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FROM PAGE TO SCREEN: MULTIMODAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE AMERICAN DREAM IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S THE GREAT GATSBY AND BAZ LUHRMANN'S FILM ADAPTATION

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The Great Gatsby; American Dream; film adaptation; multimodal reconstruction; social semiotics.

ABSTRACT

This article examines how the American Dream, represented in F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby (1925), is reconstructed in Baz Luhrmann's 2013 film adaptation. The novel and the film are treated as two distinct semiotic texts: a predominantly verbal-narrative text and an audiovisual cinematic text. Using a descriptive qualitative design with a combined deductive-inductive directed content analysis, the study analyses seven thematic units: the green light, Daisy Buchanan, Gatsby's mansion and parties, social space, Gatsby's constructed identity, the past, and Gatsby's death. Each unit is documented through a direct quotation with its page or chapter reference, a corresponding film scene with an approximate timestamp, and an analysis of shot scale, camera angle, composition, lighting, colour, camera movement, music and sound, and duration. The analysis is guided by representation theory, social semiotic multimodality, and adaptation theory, and differences between the two texts are stated as relative shifts of emphasis: continuity, amplification, attenuation, and relocation. The findings show that the film retains the novel's central pattern of aspiration, class exclusion, and illusion while changing the balance of emphasis. It gives greater weight to affective immediacy, spectacle, and visible longing, and lesser weight to retrospective irony and narratorial reflection, and it relocates part of the social and moral critique into colour, space, sound, and performance. Compared with earlier studies, the results confirm that audiovisual resources intensify the theme, extend this observation to a unit-by-unit account, and complicate the view that the film replaces critique with emotional effect. The study proposes a five-stage reconstruction framework as a potential analytical tool; because it rests on one novel, one film, and seven units, the framework requires further testing on other novel-to-film adaptations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature serves as a storehouse of a society's ideals, goals, conflicts, and social systems in addition to being a narrative art form. Novels are useful places to study the interaction between individuals and the culture they live in because they encapsulate the construction and contestation of success, identity, class, and happiness. *The Great Gatsby* (1925) by F. Scott Fitzgerald and the 2013 movie by Baz Luhrmann are treated in this article as two different semiotic texts, or media representations: the film is an audiovisual, cinematic text, whereas the novel is mostly verbal narrative. The concern here is how a single cultural meaning—the American Dream—is conveyed from one book to another. Each creates meaning using its own resources.

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Despite it depicts the social contradictions of the Jazz Age of the 1920s—prosperity, consumerism, speculation, and a new hedonistic lifestyle coexisting with moral decay, social inequality, and the loneliness of the modern individual—*The Great Gatsby* is widely considered a canonical text of American literary history. According to recent research, the book is situated as a record of cultural concern [1] and as a place to learn about identity, ethnicity, and interwar American social interactions [2].

The American Dream, which is roughly described as the conviction that people may improve their social and economic status through hard effort, ambition, freedom, and opportunity, lies at the heart of the book. Fitzgerald challenges this notion by demonstrating how the quest for self-improvement gives way to avarice, status anxiety, and the unachievable wish to bring back the past. While Chouhan and Thakur [3] specifically link the novel's moral deterioration to the American Dream philosophy, Borah [4] contends that people are driven toward aberrant behaviour by social pressure to succeed.

It takes more than just translating written words into moving pictures to move from page to screen. The novel's language, figuration, and narrative viewpoint are not directly comparable to the film's use of colour, lighting, music, performance, editing rhythm, costuming, and camera movement. Changing the medium encourages selection, focus, and reduction in adaptation studies [5]; Thomas [6] defines adaptation as a creative act rather than a derivative one, while Cattrysse [7] characterizes it as an intermedial practice of transformation and translation. The novel's meanings are mostly conveyed through words, but it is not strictly monomodal because it also uses typography, structure, and a deeply metaphorical voice.

The reason Luhrmann's film works so well is that it uses a maximalist aesthetic to depict Gatsby's world: extravagant parties, out-of-date music, vibrant colours, quick camera movements, and intricate production design turn the American Dream into an opulent spectacle. Suleiman and Hussein [8] show that the film's multimodal depiction rearranges the novel's contents using resources that written narration does not provide, rather than merely repeating them.

