.

Monk offers an interesting study of the place of the audience in front of Heritage Films, from their social identities to their reactions toward the adaptations. In the part of the essay dedicated to the 'Audience Pleasure', she analysed that

> Among those NTs preoccupied with the specifics of 'authentic' period detail, costume, hairstyles, domestic, architecture, props and room settings were all popular choices. However, a significant number also mentioned kinetic and aural details: dancing, the scripting of dialogue or language perceived to be appropriate to the period depicted, and the 'correct' deportment and diction of actors[129].

Hence, when watching a Heritage Film, some people are attentive to the reconstruction of a 'moment of the past', with the setting and decorum, while others tend to be receptive to the social behaviour displayed in those films, which can be linked to the social manners. I would argue that this analysis of the reactions of the audience in front of Heritage Films can be linked not only to the question of the irony, but more broadly to the 'art of conversation' in general, and how the audience can apprehend it. On the one hand, the audience seems to enjoy the 'art of conversation', understood as a social and public exercise, that the films can adapt thanks to film techniques. On the other hand, one might wonder if the audience goes beyond this first aspect and may apprehend the other elements of the 'art of conversation' pointed out in this research project. It seems that the argument raised by Brownstein may be correct in the sense that the audience gives more importance to the dialogues and the way it is staged than the implicit and ironic style of it. However, one can wonder if this argument may be applied identically to the three adaptations under study. I would claim that the three adaptations of the corpus do not represent irony to the audience with the same efficiency. To go further on the arguments made about adapting irony on screen, one can link this question to the analysis made in part II on the various film techniques used by the different directors. This analysis becomes qualitative, as the techniques for each film may be an argument positive or negative regarding the adaptation of irony on screen. Hence, I would argue that differences can be established between *A Room with a View* by Merchant-Ivory and *Pride and Prejudice* by Joe Wright, in terms of choices made to represent irony and for the audience to grasp it. Indeed, I would argue that the film techniques and choice of dialogues used by Joe Wright for his adaptation convey the irony of Jane Austen's novel, from the role played by the actors to the shots and editing. On the contrary, for E.M. Forster's novel, while elements of irony may be perceived in the dialogues, which are almost the same as the

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[129] Claire, Monk, *Heritage Film Audiences: Period Films and Contemporary Audiences in the UK*, Edinburgh, EUP, 2012, 127: NT designates the National Trust membership that responded to her Heritage Audience survey questionnaire.

original, the film techniques used do not render this idea of irony. As for *Sense and Sensibility*, I would qualify this analysis: while this adaptation does not use the film techniques like *Pride and Prejudice* for adapting irony, the use of the movement of the camera, as well as the close-up of the characters, clearly represent the complex aspect of the conversations. In other words, this adaptation does not fully represent irony, but the implicit may be perceived by the audience. Hence, the analysis of the adaptation of irony from novels to film adaptations has shed light on the different film techniques used to represent irony but also on the importance of the context of production. While those three films belong to the 'Heritage Film', one can note differences in the use of film techniques to convey the irony of the original novels.

B. As a consequence, after establishing this classification between the three adaptations under study, it appears that another dimension to the 'art of conversation' can be conveyed in this research: it may designate how successfully the adaptations address the different meanings of the 'art of conversation' to the audience. Throughout this research project, one can notice that the links between the film adaptation and the art of conversation are aimed at questioning the place of the spectator in this relation. Indeed, when dealing with the representation of social manners and etiquette on screen, one can wonder how the audience can apprehend social rules that belong to another era. When evoking the concept of manipulation and the importance of rumours, the analysis of different extracts reveals the importance of the film techniques to convey those ideas to the audience. Hence, the conversations in the three adaptations acquire a new dimension, as they also have to represent to the audience the various forms of politeness in the 'art of conversation', while conveying how it can become manipulation or appearances, and so how conversations may reveal implicitly more than they expose explicitly. In other words, the question of the 'art of conversation' becomes linked to the place of the spectator in front of the adaptation. Indeed, the different arguments raised on the concept of conversation and sub-conversation directly question the place of the spectator and how he apprehends those concepts. Because the adaptation from novel to film 'erases' the narrator of the novel, the spectator must be able to understand by himself the conversation and the sub-conversation. This idea is directly related to the theory of adaptation evoked in part I and the adaptation from novel to film, from telling to showing. In a sense, the spectator has to 'reconstruct' the movements of the dialogues by himself, helped by the actors' acting. The film techniques used do not only serve to adapt from one medium to another the idea of the 'art of conversation', but they also manage to represent those movements through different techniques. However, as seen with the concept of conversation and sub-conversation, the

