

Graphic Literature Meets Classic Fiction: Discerning the Visual Language of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fahrenheit 451*

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Abstract

Abstract Visual language has gained importance with the acceptance of graphic novels as a literary genre. Visual Language studies the interaction between words and images to convey meaning (Cohn 2013). The current research explores how visual elements in comics combine to convey a cohesive message in graphic novels, especially focusing on visual morphology, visual narrative structure, and visual lexicon. The research relies on theories of visual language by Cohn to analyze the graphic adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* (1984) and *Fahrenheit 451* (2009). It explores the role of fewer words and a different writing style used in graphic novels to convey meaning in visual narratives. Discerning visual language in graphic novels is expected to add to the human understanding of communicating and comprehending meaning through the interplay of words and images.

Keywords: Visual Language, Graphic Novel, Visual Morphology, Visual Lexicon, Visual Narrative Structure, Panels.

Introduction

Authors of several comic books have drawn comparisons between their writing process and traditional language. Jack "King" Kirby, renowned for his immense impact on mainstream American comics, once remarked that he had been engaged in writing through images (Kirby 1999). Similarly, Osamu Tezuka, revered as Japan's "God of Comics," expressed that he does not view his comics as mere illustrations (Power 2009). He believed that he was not illustrating; he was composing a narrative using a distinct type of symbol (Schodt 1983). In his introduction to McSweeney's, comic artist Chris Ware (2004) articulated that Comics are more than a mere genre; they constitute an evolving language.

The visual language of graphic novels is a captivating fusion of art and storytelling that goes beyond traditional literary formats. This unique medium combines illustrations, text, and layout to create a rich narrative experience that engages visual and narrative meaning. Much like a symphony of images and words, graphic novels convey stories, emotions, and themes through a carefully orchestrated interplay of visual elements.

Unlike traditional novels, which rely solely on written words to depict scenes and characters, graphic novels introduce readers to a dynamic world where visual cues hold equal narrative weight. The intricate illustrations, varying panel sizes, and the arrangement of images on each page guide readers through the narrative with a rhythm that complements the textual content. These visual choices influence the story's pacing, tone, and emotional impact, enhancing the reader's engagement and understanding. Graphic novels distinguish themselves by presenting self-contained stories with intricate plots instead of serialized narratives in comics. Weiner (2003) defines graphic novels as book-length works that use a combination of images and text to present complete stories. Unlike traditional comic books, graphic novels are designed to stand-alone and can encompass a wide range of genres, including mystery, superheroes, and supernatural themes, without being tied to ongoing comic book series.

1. Unlocking the visual narrative

Graphic novels are a vibrant and versatile medium that bridges the gap between visual and literary arts. Exploring graphic novels offers a unique opportunity to engage with storytelling innovatively, fostering a deeper appreciation for narrative, art, and the seamless fusion of words and images. Research in this area focuses on how graphic novels represent various identities, cultures, and communities. Writers such as Lan (2022) and Allison (2014) examined themes of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. These researchers analyzed how graphic novels contribute to diverse representation and discussions on social justice, such as portraying characters from marginalized communities and their impact on readers' perceptions of identity. Some research delves into the educational applications of graphic novels. These include investigating their effectiveness in teaching complex subjects, improving literacy skills, and engaging reluctant readers (Rocamora-Pérez et al. 2017). Studies might assess how graphic novels are integrated into curricula and their influence on students' comprehension and critical thinking, such as Karp (2012). Research at the intersection of literature and art examines graphic novels as artistic expression. Scholars explore how graphic novels challenge traditional notions of literature and explore the creative choices made by creators (Richardson 2017). Some studies analyzed the visual styles, symbolism, and interplay between images and words (Graham 2008). Some of the research on the impact of graphic novels focuses on readers' experiences and the development of visual literacy skills. For example, Studies by Williams (2008) investigated how readers engage with graphic novels, how their comprehension skills differ from traditional texts, and how exposure to visual storytelling influences their interpretation of visual media in general. The aim of this paper is to explore how meaning is constructed in graphic novels through the interplay of words and images, and to investigate the role of visual morphology, narrative structure, and lexicon in the practices of meaning-making.

The visual nature of graphic novels makes them highly accessible and appealing to a broad range of readers, including those who might find traditional novels intimidating or less engaging. Graphic novels merge visual and textual elements to create a harmonious narrative. The interplay between images and words adds depth and complexity to the storytelling, allowing for a multi-layered experience. They challenge conventional storytelling norms by playing with panel layouts, sequencing, and visual

symbolism. Many traditional stories have been adapted as graphic novels in the last decade. Thus, the conventional and the graphic versions of the same novel are two different ways of saying things; they are narrating the same story in two different ways. The same notion can be reiterated using Cohn's words that comics are written in visual languages like novels or magazines *are written in English*. Potentially, comics can be written in both a visual language (of images) and a written language (of text)" (Cohn 2013, 2). This study enables the reader to explore the three systematic parts of the visual language by giving examples from graphic novels. These recurring parts make the analytical categories of the current research (as discussed in section 2.2).

2. Research methodology

This study borrows the theoretical framework from visual language theory (Cohn 2013). Few researchers have targeted examining visual language regarding the interplay between words and images in the selected graphic novels. *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fahrenheit 451* are chosen for their contrasting themes and narrative styles. *Pride and Prejudice*, a classic novel, provides insight into how historical and social themes are visualized, while *Fahrenheit 451*, a dystopian work, offers a perspective on futuristic and critical themes. Analyzing these adaptations helps explore how visual language conveys complex ideas and emotions across different genres and contexts in graphic novels.

The systematic parts of visual language analyzed in this research make up the analytical categories. These categories include visual morphology, visual narrative structure, and visual lexicon.

