

FROM SHORT STORY TO SHORT FILM: LOCALIZING A TEMPORARY MATTER IN INTERLUDE AND THE LOTTERY IN BLACK BOX

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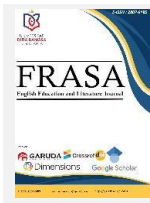
Abstract

World literature adaptation into short films by university students creates a reflective space for literary education and film production sensitive to local contexts. This study examines how students of the English Literature program at Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta adapted two short stories, A Temporary Matter and The Lottery, into short films that embed Indonesian local wisdom. The research was conducted in the English Indie Movie Production course as a direct application of adaptation theory. A descriptive-analytical method was employed, with data collected through documentation, and textual and visual notes. The analysis draws on four sources: the original short stories, the short films uploaded on YouTube, Instagram posts used to promote local narratives, and audience responses. Linda Hutcheon's adaptation theory (2013) is used to interpret the process of transferring texts into film. The study reveals creative and contextual adaptation practices by students and demonstrates how media production-based learning fosters active engagement. Findings show that students successfully reinterpret universal issues from classic short stories through the lens of local culture.

Keywords: *Adaptation, world literature, local values, digital media*

INTRODUCTION

The narrative of local wisdom in film adaptation creates an important space that enriches how we understand and interpret literary works. Each culture holds unique values that shape the interpretation of universal issues such as morality, ethics, and human relationships. In Indonesia, elements such as customary traditions, social norms, and local wisdom strongly influence how literary texts are transformed into film. For example, the legendary love story

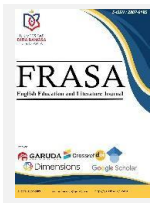


Layla and Majnun by the Persian-Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi, first composed in 1188, was adapted into the Indonesian film *Layla Majnun* (2021) directed by Monty Tiwa. Although the narrative originates from Middle Eastern literary tradition, the film succeeds in localizing the story by introducing Indonesian cultural elements while maintaining the essence of the original text. Similarly, the Western fairy tale Cinderella, popularized by Charles Perrault, was adapted into the Indonesian film *Cinderella* (2007), directed by Rudy Soedjarwo, where its core themes of oppression and transformation are retained but reinterpreted through a different cultural context and genre, shifting from fairy tale into horror. As emphasized by Hutcheon (2013), adaptation is a process of negotiation between global and local cultural values, in which local values may imprint distinct characteristics on narrative transformation. In the Indonesian context, such adaptations enrich classical narratives with Indonesian cultural elements and build a deeper emotional connection with local audiences.

This phenomenon illustrates the inevitability of media transformation in the digital era, where traditional literary works now circulate dynamically through film adaptation and reach wider audiences via digital platforms. As Ramon Lobato (2019) argues, digitalization expands access and visibility, allowing literature to move beyond limited readerships into global circulation. However, this opportunity is accompanied by several challenges. One of the main issues lies in balancing cultural localization with fidelity to the source text, as integrating local elements may risk altering the original narrative's socio-cultural meanings. As noted by Linda Hutcheon (2013), contextual change is necessary, yet it requires careful negotiation to avoid cultural simplification or distortion. Additionally, platform-driven distribution systems may encourage adaptations to conform to market preferences, potentially reducing narrative complexity into more accessible but less nuanced forms. The transformation from textual to audiovisual form also presents limitations, particularly in conveying internal thoughts and narrative depth. Therefore, while film adaptation in Indonesia offers opportunities to embed local cultural values and expand audience reach, it simultaneously demands a critical balance between artistic integrity, cultural translation, and industrial pressures.

Nevertheless, adapting literature to film often involves challenges, especially in balancing fidelity to the original narrative with relevance to local cultural contexts. Leitch (2007), in *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents*, notes that adaptation frequently requires substantial transformation of settings, characters, and other elements to reflect local values without sacrificing the integrity of the original story. This becomes even more crucial given the differences between film and literary media, which demand efficient narrative restructuring while maintaining thematic depth. The selection of authentic cultural elements is essential in building an emotional connection with local audiences without appearing forced. In this regard, adaptation becomes a creative space that allows universal literary values to merge with local cultural richness in ways that resonate with Indonesian viewers.