audience must also understand those 'movements' present in the dialogues, and so be able to do the work of 'reconstruction' that the film adaptation needs from it. Thus, adapting the conversations implies a place accorded to a third 'converser': the spectator. I would argue that, as well as the characters of the adaptations must be confronted with this 'art of conversation', the spectator is also engaged in this 'adapted' form of social manners. For instance, in *A Room with a View*, the spectator is confronted with the social manners and the hypocrisy of it just like Lucy is. In the beginning, the spectator learns what is appropriate to do and what is not. And by the end of the adaptation, as well as Lucy does, the spectator learns to hear beyond the mere politeness what people mean. In *Sense and Sensibility*, the spectator witnesses how manipulation and secrets can take place in a conversation and what can be the consequences of it. Even if it is never explicitly said by any of the characters, the behaviour of Miss Lucy toward Elinor appears to be manipulative and mean, which must be understood by the spectator himself. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the spectator is also confronted with false appearances in conversation, and how being a good speaker is not always the sign of a truthful character. As exposed in the essay 'Mr Darcy's smile', by Wiltshire;

> One of the reasons, in fact, why *Pride and Prejudice* is such an engaging novel is that the conversations between Elizabeth and Darcy constantly challenge the reader's powers of interpretation. [...] 'Austen's keen sense of the variability of character…, her awareness of the possibility that the same remark or action has very different meanings in different relations.' Sometimes, that is to say, we read these conversations one way, sometimes another: coming back to the book, there is something new to be observed, or construed, forever[130].

In a sense, this 'challenge' on 'the reader's powers of interpretation' may be linked to the concept of conversation and sub-conversation, and how the spectators must understand the movements of the sub-conversation. I would argue that this argument may easily be applied to the adaptation of Joe Wright. As the spectator is constantly challenged to comprehend the full meanings of the conversations between Elizabeth and Darcy, each rewatching enables them to grasp it better. Thus, by dealing with the notion of film adaptation through the angle of conversation in adaptations of Heritage fiction, I intended to demonstrate that the notion of implicitness is directly linked to the place of the spectator. The 'art of conversation' designates not only the process of adapting dialogues on screen, with dialogues that must reflect the original novels but also be 'natural' on screen, while being a narrative element. The art also lies in the way the spectator understands the 'art of conversation' and reacts to it. In a way, one can wonder if those adaptations may not be seen as essential to pass down the 'art of

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[130] J., Wiltshire, 'Mr. Darcy's smile', *op. cit,* 85.

conversation' in Georgian and Edwardian novels to a contemporary spectator. Indeed, thanks to film adaptations, the spectator is engaged with this social practice, from understanding its rules to seeing beyond the first impressions. One can wonder if, by reading the original novels, the spectator would have had the same engagement. This goes back to the general idea in the theory of adaptation that film adaptations can reach a larger public than the original novels they are from, or that film adaptations increase the sales and the consumption of their original novels[131]. Another argument may be found in the essay by Claire Monk and why the Heritage Film Audience enjoys watching those adaptations: 'This notion that films can animate that which is inanimate - and perhaps less easy to comprehend - in museums and historic houses or on the printed page recurred in the replies of TOs as well as NTs'[132]. Film adaptations 'animate' the conversations of the novel, in the sense of giving life to it, which is interesting when applied to the 'art of conversation'. Indeed, as demonstrated with the analysis of extracts, the 'art of conversation' mostly relies on the ability of the actors to embody and perform it. Hence, the film adaptations of three 18th-century novels for a contemporary audience enable the 'art of conversation' to become alive. Hence, at first sight, one may argue that the film adaptation is a benefice for the original novel as it sheds new light on its different aspects through the prism of a new medium. I would argue that the adaptation of the 'art of conversation' on-screen goes beyond this first aspect, as it not only allows the audience to witness 'animated' dialogues but also to learn the codes of the 'art of conversation'. The didactic dimension of those films sheds light on the plural meanings of this 'art' and gives at the same time new reflections to build on the theory of adaptation, from novel to film. Indeed, it launches the debate on the didactic dimension of the film adaptation: how a film adaptation may teach the spectator about the implicit hidden in a film.