Visual morphology

Like written language, Cohn's (2013) concept of visual morphology delves into the investigation of meaning-bearing units within the image, although the unit is not constant across images. For example, in depicting a face, is the face itself the tiniest morpheme, or is it the eye or even the pupil within the eye? This involves inherent ambiguities and is to be decided by the artist according to the context. Visual Morphology refers to rules and regulations used to convey meaning through visual design. Using a variety of modes is necessary when communicating with visual grammar. A picture, a map, and a diagram are all examples of visual morphology. Line, shape, color, form, motion, texture, pattern, direction, and angle are some of the structural building blocks of visual morphology (Cohn 2013).

Visual narrative structure

A visual narrative is a story told primarily through visual media, i.e. photography, illustration, video, and graphics. Elements of visible narrative structure are scene and settings, characters, style, tone, animation, movement, and visual thinking. It is based on a series of pictures produced with purpose, usually depicting a continuous series of events to tell a story. Modern language interpretations emphasize that the communication of meaning goes beyond merely basic grammatical units like words. Instead, it encompasses a systematic combination of these units in various sizes across multiple levels of linguistic structure. Cohn (2013) compares these more extended grammatical units, such as sentences/paragraphs, to the arrangement of panels in visual language. This leads us to tackle the inquiry: What forms of

representation do artists employ to create meaning from a sequence of images? According to Cohn (2013), the visual narrative structure consists of several core categories: Orienter, Establisher, Initiator, Prolongation, Peak, and Release. All the narratives have a plotline or a trajectory of action. In the case of graphic novels, the action is spread over many pages. Thus, all the images do not contain all these narrative categories. Cohn (2013) states that these narrative categories must be in a well-defined sequence, though this sequence may be unique in each image.

Visual lexicon

The visual lexicon includes signs like text in the thought bubbles and speech balloons, emotion lines, or circular stars above people's heads to show pain or dizziness. The visual lexicon includes all the visual elements and symbols holding a more symbolic nature (Cohn 2007). The creation of novel signs within this category proves considerably challenging. Typically, there are limited types of visual lexicons consisting of a set of parameterized primitive visible items that can be used to create more complex visual presentations (Cohn 2013).

Pictures that speak - understanding Cohn's concept of visual language

Visual language refers to the system of communication that uses graphic elements to convey meaning, ideas, and messages. According to Cohn (2013), humans utilize only three modalities to articulate ideas: generating sounds, enacting physical movements, and crafting graphic representations. He proposes that once any of these modalities adheres to a structured sequence guided by regulating principles, giving rise to output constrained by rules—essentially forming a grammar—it results in language. Thus, orderly successive sounds evolve into the world's spoken languages, methodical subsequent bodily movements transform into sign languages, and systematic consecutive images tangibly manifest as visual languages. McCloud (1993) proposes that comics possess a distinctive visual language, blending words and images to convey meaning using several techniques, including panels, gutters, and speech balloons. One of the central themes in McCloud (1993) is the notion of closure. Closure refers to how readers mentally bridge the gaps between panels in a comic book, enabling the story to flow smoothly with a sense of continuity and movement.

We have chosen graphic adaptations of two novels belonging to two completely different eras and genres. By studying novels from contrasting genres, we uncover valuable insights into how various elements, themes, and narrative techniques influence readers and contribute to the evolution of literature. It allows for a comparative analysis of how distinct narrative structures, themes, and stylistic choices impact the graphic adaptation of traditional novels. Different genres often reflect specific cultural and societal contexts, as in this case, the Victorian era and the postmodern era. Graphic novels reflect and reinterpret cultural and societal contexts by using visual elements and narrative techniques that align with specific eras. They can depict historical settings and social norms through imagery and themes, while adapting contemporary issues and styles to resonate with modern audiences. For instance, *"Pride and Prejudice"* (1984) graphic adaptation portrays 19th-century British society through period-specific costumes, settings, and social norms, reflecting the era's class distinctions and gender roles. Whereas

"*Fahrenheit 451*" (2009) graphic adaptation uses contemporary visual styles and fragmented narratives to explore themes of censorship and technology, reflecting modern anxieties about media and information.

The analysis of the current study is divided into two parts consisting of four images each. Part 1 consists of the selected images from *Pride and Prejudice* (1984), and the second part consists of pictures from the novel *Fahrenheit 451* (2009). Every image is discussed from the perspective of the three analytical categories devised for analysis. These categories are visual morphology, visual narrative structure and visual lexicon.

3. Analysis of the intersection between art and text in *Pride and Prejudice*

The interplay of visual language in the graphic novel adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* adds a new dimension to the classic story, combining the power of visuals and text to convey the narrative. The artists use facial expressions, gestures, and postures to communicate the characters' inner thoughts and feelings. Thus allowing the readers to understand better the dynamics between characters, such as the initial tension between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr Darcy or the affectionate teasing between Elizabeth and her sisters.

Contextualizing Austen's universe: The art of setting the stage in *Pride and Prejudice*

The opening scene of *Pride and Prejudice*, written by Jane Austen, is crucial as it sets the tone for the entire novel. In Figure 1, a ballroom with chandeliers hanging from the ceiling is depicted. Well-dressed ladies including Elizabeth Bennet, a spirited and intelligent young woman with dark hair, is shown standing in conversation with her elder sister Jane. They both wear elegant Regency-era dresses.

Regarding Figure 1, the dynamics of Bennet's family are showcased skillfully. Mrs Bennet is shown in a conversation with her husband. The gestures of her hand replaced the authorial comments given in traditional novels to understand the characters' feelings. Mr Bennet has his back towards Mrs Bennet, depicting his disinterest in whatever his nagging wife suggests. Jane and Elizabeth are conversing while Jane, the eldest daughter, focuses on embroidery, and Elizabeth holds a hat. Jane has a sweet smile on her face depicting her docile and submissive nature. The younger sisters are shown busy reading a book and practicing a piano lesson. This portrayal highlights the girls' talents and their diverse range of skills.