This research is particularly relevant within the context of education and independent film production, especially for students engaged in literary-based indie filmmaking. In the English Indie Movie Production Course in the English Literature Department at Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, students are taught not only technical aspects of filmmaking but also encouraged to integrate elements of world literature, local culture, and digital media as channels for creative distribution, as outlined in the institutional curriculum



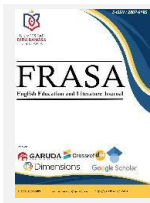
(Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, 2024). The research aims to reinterpret world literature, particularly short stories, into short films produced by students, highlighting how literary texts are transformed into Indonesian cultural contexts through visual and narrative transcreation. The choice of English Literature students as research subjects reflects the unique academic character of the program, which incorporates filmmaking as part of adaptation theory practice. Students therefore become not only consumers of literary texts but also narrative creators who actively transform world literature into films sensitive to local cultural contexts. As Buckingham (2003) argues, media education that foregrounds cultural and contextual dimensions provides significant value in creative production practices. This approach contributes to the discourse on media education and literary adaptation while mapping the potential of student filmmaking as a space for cultural experimentation within the ecosystem of Indonesian independent cinema.

Previous studies on short story-to-film adaptation have examined narrative transformation processes, showing changes such as reduction, addition, and variation due to interpretive choices and production needs (Fakhrurozi & Adrian, 2021; Rahmah & Meinati, 2021; Kistianingsih & Sunahrowi, 2021). However, these studies analyze finished films and do not involve students as adapting subjects, nor do they address adaptation within higher education contexts. Other research highlights the role of local wisdom in shaping community values (Mazid et al., 2020) and discusses strategies and challenges in digital film distribution (Iswahyuningtyas & Hidayat, 2021). In addition, recent scholarship has begun to explore the role of digital platforms in intercultural processes, particularly how social media facilitates intercultural adaptation and negotiation of meaning across cultural boundaries (Yang & Dalib, 2025). Yet, these studies do not link local wisdom and digital media to the practice of literary adaptation.

In contrast to these existing works, the novelty of the present research lies in its focus on the process of adapting world short stories into short films by students as active creators within a pedagogical space. Rather than solely analysing the final films, the study maps adaptation as a learning medium that strengthens literary interpretation, supports creative cinematic practice, and facilitates the internalization of local values. By positioning students as both interpreters and producers of narrative, the research highlights adaptation as a form of active learning where global literary texts encounter local cultural contexts.

Building on this conceptual gap, the research further contributes to current scholarship by tracing how local wisdom is constructed and distributed through digital platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, an aspect largely unaddressed in previous studies. Specifically, this study investigates how *Jhumpa Lahiri's A Temporary Matter* and *Shirley Jackson's The Lottery* is adapted by students into short films that integrate perspectives of local wisdom within Indonesian cultural contexts.

This study employs several theoretical frameworks to examine the adaptation process, including adaptation theory, intertextuality, and local wisdom as analytical lenses. First, adaptation theory, as proposed by Linda Hutcheon, views adaptation not as a linear reproduction of a source text but as a lateral process characterized by transformation, variation, and contextual reconfiguration. Rather than emphasizing fidelity, adaptation involves organizing, modifying, and recreating texts to suit new contexts, where meaning

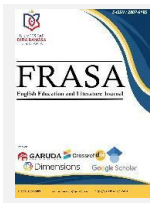


emerges through change rather than imitation (Hutcheon, 2006). Hutcheon further outlines adaptation through key questions - what, who, why, how, and where transformation occurs - while also stressing the importance of medium, particularly in a contemporary media landscape shaped by cross-platform consumption (Hutcheon, 2006). She identifies three modes of adaptation, namely telling/showing, showing/showing, and interacting/telling/showing, with the telling-to-showing mode being most relevant for the transformation of short stories into short films (Hutcheon, 2006).

Within this mode, adaptation requires dramatization, understood as the transformation of linguistic narration into audiovisual expression through dialogue, gesture, *mise-en-scène*, cinematography, and sound, enabling meaning to be conveyed through sensory experience rather than verbal description (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013). This process involves selective transformation, where narrative elements are condensed, modified, or omitted to fit cinematic structures, emphasizing external action over internal narration (Ghafoor & Ishfaq, 2021). At the same time, conflicts and ideological tensions must be rendered visible and audible, as film communicates meaning through performance, spatial arrangement, and sound, requiring clarity to ensure audience engagement within limited duration (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013). This aligns with the need for coherence between visual and verbal elements in constructing meaning (Ali, 2024). Furthermore, adaptation demands succinctness and clarity, as cinematic storytelling relies on narrative economy, where characters, settings, and conflicts are presented efficiently through audiovisual cues. Such condensation is not merely reductive but a strategic restructuring to maintain coherence and preserve core meanings within temporal constraints (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013; Zhang, 2023).