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[131]See Chapter 4, 'How', *in* L. Hutcheon, et S. O'Flynn. *A theory of adaptation, op. cit,* 118 : the author ponders on the reaction of the audience and how the adaptation of a novel encourages a new public to read it.
[132]C. Monk, *Heritage Film Audiences: Period Films and Contemporary Audiences in the UK, op. cit,* 127 : TO designates the *Time Out* readership that responded to the Heritage Film survey questionnaire.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyse the 'art of conversation' in three film adaptations of Georgian and Edwardian fictions. The main focus was on the one hand on the various meanings this art could endorse, and on the other hand, on how the film adaptation representing the conversation gives it a new dimension. Hence, the corpus chosen for this study was first and foremost three adaptations studied and analysed as adaptations, which led to reflect on what the status of adaptation may foster. Indeed, in this study, the main objective was to demonstrate how the film adaptation brings a didactic aspect to the 'art of conversation' and in what ways this art acquires a new representation on screen.

In the first part of this project, the main focus was on the importance of social manners, perceived as a social practice with rules to follow. To conduct this social study, conduct books and historical studies from the 19th century on the conversation were essential to understanding the social elements at stake. After establishing the rules people had to follow regarding the manner of speech, the topics of conversation or the context in which conversations could occur, it appeared that a discrepancy was established between men and women, notably on the topics they could each talk about. This comparison led me to ponder on the consequences of not following rules and social manners. Indeed, the corpus displays examples of characters and their ways of dealing with the 'art of conversation'. As some characters appear at ease when speaking, enjoy conversing and know how to apply the social etiquette of conversation, other characters seem to be uncomfortable when speaking in public. While this relation toward the 'art of conversation' may appear indolent, being a non-good-speaker could have a direct impact on the characters' places in society. The importance of appearing at ease and knowing how to be agreeable in conversations would guarantee a character of being seen as likeable by society. On the contrary, someone may be perceived as rude and unsympathetic if this person did not respect the codes. Hence, this sheds light on the importance of appearances in conversation and led me to ponder on the opposition between polite conversations and intimate ones, between hypocrisy and real emotions in conversation, which serves to establish a difference between public conversation and private conversation, enhancing the importance of the context. In the end, after defining the 'art of conversation' as a form of social practice, it was essential to examine the film representation of it in the corpus under study. Indeed, the particularity of this study lies in the

composition of the corpus and its status of adaptation work. Thus, in this first part, it was essential to ponder on the adaptation from novel to film, the changes it fosters and why they were done. It follows that the reflections on the film adaptations enabled me to apprehend the specificities of the 'art of conversation' in the film from the original novels.

In part II, the interest lay in the importance of knowing how to master the 'art of conversation'. By using the term 'mastering', I meant to focus on characters who know how to use the rules to be perceived as good and eloquent speakers. In a sense, those characters know how to employ good manners to their advantage, and not just to appear polite in society. They easily apprehend social manners and to other characters, they appear to be nice and persuasive. Hence, the 'art of conversation' may be associated with subterfuges, lies, or appearances. This goes beyond the opposition between hypocrite conversation and emotional one, as it led me to ponder on the importance of manipulation in the conversations of the corpus. Indeed, the analysis of the various forms of manipulation in a conversation led to establishing different categories of it, from encouraging someone to do something, to trying to have the upper hand in a conversation. In this analysis, conversations were composed of secrets and rumours, two elements that are central in the adaptations studied. While secrets are linked to a private and intimate conversation, the power of rumours in the 'art of conversation' becomes a bond between public and private. The act of spreading rumours was condemned by conduct books. And yet, in the three adaptations of the corpus, one can note several examples of rumours at stake, being either heard, whispered, made up or spread out. Rumours appear in an intimate conversation but may harm someone's reputation. In a sense, rumours became a female power: used mostly by women, they enable them to gain power, as the social manners prevent them from doing as much as men. Thus, the elements of manipulation, secrets or rumours must be adapted on the screen to show their importance and their impact on the 'art of conversation'. This led me to discuss the theories of adaptation related to the differences between showing and telling, or the film techniques used by each director to establish a comparative analysis of the three adaptations under study.