The narrative structure becomes more evident in an image where more than one panel are arranged on one page, and this is not the case with Figure 1. However, the artist has put Jane and Elizabeth in the foreground, helping the viewer understand that the narrative will be primarily their story. Nevertheless, the rest of the family members will also play their role in furthering the plotline, as they are also shown in the background. The setting of the novel becomes clear from the beginning of the book. This aim is achieved through the narrative category *Orienter* which includes the dressing, the home furnishing, and all the animate and inanimate objects shown in Figure 1.

The second core narrative category is *Establisher*. In Figure 01, the two eldest sisters, Elizabeth and Jane, are the *establishers*, as they are the sole cause of interaction between Mr. and Mrs. Bingley. Establisher provides referential information (characters, things) without involving readers in the narrative's actions or happenings. This is usually a constant procedure or state that is changed by the

occurrence of the story. The persistent object of worry for Mrs. Bennet is the marriage of her daughters, especially the eldest ones.



Figure 1

The most easily recognizable form of visual lexicon includes captions, thought bubbles and speech balloons. These three are grouped under a broader category called “*Carriers*”, which function to encapsulate text (or images). In Figure 1, the only type of *carriers* used is *narrative captions* that show the narrator's thoughts in boxes. One narrative caption appears at the top of the panel and the other at the bottom. Whenever we receive any visual representation through our eyes, our brain uses a complex network of pathways to interpret the meaning of images. The linguistic item plays a crucial role in confirming the perception the human mind has made. The captions in Figure 1 also plays this role.

Building suspense: The crafting of tension in *Pride and Prejudice*

Figure 2 deftly cultivates suspense through narrative techniques and character dynamics and establishes tension in the novel's opening. The upper half of the figure 2 depicts an elegant drawing room,

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where Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley are in a conversation. The second panel captures the moment when the Bennet sisters first lay eyes on Mr. Bingley, highlighting their varied reactions and setting the stage for the romantic entanglements that will unfold throughout the story.

In the upper panel the room is adorned with fine furnishings and decor. Mr. Darcy is seated in a composed manner, while Mr. Bingley leans forward with a grin. The relaxed sitting position of Darcy on the left-hand side of the upper panel discloses his indifferent nature showing a contrast with Mr Bingley's amiable nature. In the lower panel, although the two elder sisters are shown peeping out of the window, they refrain from giving any comment, unlike the younger and immature sisters on the right-hand side of the lower panel. Their faces show a mixture of curiosity and excitement. Gathering two men and five girls in one image intrigues the reader about the potential romantic pairings.

Production scripts detail the transformation of conceptual information into physical expression through a conduit to the motor system, which governs our manual movements. The artists construct drawings by executing the schemas stored in memory, combined according to morphological and "photological" rules intertwined with production scripts (Cohn 2013, 64). It is pertinent to mention that this interplay between a graphic lexicon of preserved schemas and a set of combinatory rules facilitates a more profound comprehension of depth and shading. If this knowledge is applied to Figure 2, we can see that the male partner is shown as the main focus of attention, especially in the lower panel. His back is towards the window showing his departure on one hand and disinterest on the other. The supposedly female partners are interested in Mr Bingley's appearance conveying the meaning of chasing a suitable spouse for themselves. This is one of the main themes of the novel, where men are shown in a privileged position over women.

In Figure 02, the first panel exhibits *Orienter*, indicating the action's primary location. The setting reminds us of the 19th century because of the clothing, furniture, long boots, and hairstyle. In the upper panel, Mr Bingley's dress and long boots signify power, and prosperity. Passion for reading is shown by placing the bookshelf in the backdrop.

In the second panel, Mr Bingley is the *establisher* who is the reason for the interaction between the Bennet sisters. The younger sisters are the *initiators* whose comment about Mr Bingley's pleasant appearance. Mr Bennet is standing in respect of Mr Bingley. The demeanor of Bennet's daughters acts as *prolongation*, which marks a medial stage and shows a continuation of the conflict.



Figure 2

In Figure 2, we have six *carriers*, four of which appear as speech bubbles, while two carry the authorial comments. The pointed tail tells us that in the first panel, both male figures participated in the conversation. The third carrier is in the form of a narrative caption carrying the authorial comment. The caption is loosely placed over the upper left corner of the panel without a defining box. Although the order of the three *carriers* in the upper panel in Figure 2 is unclear in terms of chronological order. Still, the human mind can decipher meaning due to *closure*. In the lower panel, the tail of the speech balloon is pointed towards the younger sisters, marking them as the speakers.

Sculpting emotional peaks: The author's strategies for keeping readers on edge

Figure 3 captures the dynamic between Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley as they discuss the Bennet sisters, displaying their contrasting views and foreshadowing the complexities of their relationships with the Bennet family. The tension between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* begins to take shape during the Meryton Assembly, a pivotal scene early in the novel. Elizabeth's first encounter with Mr Darcy leaves her with a negative impression. She overhears him describing her as *tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me*. This comment, which she finds arrogant and insulting, creates an immediate sense of dislike towards him. Figure 3 captures the scene skillfully. The scene ends with a

close-up of Elizabeth's face, her eyes reflecting her resolve and the beginning of the "prejudice" she will hold against Mr. Darcy.