Second, intertextuality provides a framework to understand adaptation as a dialogic process operating within a network of texts. Drawing on Julia Kristeva, who extends Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of dialogism, every text is understood as a mosaic of quotations and a transformation of other texts, meaning that no text is entirely original or self-contained (Kristeva, 1980; Bakhtin, 1981). In this sense, adaptation is not merely derivative but a site of intersection where multiple discourses interact across cultural and ideological contexts. Within this research, intertextuality enables the analysis of how source texts such as *A Temporary Matter*, *The Lottery*, and *The Ninth Skeleton* are recontextualized through the incorporation of local textualities, such as Indonesian social values, myths, and cultural traditions, positioning adaptation as a process of negotiation between texts in different cultural fields.

Third, the concept of local wisdom is employed to identify how cultural values are embedded within adapted films. Local wisdom refers to region-specific values that guide social relations, human-nature interactions, spiritual beliefs, and cultural expressions through customs, folklore, and social institutions. As noted by Wahyudi in Azis (2021), local wisdom emerges through cultural synthesis, where communities internalize and reinterpret external religious and cultural influences into everyday norms and practices (Azis, 2021). In the context of adaptation, these values shape both narrative transformation and aesthetic representation, enabling adapted films to function not only as reinterpretations of source texts but also as cultural articulations rooted in local identity.



METHOD

This study employs a descriptive-analytical method. Following Ratna (2013), descriptive analysis involves describing factual data and interpreting it through relevant theoretical frameworks. The data in this research consists of two types: textual data from the short stories, audiovisual data from the adapted films uploaded on YouTube.

Textual data from the short stories includes words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. Film data consists of dialogue excerpts and visual elements documented through screenshots that indicate representations of local wisdom. The data sources cover all textual elements in the original short stories, as well as dialogue and visual sequences from the short film adaptations produced by sixth-semester students enrolled in the English Indie Movie Production course at the English Literature Program, Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta. The films are publicly available on YouTube, while Instagram serves as a digital platform to examine the dissemination of local value discourses.

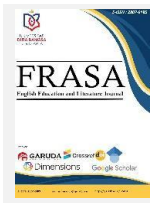
Data collection was carried out through documentation and note-taking techniques. Documentation was used to collect textual data from the short stories and screenshots from the films and Instagram content. Through reading, observation, and note-taking, the researcher gathered narrative and visual elements relevant to the theoretical framework. Data analysis involved describing, identifying, and interpreting the collected data based on the adaptation theory applied in this study. Findings from the short stories, films, and Instagram content were then synthesized to provide a comprehensive analysis. In addition to primary data, the research also uses secondary sources such as books and scholarly journals related to literary adaptation and local wisdom.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Results and Discussion sections in this study are intentionally combined to reflect the nature of qualitative research, where data interpretation occurs simultaneously with data presentation as the empirical data and its interpretation are closely interconnected. Therefore, the combination of Results and Discussion is employed to enhance analytical clarity and to present a more comprehensive explanation of the research findings. This section discusses two main aspects: the process of adaptation from short story to film and the ways in which the resulting films reinterpret the source texts by adjusting them to the local cultural context in which the works are produced. The three short stories that serve as the objects of analysis are *A Temporary Matter* by Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson. Each originates from a different social and cultural background and offers distinct narrative complexities.

A Temporary Matter (1999), for instance, is set in Boston, United States, and tells the story of a married couple of Indian descent attempting to restore their relationship after the loss of their child, presenting themes of domestic grief and emotional estrangement. Meanwhile, *The Lottery* (1948) represents life in a small American village that upholds a violent ritual tradition, functioning as a social allegory that critiques blind obedience to custom and authority.

Both stories have been adapted by students into short films that highlight various forms of local wisdom according to the cultural preferences and contexts of each director and production team. In this process, the works undergo not only a change of medium, but also a



reinterpretation of values: universal themes such as loss, social violence, and existential fear are translated into local experiences through visual language, gesture, space, and cultural symbols. To address the first research question, this section examines the adaptation process from short story to film through the lens of Linda Hutcheon's adaptation theory, focusing on the principles of dramatization, visibility and audibility, and succinctness as the core analytical framework.

Adapting *A Temporary Matter* (1999) into Short Film *Interlude* (2024): Negotiating Meaning and Contextualizing Within Indonesian Culture

Interlude is a short film produced in 2024 by students of the English Literature Study Program at Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta under the direction of Tarangga Widyadhana. Its main premise is adapted from Jhumpa Lahiri's short story *A Temporary Matter* (1999), first published in the collection *Interpreter of Maladies*. The adaptation does not merely change character names and cultural setting; it also transforms the socio-emotional context of the story to bring it closer to Indonesian audiences, particularly urban youth. In this intersemiotic transfer, understood as the transformation of meaning from one system of signs (verbal/literary text) into another (audiovisual/cinematic form), the students reinterpret Lahiri's post-tragedy domestic dynamics within a more familiar local frame. As originally conceptualized in translation studies, intersemiotic transfer involves translating verbal signs into non-verbal systems such as images, sound, and performance (Giannakopoulou, 2019). This shift is evident in how the Boston setting is reimagined into a domestic space that is at once Indonesian, universal, and symbolic, allowing the narrative to resonate culturally while maintaining its emotional core.