In the end, the attention was drawn to the conversations that go beyond appearances and the manipulative aspect. This research project then demonstrated that some conversations may reveal more than they seem to do at first sight. Hence, in this part, the interest lies in conversations that have hesitations, stuttering, or even silence. The references to critical essays on the silence in conversations shed light on the double meaning this element has. Moreover, this part was the occasion to establish distinctions between conversation and the dialogues in the film, which have to follow established rules. Hence, using fictional works to

study the 'art of conversation' led me to ponder on the characteristics of dialogues when opposed to 'real life' conversations. Interestingly, the rules of film dialogues may be related to social manners and how breaking them is narratively meaningful. This led me to address the theory of conversation and sub-conversation, meaning that some conversations may have hidden messages in them. With this argument, it was important to ponder on the different addresses in conversation and on the importance of the implicit. Indeed, using the implicit in conversations serves not only to address someone without explicitly saying it but also to bypass social manners. Hence, the implicit has to be considered as being part of the 'art of conversation', in the sense that it is a powerful tool in conversations. With the implicit, the irony present in the original novels and the film adaptations was also discussed, as it is a major narrative element. Thus, one can wonder how the implicit and irony can be adapted to film and if the quality of it is lost. Indeed, the main characteristic of it is to be not visible at first sight. For a showing medium, the analysis of the techniques used to translate the implicit and the irony of the novels into films is a key element to understand it. And after this analysis, it was important to question the place of the audience when facing this irony: can a contemporary audience grasp the irony of a 19th-century fiction? With this question, the debate is broadened on the place of the audience when facing the 'art of conversation' in general and how the film adaptations enable the audience to fully understand it.

As a consequence, the study of the 'art of conversation' becomes meta-filmic as it directly questions the place of the spectator in the process of adaptation. Thanks to the adaptation, the spectator is confronted with the different aspects of the 'art of conversation', from the most evident one, with social manners, to its implicitness. One can wonder if the 'art of conversation' does not designate the art of conversing with the audience, of teaching them the issue at stake with a social practice that is from a different era, with a different medium. It should be noted that the power of the 'art of conversation' actually lies in the difference in medium, and in the characteristics of the adaptation, that still sheds new light on the original novels. Heritage Films appear to be more than a form of nostalgia for a fictional English Past. The comparative approach of the three adaptations from 1985 to 2005 has shown an ability to adapt to fit the expectations of the audience while trying to be as close as possible to the original meaning of the novels. The choice of three Heritage adaptations for the corpus appears relevant as it enabled to put into perspective a cinematic genre, as well as questioning the status of adaptation.

Thus, throughout this research study, the aim was to shed light on a new aspect of the possibilities offered by film adaptation. Far from being a compared element to the original novel, the film adaptation offers a new perspective on the didactic dimension of cinema. While the 'art of conversation' is a way to tackle the specificities of a film adaptation, I would argue that it does not sum up its possibility. Indeed, by shedding light on the implicit in conversation, it puts into question the visuality of the medium and the particularities of the film adaptation. Indeed, the main theories regarding the adaptation focus on the visual aspect of the medium, sometimes concluding that it is the only particularity of this medium. By reflecting on the on-screen implicit, it shows how the film adaptation can be more than visual. While cinema is indeed a visual medium, the 'art of conversation' draws attention to the sound elements, sometimes neglected in studies, and other film techniques used to convey what is implied. Hence, this research project is related to studies on film dialogue, from a technical and aesthetic point of view. Not only does it render the possibilities offered by the film adaptation, compared to the original work, but it also broadens the debate on the analysis of film dialogues. Moreover, the analysis of the implicit in conversation was linked to reception studies, with the spectator's place. In a sense, the place of the spectator is always regarded as related to the cinematic medium on this whole. In this case, it was related to the specificities of the film as an adaptation and focused not only on the profile of the audience watching the adaptation under study but also on its motivations and results. Hence, the 'art of conversation' aimed at putting into question the place of the audience when confronted with a film, and most importantly with a film adaptation.

All in all, one can wonder if the film adaptation may offer more to reception studies than sociological studies of the audience. The 'art of conversation in adaptation' can then be extended to a broadened reflection on the relations between original work, adapted work, and the place of the audience when facing the changes. Studies on the process of adaptation from a novel to a film have tended to focus on the reactions of the audience, between pleasure and frustration. One can wonder if adaptation studies and reception studies cannot be more associated, confronted or linked to each other to open new debates on the film adaptation and its didactic dimension.

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