In Figure 3, Mr Darcy's aloof and reserved demeanor is evident from his body language. Mr. Bingley's enthusiasm wanes slightly as he considers Mr. Darcy's dismissive remarks. He glances at Mr. Darcy with a mixture of surprise and uncertainty, as he expected his friend to share in his excitement. Although Darcy looks at Elizabeth, he appears disdainful of the local society and considers her beneath his notice. Elizabeth and Darcy appear in all three panels in Figure 03 but not even once they are shown face to face. Elizabeth's expression is animated as she has her back towards the gentlemen. She has heard Darcy's dismissive comments and this is reinforced by the authorial comment given in the narrative caption at the bottom of the image. She is too composed to react or look at him. This is established through her body gestures and facial expressions because, unlike traditional novels, graphic adaptation cannot carry authorial judgments at length.



Figure 3

Cohn (2007) discusses the panels as attention units in a graphic novel. Generally, panels have a systematic structure, although they can also have a certain level of abstract consistency. In figure 3 panels function as a "window", functioning as distinct "attention units" that emphasize the dismissive comments given by Darcy. The upper horizontal panel in Figure 3 consists of medium shots of *initiators* in the conversation, i.e., Darcy and Mr. Bingley. Jane and Elizabeth appear as *establishers* and do not initiate the discussion but are the topic of the debate. The lower panel shows Darcy, Mr Bingley and Elizabeth in a close shot. Close-ups may prototypically be *Micros* which means consisting of a single character. However, in Figure 3, the artist included all three characters in the image to reflect the burgeoning tension between Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet from their initial encounter.

The prevailing concept in comprehending sequential images suggests that viewers establish connections between the meanings portrayed in adjacent panels. This notion is prominently articulated in McCloud's (1993) exploration of *panel transitions*. According to McCloud, readers grasp sequences by deducing and filling in the information that bridges the behaviors depicted in two consecutive panels. This approach of panel transitions works in graphic novels as well. In Figure 3, the three panels depict three different scenes of the same occasion, and there is no shift in time and place within a single location. The upper panel portrays Mr Bingley and Mr Darcy discussing the beautiful girls, and Elizabeth is shown in the backdrop listening to their discussion.

The analysis of Figure 3 reveals that the panel transitions in *Pride and Prejudice* are smooth and logical. This follows the whole atmosphere and true spirit of the Victorian era. The relationships between every panel contribute to the cohesive narrative, ensuring a smooth storytelling experience. In the last half of this article, we see that to depict the paranoia and chaos in society in the postmodern era, *Fahrenheit 451* carries many cases of promiscuous panel transition and convergence transition.

In Figure 3, we find typical speech balloons and authorial comments in captions. The authorial comments are used to reveal the inner thoughts of the characters. This could also be done through the thought babbles, but the artist had to follow the literary tradition of the Victorian era, where a stream of consciousness was not introduced yet. In graphic novels, words and pictures work together to convey the narrative. Without encapsulating the dialogues in speech bubbles and thoughts in captions, it was not possible to decipher the rising tension between the characters in figure 03.

Wickham's detrimental influence

Figure 4 captures the pivotal moment when Elizabeth meets Mr. Wickham, showing their initial interaction and the beginnings of the emotional connection that will impact the course of the story. Wickham's Detrimental Influence refers to the negative impact and the wicked role played by Mr George Wickham. Wickham is a charming and charismatic character who initially appears likeable and charming. However, it becomes evident soon that he is manipulative, dishonest, and self-serving.

In Figure 4, the initial panel features Elizabeth engaged in conversation with Mr. Wickham. He is elegantly dressed and has his back towards the viewer. Mr. Wickham's speech bubble displays that he is recounting the details of his life. The second panel employs a zooming effect to show the expressions on

Mr Wickham's face, emphasising his actions and gestures, particularly his heightened interest in gauging Elizabeth's reaction. Wickham's hands are clasped together in panel 2, and facial expressions show lowered eyebrows out of concern. His sitting posture in panel four can be labelled as aggressive. It matches his intent since he is verbally attacking Darcy. Wickham falsely presents himself as a victim of Mr Darcy's mistreatment, claiming that Darcy cheated him of his rightful inheritance. This portrayal gains him sympathy and support, particularly from Elizabeth Bennet

Elizabeth's speech bubble reveals her attentive and interested responses. She listens to Mr. Wickham's story, her expression is a mixture of empathy and curiosity. She is drawn in by his words and apparent openness. The position of Elizabeth's hand in the first and the fourth panel in Figure 4 make her appear agitated. While in the last panel, Elizabeth appears preoccupied owing to the position of her arm. She seems absorbed in her grim thoughts, prejudiced by Wickham's skillful manipulation.



Figure 4

It has been observed in this research that the *navigational patterns* of panels are relatively straightforward. These images often depict objects from the real world, and we naturally perceive actions that occur in reality. From a broader perspective, it is essential to acknowledge that we are not dealing with a single image, but with a succession of pictures organized by the shapes of the panel borders. This immediately presents a challenge: how do we determine the direction in which the sequence unfolds? Is it left-to-right and downward? Right-to-left and downward? Does it follow a zigzag pattern, ascending and descending? Or does it radiate from the center outwards? This sequence incorporates even further layers, including rows within rows, particularly evident in dialogues (panels 1, 3, 4, & 5 in Figure 4), introducing additional layers of complexity. Understanding the *navigational structure* of panels is purely intuitive. In Figure 4, the viewer automatically assumes that panels 2 & 3 show a close-up image of the same man captured from the back in panels 1 and 4.

The speech balloons and the pointed tails make the situation clear to the reader, and there was no need for authorial comments. However, another type of visual lexicon can be observed in the form of focal lines from the eyes of Wickham to Elizabeth's face. Since he is eager to progress cautiously in bad-mouthing Darcy in front of Elizabeth, he is shown carefully observing her expressions as if he wants to monitor the impact of his words on her mind. This is very evident in panel 2, where the sole focus of attention for Wickham is Elizabeth. The reader can decipher it because of the focal lines of Wickham, even though Elizabeth is not shown in that panel. Elizabeth's speech bubble in 3rd and 5th panel reveal her sympathetic responses, expressing disbelief at Mr. Darcy's actions and questioning his character. She appears to be forming a bond of trust with Mr. Wickham as they share their thoughts. The scene ends with a close-up of Elizabeth's face, her eyes reflecting a growing sense of connection with Mr. Wickham. The atmosphere is charged with a mix of intrigue and warmth.