The film adopts an intimate realist approach with minimalist visuals, using low-key lighting and restrained dialogue to depict the emotional estrangement of the couple. Through this strategy, *Interlude* performs intersemiotic translation from literary text to cinematic language, emphasizing dramatic and visual dimensions. The adaptation does not simply reproduce the plot; it re-embodies the emotional experience in a new medium. *Interlude* thus functions as a new lens through which to reread Lahiri, demonstrating how a global text can be transformed into a local narrative without losing its interpretive complexity.

Dramatizing Internal Narrative into Cinematic Form

In the short story *A Temporary Matter*, Jhumpa Lahiri (1999) presents extensive internal narration that illustrates the emotional distance between husband and wife:

"He thought of how he and Shoba had become experts at avoiding each other in their three-bedroom house..."

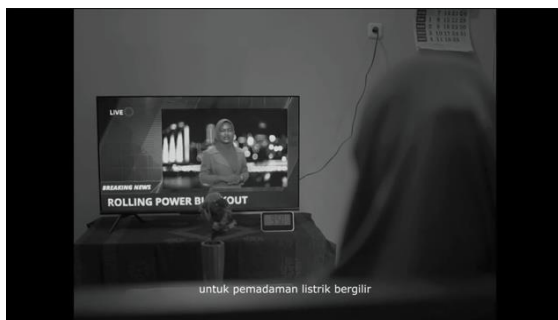
This narration is introspective, accessible only through written language. In the film *Interlude* (2024), this internal dimension is dramatized through action and visual composition: Baskara (the counterpart of Shukumar) sits alone at the dining table, while Samantha (the counterpart of Shoba) chooses not to sit across from him but at another end. The camera frames their

physical distance as a metaphor for emotional separation. This demonstrates how interior narration (telling) is transformed into visual gesture (showing).



Figure 1. Samantha and Baskara eating together before

The power outage sequence undergoes a similar transformation. In Lahiri's text, the information is delivered through a simple line: *"The notice informed them that it was a temporary matter..."* (Lahiri, 1999). The film replaces this narrative exposition with a televised news broadcast announcing the rolling blackout in Wijaya City, complete with the anchor's voice and on-screen text.



News Anchor:

Breaking News! Wijaya City is getting ready to have a rolling power blackout. It was learned that in an effort to maintain public safety and prevent major traffic problems, the local government has announced plans for rolling power blackouts in the region.

Figure 2. News anchor announcing the power outage

This shift in the mode of communication is part of an intersemiotic transposition, where informative narration is replaced with audiovisual signs that appeal directly to the senses.

Dialogue also undergoes dramatization. Shoba's line, *"It's good of them to warn us... But they should do this sort of thing during the day"* (Lahiri, 1999), appears almost verbatim in the film as Samantha's spontaneous remark. By rendering it as actual dialogue, the film no longer narrates but performs the couple's tension through intonation, facial expression, and pauses. This marks the essence of dramatization in film adaptation: narrative becomes performance.

One of *Interlude's* strengths lies in how emotions formerly conveyed through extended narration are now visualized through cinematic language. For instance, the stillbirth, mentioned retrospectively in the short story, *"The baby had been born dead"* (Lahiri, 1999) is presented as an immediate scene in the film.



Figure 3. Baskara receiving the news that the baby could not be saved

This transformation is not merely narrative compression but a form of intermedial dramatization: meaning once constructed through words is now conveyed through the interplay of image, sound, and rhythm.

The adaptation of *A Temporary Matter* into *Interlude* demonstrates how dramatization becomes a bridge between text and film. Through intersemiotic transposition, language is reshaped into visuals, sound, and performance. The film not only reproduces the story but also creates a new experience through intermedial signs. *Interlude* succeeds in dramatizing the grief and estrangement at the heart of Lahiri's text, rendering them more immediate, palpable, and communicable to viewers.

From Text to the Visible and Audible

Adaptation entails more than transferring plot; it activates the sensory dimension, allowing conflict, emotion, and ideology to emerge through gesture, lighting, and sound. Film, as a performative medium, relies less on verbal narration and more on visual and acoustic imagery directly perceptible to the audience.