4. Analysis of the intersection between art and text in *Fahrenheit 451*

Four pages are selected from the graphic adaptation of *Fahrenheit 451* and discussed in the light of analytical categories.

From spark to inferno: The opening scene in setting the tone for *Fahrenheit 451*

Figure 5 shows the opening scene of *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury, which is rich in symbolism and sets the tone for the entire novel. Figure 5 shows a stark, desolate cityscape dominating the upper portion of the frame. Towering streetlights, lifeless paths, and a pervasive sense of isolation characterize the cityscape. The colors are muted, primarily greys and blacks, with a hint of cold blue to emphasize the lifelessness.

The color palette chosen for Figure 5 contributes to the overall mood and atmosphere of the novel *Fahrenheit 451*. Bright, vibrant colors might be used for cheerful and lively scenes, while in Figure 5, muted or darker tones represent more somber and dramatic moments. The careful selection of colors helps enhance the story's emotional impact and provides visual language. The image in which Guy Montag and Clarisse meet for the first time evokes a sense of unease, isolation, and tension. The juxtaposition of the imposing cityscape with the solitary figure emphasizes Montag's individuality in a

conformist world. The atmosphere created in Figure 5 hints at the danger, paranoia, loneliness and rebellion bubbling beneath the surface. The falling leaves provide the theme of lifelessness.

The general concept about graphic novels is that interpreting sequential images is relatively straightforward. Owing to the resemblance to the real world, one might assume that understanding a series of images is akin to directly witnessing events. However, this explanation oversimplifies the situation in figure 5 and overlooks a considerable amount of potential intricacy, especially in *Fahrenheit 451*, which has a dominant theme of mayhem and turmoil. This theme has seeped into the disorderly arrangement of panels. Figure 5 is a combination of macro, close-up and long-shot panels - macro in panel 1, & panel 5, close-ups in panels 2 & 3, and a Long short in panel 4 of Clarisse and Montag. This zooming-in and zooming-out movement captures the encounter between Montag and Clarisse and highlights their interaction and the impact this meeting has on Montag's thoughts. In the progression of these five panels, the close-up of Clarisse and Montag alternate between the two characters until both characters unite in panels 4 and 5. This technique is termed the *convergence construction* by Cohn (2013) and employs seamless transitions between characters. Meeting Clarisse is the most crucial development of this part, highlighted through converging the focus on her close-up shot in panel 3.



Figure 5

Using visual morphemes in visual languages serves as a means to convey meaning, although identifying the minutest elements within images can present difficulties. The present analysis directs attention towards the visual components stored within individuals' memory as an integral component of a broader lexicon, examining their interaction with other signs to augment meaning. Figure 5 depicts a pivotal moment in the story. Clarisse is a young woman who introduces Montag, a fireman responsible for burning books, to a world of curiosity, critical thinking, and introspection. This encounter marks the beginning of Montag's transformation as he starts questioning his society.

Clarisse is depicted as a young woman with a contemplative expression, and in every panel, Montag is looking at her as if she is leading the way to discovering a new Montag. Montag is shown in his firefighter uniform, and his demeanor conveys a mix of confusion, skepticism, and a hint of awakening as he converses with Clarisse. Some symbolic elements, like a subtle representation of falling leaves, are shown in the backdrop of the first panel as the only dynamic element in the image. These falling leaves surely carry semantic weight and contribute to the overall narrative hinting towards the theme of desolation and emptiness.

Conflagration of conscience: The sacrifice of the old woman

Figure 6 is a graphic representation of one of the most crucial scenes, rightly termed the symbolic blaze of rebellion. The illustration foreshadows the flames about to engulf the older woman through vivid and intense colors, emphasizing her courage and defiance. The graphic representation aims to capture the emotional depth and thematic significance of the scene in *Fahrenheit 451* where the old woman self-immolates in protest. The choice of colors, composition, and symbolism plays a crucial role in conveying the intensity of the moment and the novel's broader themes.

Not a single recognizable face is shown in Figure 6. The two extreme sides of society are shown. One consist of the woman representing the desire for vigorous resistance and the other, Capt. Betty representing the will to crush the resistance with unchallenged authority. Although the fire is not burned yet, the warm hues in the image cast an illuminating light on the whole picture.

While deciphering the meaning of an image, the human mind pairs the information with our abstract understanding of concepts. In image 6, we recognize that the initial panels portray a firefighting truck (actually a fire-igniting truck in the novel) and a few uniformed men with Helmets because we are familiar with the appearances of these two together. We retain this mental image of the uniformed men and the fire truck as we progress through the rest of the panels. Even though these characters do not appear in panels 3, 4 and 5, we understand that each image doesn't introduce an entirely new situation, and we know the rest of the panels as giving further information about the various states of continuous development across panels within the same setting. Keeping this concept in mind, we discuss the appearance of the hand as a visual lexicon under the next heading.

Observing closely, we find that the four smaller panels are embedded on the most extensive first panel showing the setting of the subsequent panels for ease of understanding. Even when panels lack a systematic arrangement, they can still exhibit a certain level of inherent abstraction. Panels serve as a form of "window" into a visual scene, effectively acting as units of attention that emphasize different

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parts of the scene in various manners (Cohn 2007). Within a sequence of images, a set can consist of two distinct types of elements.