In Lahiri's *A Temporary Matter*, Shoba and Shukumar's gradual estrangement after the loss of their baby is conveyed largely through internal narration rather than action. For example:

"He thought of how he and Shoba had become experts at avoiding each other in their three-bedroom house..." (Lahiri, 1999).

"Something happened when the house was dark. They were able to talk to each other again." (Lahiri, 1999).

These sentences evoke emotional distance without depicting concrete action. The reader imagines the silence; sound and movement remain abstract. Here, the film medium fills the gaps left by the text.

In *Interlude*, the idea of "avoiding each other" is translated into visual language. The camera frequently frames Samantha and Baskara in separate spaces despite sharing the same house. Lighting also operates as an emotional cue: dim rooms underscore coldness and distance.



Figure 4. Samantha showing an unresponsive expression during dinner

In the dinner sequence, two plates and a candle sit between them; Baskara attempts small talk, but Samantha barely responds. The camera holds on her blank expression. This visualizes conflict without a single explanatory sentence. Lahiri describes Shukumar's guilt through reflective narration:

"He remembered how much she loved surprises, and how she'd planned for months for his birthday, wrapping gifts in the pages of a magazine..." (Lahiri, 1999)

In the film, this memory is conveyed through a visual montage: flashbacks show Samantha preparing a gift, a soft smile on her face, accompanied by gentle music. Returning to the present, the lighting dims, and Baskara's expression registers loss. Through image and sound, memory becomes an embodied experience rather than textual description.



Figure 5. Samantha giving Baskara a gift

Through the principles of the visible and audible, *Interlude* animates the conflict and emotional undercurrents originally rendered through language. The film presents a visual dramatization of silence, distance, and estrangement through camera movement, lighting, bodily gesture, and calibrated sound. This exemplifies the power of intermediality: film becomes a site where verbal, visual, and acoustic modes intersect to intensify emotional experience.

Narrative Compression: Clarity and Intensity in Film Language

Adaptation into an audiovisual medium requires presenting narrative succinctly and forthrightly; the source text must be condensed to match the duration, rhythm, and expressive economy of cinema. This is not merely a matter of shortening but delivering meaning with precision, preserving emotional force. Film, with its “language of limitations,” must select the most representative moments and present them economically yet meaningfully.

In adapting *A Temporary Matter* into *Interlude*, this principle is unmistakable. Lahiri’s short story unfolds slowly through layered monologues, descriptions, and memories. The film, however, offers a more direct and concentrated version without diminishing emotional depth.

Lahiri structures the story as follows: the announcement of the blackout, the couple’s routines, the nightly confession game, and Shoba’s final revelation. The film condenses this into three major movements: (1) the tragedy of losing the baby, (2) emotional estrangement at home, and (3) confession and reconciliation.

In the short story, the stillbirth is described retrospectively:

“When he returned to Boston it was over. The baby had been born dead. Shoba was lying on a bed, asleep, in a private room...” (Lahiri, 1999).

In *Interlude*, this becomes the opening scene: Samantha bleeding in the kitchen, being rushed to a clinic, and the doctor announcing the loss.

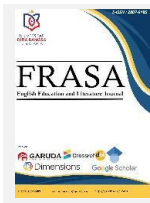


Figure 6. Samantha experiencing severe bleeding

By presenting this visually and immediately, the film confronts viewers with the source of the couple’s trauma from the outset. This shift is more than a change in chronology; it reflects a forthright mode of presentation suited to cinema.

Similarly, the film does not require prolonged narration to depict emotional distance. Whereas Lahiri uses repeated descriptions of the house, the dining table, the workroom, and silent routines, the film replaces these with brief montage sequences: Samantha washing dishes without speaking, Baskara writing without looking at her, the television murmuring in the background. Seconds of imagery substitute pages of text, an embodiment of presenting narrative succinctly and forthrightly.

This narrative compression sharpens emotional intensity and accelerates pacing. In cinema, silence and glances replace paragraphs of reflection. Hutcheon (2013) refers to this as “adaptation through compression,” where meaning is not lost but transferred to the visual and performative register.



Minor characters, such as Shoba's mother and neighbours, are removed to maintain narrative focus on the couple. In a film of roughly 30 minutes, this ensures emotional consistency and clarifies the dramatic core. Effective adaptation depends on such selective compression.

The principle of presenting narrative succinctly and forthrightly in *Interlude* demonstrates how cinema demands narrative economy and focused dramatization. Reflective prose is transformed into actions and symbols without weakening emotional resonance. Through intersemiotic transposition, extended verbal passages become cinematic language, quick, precise, and expressive.

Interlude exemplifies successful adaptation by conveying the essence of Lahiri's story with efficiency, "telling less, but saying more." This process affirms Hutcheon's argument that adaptation is not reduction but transformation: a renewed articulation of an existing story in a more compact yet equally vital form.

Adapting *The Lottery* (1948) into the Short Film *Black Box* (2025): Reinterpreting Collective Violence within the Indonesian Socio-Cultural Context

The short film *Black Box* is an adaptation created by students of the English Literature Program at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta under the direction of Yasmin Hasna Dzakiyyah, creatively reworking Shirley Jackson's classic short story *The Lottery* (1948). While Jackson situates her narrative in a small American village that appears peaceful yet conceals an annual ritual of violence, *Black Box* performs a cultural transposition by relocating this story into a Javanese rural context. This transformation not only shifts the geographical setting but also recalibrates the value system, social structure, and belief practices of a more religious and collectivistic community.

In this adaptation, Javanese agrarian society is depicted as operating within a hierarchical social order, where traditional rituals serve as instruments for legitimizing authority and enforcing social morality. The characters Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves, who function as ritual officials in Jackson's original text, are reconfigured into the figure of Pak Mantri, an authoritative village leader who presides over the annual drawing as a symbol of both harmony and social control. The lottery ritual, originally administrative and secular, is transformed into an adat ceremony accompanied by a chant in Javanese Kawi, producing a spiritual atmosphere distinctive to Javanese cultural cosmology.

Black Box thus becomes more than a narrative translation from text to film; it operates as an act of cultural transposition that recontextualizes an American social myth within the local epistemology of the Nusantara. This adaptation demonstrates how collective violence may continue to be legitimized when framed as a sacred ritual, highlighting the potential of tradition to reproduce structures of power.

Dramatic Approach in Adaptation

Adaptation from a narrative medium to a visual medium inherently involves a process of *dramatization*. In this context, film no longer recounts a story but performs it through audiovisual language: images, dialogue, gestures, and atmospheres constructed through music and lighting. This dramatic process is particularly evident in the short film. Rather than

merely translating the story literally, the adaptation reworks the mode of storytelling into a visual and emotional experience embedded within Javanese cultural contexts.

In Jackson's original version, the atmosphere is introduced through a long and calm descriptive narration:

"The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green."
 (Jackson, 1948)



Figure 7: Awaluddin riding his bicycle while carrying the Black Box to the village hall

This opening line in Jackson's text functions as a narrative exposition that creates an ironic contrast between a beautiful day and the unimaginable tragedy that follows. In the film *Black Box*, however, this description is transformed into a visual montage: Awaluddin rides his bicycle along the village road, passing scenes of everyday life that appear busy yet peaceful. There is no verbal narration; instead, the camera moves slowly, showing the market, houses, and school bathed in warm midday light. Soft gamelan music underscores the sequence, effectively replacing the function of the narrator in Jackson's text. Through this technique of visual substitution, the film enacts dramatization by replacing verbal description with images and sounds that carry symbolic meaning.

Beyond the visual dimension, dramatization also engages emotional intensity. In *The Lottery*, Tessie Hutchinson's death is narrated quickly and coldly:

"Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her." (Jackson, 1948)



Figures 9 Ningsih executed by the villagers

In *Black Box*, the parallel scene is expanded into a sequence of heightened visual intensity. Ningsih, who replaces Tessie, screams “NOT FAIR!” in panic, and the camera cuts to the villagers’ hands gripping stones, accompanied by gamelan music that accelerates. A ritual that appears sacred and detached becomes a dramatic depiction of internal conflict, between obedience and guilt. At this moment, dramatization reaches its peak: violence is no longer narrated but performed, unfolding vividly before the viewer.

Visible and Audible

The short film *Black Box* offers an instructive example of the application of the *visible and audible* principle, as it demonstrates how the narrative and observational qualities of *The Lottery* are transformed into a culturally inflected social ritual that is both seen and heard.

Shirley Jackson writes in a tone that is calm, even cold, when describing the impending ritual violence in the original text. The narrator merely states:

“The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions; most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around.” (Jackson, 1948)

This sentence is observational and relies on the reader’s internal interpretation of silence as a psychological atmosphere rather than a concrete event. *Black Box* transforms this into a fully sensory experience, a silence that becomes audible. When Pak Mantri begins reading the list of participants, the scraping of chairs and the sound of held breaths are amplified through minimalist sound design. The camera isolates the villagers’ expressions one by one while the rest remain silent. This scene translates textual “silence” into an auditory tension, revealing that silence in film is not the absence of sound but an audible marker of social pressure.