1. Active entities, which recur across panels by participating in the actions and events of the sequence (such as the characters within the scene)
2. Inactive entities remain stationary across panels and constitute the "background" elements.

Cohn (2013) classifies panels based on these elements and is worth repeating here.

- Macro: Portrays multiple active entities. (Panel 1 & 2 in figure 6)
- Mono: Depicts a single active entity. (Panel 4 in figure 6)
- Micro: Presents less than one active entity, often in a close-up view. (Panel 3 & 5a, 5b in Figure 6)

Considering the progressions illustrated in Figure 6, the panels alternate between six other representations of hands until the final panel of the sequence, where a female hand without gloves with a match stick is shown twice (Panels 5a & 5b). The reader understands this is the old lady's hand who refused to leave books alone for burning. This *convergence construction* utilizes macro, micro and mono panels to show a smooth transition before converging on the hand with a matchstick instead of the hand with a lighter. This concludes Figure 6 by establishing the older woman as the game-changer in the novel.

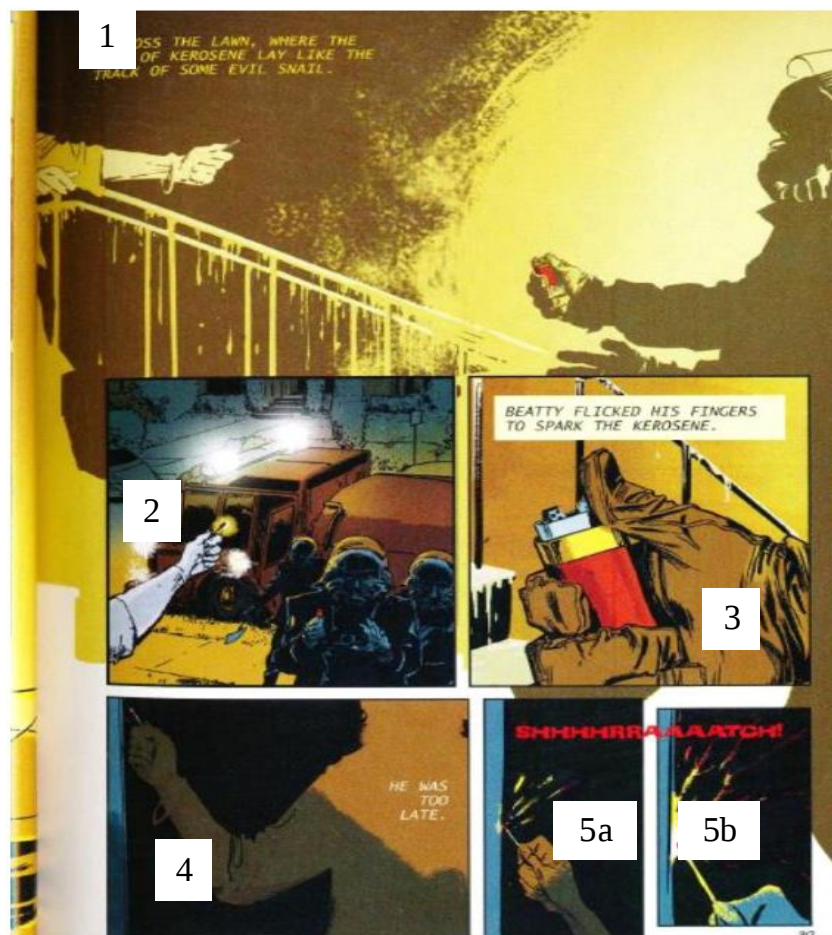


Figure 6

It is worth noting that every panel in Figure 6 has a zoomed-in image of a hand. Let's consider the progression till panels 4 and 5. Every panel depicts one object repeatedly, and we identify that they are situated within a recognizable setting. Panel 1 & 2 offer a comprehensive view of this scene's environment, which we never see as a whole, and delineates the specific portions that each panel emphasizes. In this sequence, the overall atmosphere is presented before panels 3, 4, & 5, yet we retain these spatial relationships in our minds through a heightened sense of spatial organization. This concealed spatial setting is something the viewer constructs mentally. Within this frame, attention is directed to various important components of a depicted visual space. The entire scene captures a uniformed fireman and a human silhouette at the top of a staircase in panel 1, the exterior view which includes the fire truck with a bunch of uniformed firemen in panel 2), and the detailed close-ups of two hands in the rest of the panels.

Indexical lines portray dynamic movements and highlight particular objects. Illustrated in Figure 6, the indexical lines capture the moment when Beatty has put his thumb on the lighter to ignite it with a flick of his finger. In panels 5a and 5b, the indexical line shows the dynamic movement of the hand of the older woman who just ignited the matchbox. These movements are created through visible marks such as the "SHHHHHHRRRRRAAAACH" on panel 5. This connection between physical activities and creating a visual lexicon is significant to bear in mind, particularly when considering the visual language of comics.

Navigating Guy Montag's confusion: From clarity to chaos

Figure 7 is captured immediately after the emotional moment of Montag pleading Mildred for her support and understanding, conveying the tension and conflict between them regarding their differing views on their society and the need for change. In Figure 7, Montag's solitary figure symbolizes the protagonist's internal conflict and his awakening to the oppressive nature of his world. The atmosphere appears gloomy, reminding the viewer of the suppression of knowledge, the dangers of censorship, and the potential for rebellion. In the lower part of the frame, Montag's solitary figure stands amidst the city's emptiness with a conflicted expression, emphasizing his inner turmoil. His posture is slightly hunched as if burdened by the weight of his surroundings.