The film further enriches the audible dimension by adding ritualistic elements. In the *Black Box* script, Pak Mantri recites a mantra in *bahasa Jawa krama*.



Figure 10: Pak Mantri reading the ritual

“Kula ndhawuhaken, ing ngarsaning saksi para leluhur lan jagad langgeng, menawa kula bakal netepi dharma kanthi tulus, tanpa rekadaya.”

This utterance signals a significant ideological shift from the source text. In *The Lottery*, Mr. Summers merely “called the names and instructed people to draw,” without ceremony or

incantation. No sound marks sacredness or metaphysical authority. By adding this ritualistic vocal performance, *Black Box* reframes collective violence not as a mundane civic activity but as an act sanctified by language. Within Hutcheon's framework, this constitutes intersemiotic amplification, the process by which meanings implicit in the text (tradition, obedience) are rendered explicit through sound and vocal performance. Ritual language becomes an ideological instrument that *sonically enacts* authority, illustrating how power in this adaptation is not only seen but also heard.

On the visual level, the film uses spatial composition and bodily arrangement to emphasize social hierarchy, which Jackson mentions only fleetingly. In the story, she writes:

"The men began to gather, standing together away from the pile of stones... The women, wearing faded house dresses, came shortly after their menfolk." (Jackson, 1948)

This description is brief and distanced; the narrator does not evaluate gender positions or hierarchical dynamics. In *Black Box*, this becomes a visible structure: the camera places the men seated in the front row of chairs, while women and children stand behind them, forming a composition that visibly signals subordination. The visual signaling of subordination in *Black Box* can be interpreted as a culturally embedded articulation of gender hierarchy rather than a purely aesthetic arrangement, where spatial positioning functions as a marker of authority and social order. The placement of men seated in the front row—stable, centered, and foregrounded, while women and children stand behind them reflects patriarchal patterns commonly found in many Indonesian socio-cultural contexts, in which male presence is symbolically associated with leadership, voice, and legitimacy.

In this sense, seating operates as an index of power, translating implicit social norms into explicit cinematic composition and reinforcing hierarchy through spatial organization. At the same time, the deliberate framing suggests that the film does not merely reproduce these norms but also exposes their constructed nature, inviting critical reflection from the audience. By making such hierarchical arrangements visually apparent, *Black Box* enables viewers to recognize how gendered power relations are normalized through everyday practices, while also opening interpretive space to question whether these configurations signify cultural order or reveal underlying structures of inequality and marginalization.



Figure 11: The women positioned at the back

The film's audible dimension also deepens the theme of banal violence. In Jackson's text, Tessie Hutchinson's death is conveyed in one terse sentence:

"A stone hit her on the side of the head. Old Man Warner was saying, 'Come on, come on, everyone.'" (Jackson, 1948)

In the film, sound becomes the core of the traumatic experience. When Ningsih's name is announced, the gamelan music begins softly, then accelerates and grows louder as villagers pick up stones. A sound typically associated with Javanese cultural harmony becomes an ironic marker, the rhythm of death.



Figures 12: The execution procession accompanied by gamelan and Javanese dance

After Ningsih is chosen, the villagers walk toward the rice field, accompanied by gamelan music layered with ambient sounds of footsteps and heavy breathing. The camera focuses on Ningsih's trembling face. There is no dialogue, only the collective soundscape and the unbroken rhythm of tradition. In this resonant silence, viewers *see and hear* how power operates: through ritual, sound, and the disciplined movement of bodies.

Thus, *Black Box* transforms *The Lottery* from a story about social custom into a visual-auditory performance of culturally legitimized violence. Sound and image become ideological language; ritual becomes the music of power.

Succinctly and Forthrightly

Film *Black Box* exemplifies this principle: the long, slow rhythm of prose is transformed into an economical, fast, and communicative visual structure that still maintains the tension and moral irony of the original work.

In Jackson's story, the drawing process functions as the narrative center and unfolds with a slow, repetitive rhythm. The narrator describes each stage in detail:

"Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside the box. It seemed like there was a great deal of time taken, with the villagers watching as he stirred." (Jackson, 1948)

This passage creates an intentionally slow tempo. Jackson makes the reader feel the monotony of a ritual that is routine yet horrifying. *Black Box*, by contrast, has no space for such extended narrative pacing. The filmmakers compress the drawing process into a rapid but tense visual sequence: names are called one by one ("Slamet." "Soejiman." "Sarman."), intercut with the sound of chairs scraping, held breaths, and close-ups of trembling hands picking up rolled slips of paper. Through montage and sound pacing, the film replaces verbal repetition with a visual rhythm that is equally effective. Each name becomes a narrative beat that marks the passage of time and builds escalating tension.



Figure 13: Pak Mantri calling villagers' names

This narrative condensation is also visible in the merging of characters and settings. In the original text, Jackson introduces several minor characters, Mr. Adams, Mrs. Delacroix, Old Man Warner, and Mr. Graves, each representing a spectrum of attitudes toward tradition, from skepticism to obedience. In *Black Box*, most of these characters are removed or combined into new ones such as Mbah Kaji Warjo and Pak Slamet. These two figures collectively symbolize traditional society: Mbah Kaji as the orthodox guardian of old values ("*Black box been here since forever, helping us*"), and Slamet as the cynical elder who nevertheless complies with the system. Through this strategy, the film condenses social complexity into meaningful dialogue and interaction between two characters, an efficient dramatic method that reinforces ideological depth without narrative excess.

The condensation also occurs at the climax, where the victim is determined. In Jackson's story, the second drawing is described at length:

"Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil." (Jackson, 1948)

The film presents this moment in a manner that is brief yet striking: Pak Mantri says, "Poerwanto, open your wife's paper," and the camera immediately cuts to a close-up of the slip marked with a black spot. The gamelan sound abruptly stops, and silence replaces dialogue. Within seconds, the audience understands the tragedy that is about to unfold. There is no narration, no additional explanation; the visual and auditory cues are sufficient to convey the meaning. This reduction is not merely a matter of time efficiency, but a deliberate strategy to maintain dramatic intensity.

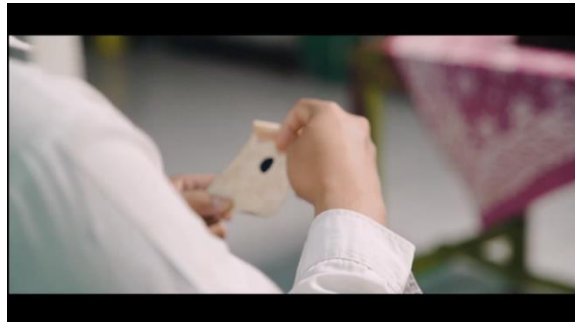


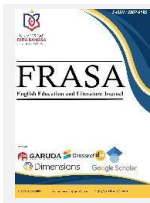
Figure 14: Purwanto opening the lottery slip

Meanwhile, the film's ending, which shows the village returning to normal, functions as a form of compressed resolution. In the short story, Jackson conveys the final irony implicitly and without moral reflection, simply describing how the community resumes everyday life after the killing. *Black Box* presents this visually: the black box remains on the table the next morning, villagers go about their routines, and there is no sign of remorse. This visual detail is reinforced by the closing scene, a casual, warm conversation between Awaluddin, Pak Mantri's son, and a village child.



Figure 15: The village returning to normal as if nothing happened

Thus, *Black Box* implements the principle of *succinctly and forthrightly* through three main strategies: (1) compressing the narrative into efficient visual sequences, (2) consolidating characters and social symbols to strengthen thematic meaning, and (3) eliminating expository narration to produce a direct and emotionally charged viewing experience. The adaptation demonstrates that "brevity" does not entail a loss of depth; rather, it becomes a means of intensifying the dramatic effect and social irony central to Jackson's work.



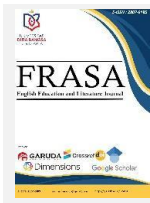
CONCLUSION

The adaptation of two world short stories, *A Temporary Matter* by Jhumpa Lahiri and *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson, demonstrates that students are able to perform creative and contextual transmediation, transferring not merely plot and characters, but renegotiating the meanings embedded in the source texts. By applying the principles of dramatization, visibility–audibility, and narrative condensation as formulated by Hutcheon, both films present an effective intersemiotic transformation: from reflective literary narration to embodied cinematic expression through gesture, visual composition, sound rhythm, and local symbolism. These findings reaffirm that the students' adaptations are not imitative reproductions, but rearticulations that place local values at the centre of interpretation.

Narrative localization in *Interlude* shows how domestic settings, the symbolism of silence, and the traumatic experience of an urban couple are translated into the Indonesian social context. Visual media such as the housing environment, language, and the metaphor of candlelight during power outages functions as a medium for activating collective memory as a new frame for the characters' emotional conflict. Meanwhile, *Black Box* illustrates how the modern ritual of violence in Jackson's original text is transposed into a Javanese adat structure grounded in collectivism through ritual language, gender hierarchy, and rural symbolism. In this adaptation, local culture serves as a lens through which the idea of violence legitimized by tradition is re-read.

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