. The muted color palette in figure 7 reflects the bleakness of society. For exploring the visual morphology of Figure 7, we need to understand how people derive meaning from a series of images. In verbal language, a similar question would be how individuals make sense of a sequence of words. Just as syntax is necessary for distinguishing random word strings from coherent sentences, the visual modality also relies on a system of rules and constraints to differentiate between random sequences of panels and cohesive sequences. This system can be considered the grammar of visual language, which operates at a higher level of meaning than mere syntax. While a single image can convey a wealth of information surpassing that of an individual word, when images are combined, they form a structure similar to that used in constructing whole sentences or narratives. The design employed to understand sequential images may be akin to the system used in comprehending sequences of sentences in discourse or series of shots

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in the film. In Figure 7, we see four panels embedded on panel 5, which provides the canvass for the four panels.

In Figure 7, Montag's body language conveys urgency and desperation. Montag's thoughts are depicted in a thought box. In panel 1, he carries books as carefully as possible, close to his body. The corners of the book cover peek out amidst his arms. In panel 2, Montag is cautiously placing books into a bush, symbolizing the act of hiding them. Panel 3 and 4 show a transition to a new scene where Montag is knocking at the door. The color scheme used for the whole figure tells us that the actions occur at the exact location. Figure 7 demonstrates that mutual interaction is integral in understanding the narrative constructed by various panels on a page. The instances shown in a panel aren't isolated and unrelated occurrences. Moving forward, let's delve into the rhythm and delivery of events depicted in Figure 7. Why the artist has initiated the sequence with an incident and concluded with a circumstance? Could it not commence with a passive state instead? These queries concern the narrative composition of the sequence - the syntax of sequential images - dictating the portrayal of events in figure 07. Also worth contemplating is the function served by the last panel in the overall significance of the sequence? In terms of meaning, it highlights the loneliness of Montag and his adversary. However, this aspect is already conveyed by panels 3 & 4 - so why opt for another lonely silhouette of Montag in panel 5?



Figure 7

From a narrative stance, panel 5 contributes additional pacing beats, prolonging Montag's effort to interact with Mildred and intensifying the tension they have developed with each other. Montag thoroughly searched his home, discovering a stack of books hidden by his wife, which he subsequently concealed in bushes. He was met with an eerie silence in his home. These panels don't necessarily extend time within the characters' action sequence or the scenario itself. The extension of narrative pacing offered by these panels amplifies the tension, culminating in the fifth panel - the sequence's climax - where Montag is finally ready to run away from the urban space. Montag ventures downtown, feeling utterly alone with the weight of his grave mistake. Symbolically, the buzzing sound of mosquitoes represents the haunting voice of the older man.

The background in Figure 7 shows a darker and cooler color palette which signifies the outdoors and the sense of secrecy. Bushes are made using deeper, darker colors to create the shadows. Schemas encompass shading elements, including drop shadows, cross-hatching, and structured shading techniques, for instance, consistent shading patterns employed whenever a backlit 3D perspective of a face is drawn, as shown in Figure 7.

Clash of convictions: Montag's standoff with captain Beatty

Figure 8 begins with a wide shot depicting the setting, which is a dark and smoky alley. Beatty sees that Montag is listening to something and strikes him on the head. Captain Beatty's gloved hand punches Montag in the face. Much tension radiates from their stances, showing the conflict's intensity. The radio falls out of Montag's ear, and Beatty picks it up, saying he would have it traced to find the person on the other end. To symbolize the book-burning theme, small flames dance around the edges of the frame, threatening to consume everything. These flames are subtle yet distinct, representing the dangerous ideology of burning books that permeates society. Contrasting lighting symbolizes the struggle's aftermath and the tension that lingers.

Panel 1 in figure 8, shows Beatty's authoritative gesture by focusing on his clenched fist and Montag's fallen figure creating a visual contrast. Panel 2 shows a zoomed-in image of the earplug to make emphasis - panel three transitions to a medium shot of Captain Beatty's enlarged hand and Montag's fallen figure. The blaze in the background adds to the confrontation's hostility. In panel 5, the action switches to an angled shot to capture the action as it unfolds. The scene is shaded in deep, ominous colors to set a tense atmosphere. Through careful use of composition, lighting, angles, and details, figure 8 conveys the energy and emotions of the fight between Captain Beatty and Montag while capturing the pivotal moment in the story.

The graphic representation of actions creates meaning by producing the schemas stored in the viewer's memory. Transitioning between panels is notably intuitive, aligning with our natural progression while reading: moving from one meeting to the following. The panels in Figure 8 can be categorized as follows,

- Amorphic: Represents scenes with no active entities, exclusively comprising inactive entities (Example Panel 2 in figure 8).
- Macro: Portrays multiple active entities (Example Panel 1, 3, & 5 in figure 8).

- Mono: showing a solitary figure of Captain Beatty, closely observing the radio buds (Panel 4 in figure 8).

A potential complication arises if we only consider the localized connections between panels, the transitions shown in Figure 8 would seem disjointed or, at most, as shifts between scene fragments. What relationship does a person falling on the ground in panel one have with the close-up of a small radio bud in panel 2? Lacking a broader view of the sequence, a coherent narrative would be absent. In reality, without referencing a more comprehensive memory of the sequence, we wouldn't deduce that all these panels symbolize elements within the exact location, as a single panel doesn't present them together. Instead, our understanding entirely emanates from our comprehension of the complete sequence.

Impact stars is the name given by Cohn (2013) to the lines used to create dynamic movements that often occur in conjunction with motion lines or impact lines. In Figure 8, the impact stars are not star-shaped, but still, the tiny flashes around the fist are used to show the impact of the hand on Montag's face. In Figure 8, the impact stars are only "half-formed". The tiny flashes around Montag's head indicate the point from where the head has lurched back from the punch. The impact stars indicate where the head once was. Similarly half-formed impact stars are shown around the tiny, fallen radio buds in panel 2, which indicates its bumpy movement on the ground. The squiggled tail suggests that the voice emerges from the blue bullet radio or the radio bud. This type of tail has jagged edges used with the carriers to show that the words are being transmitted. The squiggled tail is especially helpful in panel 4 to mark the speaker since the tail is pointed towards Captain Beatty, who is listening to Faber's voice through the radio bud.



Figure 8

5 Visual Variances in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fahrenheit 451*

The graphic adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fahrenheit 451* differ in various aspects due to the distinct genres, themes, and narrative styles of the original novels. The contrastive elements are summed up in the next section.

Visual style and setting

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the graphic adaptation employs a more detailed and elegant visual style to capture the period setting and the characters' interactions. It features intricate period costumes, landscapes, and explicit depictions of society. The monochromatic greyscale illustrations focus on portraying characters' emotions, facial expressions, and body language to convey the subtleties of social interactions, romance, and personal growth. In *Fahrenheit 451*, the graphic adaptation emphasizes the characters' internal struggles, juxtaposing the vibrant entertainment world with the emptiness of conformity. The visual representation adopts a more gritty and futuristic style to convey the dystopian atmosphere. It emphasizes the dehumanizing effect of technological elements and uses darker tones to reflect the oppressive society. While doing so, the creator depicts the entire scene very rarely and focuses more on the specific components of a location.

Panel layout and composition

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the panels vary in size and composition to accommodate detailed scenes of ballrooms, countryside settings, and intimate conversations. The layout reflects the etiquette and social norms of the time. The panels are mostly *macros* and depict the whole scene with two or more, sometimes up to 7 characters in a single panel. A higher prevalence of *macros* implies a reduced use of E-Conjunctions since the latter necessitates combining elements of a scene (*monos*) to construct a broader environmental concept. It appears more customary to frequently depict the entire scene with a macro shot, encompassing its components upfront.

Fahrenheit 451 has a more dynamic and fragmented panel layout, reflecting the dissonance and disruption caused by the oppressive society. It uses larger panels for impactful moments and scenes of conflict. This results in a fewer number of *macros* depicting complete action in them and a more significant number of *monos* implying shifts between individual characters. Another observation is that the *amorphic* panels with no active entities are found only in *Fahrenheit 451*. The attentional categories in *Fahrenheit 451* provide a framework for shaping the portrayal of a scene's meaning and consequently lead to inferences about its grammatical structure. The peculiar layout of the novel made it impossible to mark the core categories of the narrative structure such as: Orienter, Establisher, Initiator, Prolongation, Peak, and Release.

Character depiction

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the characters' appearances, clothing, and expressions are crucial to conveying their personalities and the societal norms of the time. In contrast, in *Fahrenheit 451*, the character designs focus on capturing their internal struggles, with attention to their expressions as they navigate the tension between conformity and rebellion.

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Color Palette

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the greyscale monochromatic color palette is used, reflecting the elegance and diversity of the Regency era. The color palette in *Fahrenheit 451* shifts between stark contrasts, with vibrant colors representing the allure of entertainment and muted tones symbolizing the suppression of knowledge.

Overall, the graphic adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fahrenheit 451* tailor their visual styles, storytelling techniques, and artistic choices to align with the unique essence of each original novel's genre, themes, and atmosphere.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the graphic novel adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Fahrenheit 451* both showcase the remarkable interplay of visual language in conveying meaning, mood, and themes. By combining the power of visuals and text, these adaptations bring new dimensions to the original stories. The graphic novel effectively utilizes visual cues, such as facial expressions, gestures, and postures, to portray characters' emotions and attitudes, offering readers deeper insights into their dynamics. This adds complexity and richness to the story. Moreover, the deliberate choices of colors, fonts, and lettering styles enhance the visual language, creating a specific mood and atmosphere that complements the narrative. The analysis of panel transitions reveals the meticulous use of visual cues to indicate shifts in time, place, and narrative within individual scenes. The relationships between adjacent panels contribute to a seamless storytelling experience, ensuring the smooth and continuous flow of the narrative. The visual lexicon plays a crucial role in conveying meaning in both adaptations. Open-class items, such as iconic drawings and symbols, effectively communicate ideas, while closed-class items add depth and complexity to the visuals. The visual lexicon becomes a powerful tool for storytelling, challenging perceptions, and immersing readers in the narratives.

يلتقي الأدب المصور بالرواية الكلاسيكية: تمييز اللغة البصرية برايد آند (بريجوديس) و(فهرنهايت 451)

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الملخص

انتشرت لغة الرؤية انتشاراً متزايداً مع قبول الروايات الهزلية البصرية كونه نوعاً أدبياً، إذ تدرس لغة الرؤية التفاعل بين الكلمات والصور لنقل المعنى (كوهن 2013). إذ يستكشف البحث كيفية دمج العناصر البصرية في الروايات الهزلية لنقل رسالة متماسكة في الروايات البصرية، مع التركيز بصورة خاصة على الشكل البصري، والهيكل السرد البصري، والمعجم البصري، ويقترح البحث الحالي إطاره النظري من لغة الرؤية في الروايات الهزلية (كوهن 2013)، لتحليل التكيف البصري لروايتي برايد آند (بريجوديس) (1984) و(فهرنهايت 451) (2009)، ويستكشف البحث أيضاً دور الكلمات الأقل وأسلوب الكتابة المختلف المستخدم في الروايات الهزلية لنقل المعنى في السرد البصري، إذ من المتوقع أن يساهم اكتشاف لغة الرؤية في الروايات الهزلية في فهم الإنسان للتواصل وفهم المعنى من خلال تداخل الكلمات والصور.

الكلمات المفتاحية: لغة الرؤية، رواية هزلية، الشكل البصري، المعجم البصري، الهيكل السرد البصري، الألواح.

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