Previous studies have used a variety of approaches to the novel. The dream falls into moral deterioration and tension, as demonstrated by thematic and ideological research [4]; [3]; [9]; [10]. East Egg, West Egg, and the Valley of Ashes are treated as indicators of social stratification in spatial and class readings [11]; [12], while symbolic and linguistic analyses look at metaphor, colour, and symbolism [13]; [14]; [15]. According to comparative research on the movie, the American Dream theme is enhanced by image, music, and movement [8], the movie re-presents cultural values like materialism and social stratification [16], and novel adaptations typically emphasize emotional impact [17]. However, no study that (a) anchors each analytical unit in a page-referenced quotation from the novel, (b) locates the corresponding film scene with a timestamp, (c) describes that scene using a consistent set of cinematic parameters, and (d) states the resulting difference as a matter of relative emphasis rather than replacement was found among the studies reviewed for this article. Reconstruction is a crucial phrase that is frequently confused with adaptation, reinterpretation, remediation, transformation, and representation.

Three strategies are used in this article to address these deficiencies. It distinguishes multimodal reconstruction from comparable ideas and provides an operational definition (Section 2.4). Using a specified coding protocol, it examines seven thematic units (Section 3). Additionally, it suggests a five-phase structure that arranges the movement from a verbal-

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narrative unit to a statement of relative change of emphasis through its representational meaning and audiovisual articulation. A more detailed and transparent explanation of how the film re-articulates the novel's meanings, along with a framework offered as a potential analytical tool that still needs to be tested on other novel–film pairs, constitute an analytical and methodological contribution rather than a new object of study because the novel has been studied extensively.

The study is guided by three questions. First, how do the seven thematic divisions in the book depict the American Dream? Second, how are shot scale, camera angle, composition, lighting, colour, camera movement, music and sound, and duration used to recreate each unit in the movie? Third, how do the two texts differ in terms of emphasis and continuity? In line with this, the study's objectives are to examine how the dream is portrayed in the book, explain how it is recreated visually in the movie, and analyse the continuities and changes that follow. The study is not related to English language instruction, but rather to literary-film, adaptation, and multimodality studies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The American Dream in Fitzgerald studies, representation and social semiotic multimodality, adaption theory, and the conceptual relationships between reconstruction and neighbouring words are all reviewed in this section. It concludes by identifying the research deficit.

2.1 The American Dream in The Great Gatsby

The American Dream is a sociocultural concept linked to economic success, social mobility, individual autonomy, and dignity. It is frequently revealed in the conflict between desire and reality in literary studies; it rarely serves as a steady or cohesive ideal. The concept of success is turned into an obsession with wealth, prestige, and possessions in *The Great Gatsby*.

According to Haji [9], the novel's ideal encompasses both material achievement and the disappointment that results from a conflict between one's own desires and social realities. Fitzgerald's metaphorical language creates an ideal that is always sought after but structurally unachievable, as demonstrated by Prajoko [13]. By drawing a comparison between the book and *Death of a Salesman*, Mizrak [10] shows how social structure and the delusion of prosperity itself postpone the dream in both works.

Additional investigation connects the dream to space and class. Xu [15] highlights the importance of symbolism, especially the green light and colour, within its social context, while Wu and Shen [12] demonstrate how East Egg, West Egg, New York, and the Valley of Ashes serve as spatial markers of its collapse. Thus, the definition of the dream in this article is a combination of hope, ambition, delusion, and a critique of materialism; this definition serves as the foundation for the units chosen in Section 3.3.

2.2 Representation Theory and Social Semiotic Multimodality

According to Hall [18], representation is the creation of meaning through signs, language, imagery, narrative, and cultural codes; it actively constructs meaning rather than merely reflecting it. Diction, narration, character, conflict, metaphor, and structure are the main ways that a novel produces representation. Mise-en-scène, music, colour, cinematography, costumes, lighting, facial expressions, and editing all contribute to this audio-visual effect in movies. The unique semiotic resources of each media must therefore be taken into consideration in an examination of representation.

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This article uses multimodality in the social semiotic sense [19], which holds that meaning is created through the orchestration of multiple modes—in this case, language, image, movement, colour, and sound—each of which is regarded as a resource for meaning-making on par with language rather than as a decorative accompaniment. Both texts are somewhat multimodal in this regard, though the predominant modes are different. Castaldi [20] emphasizes that conceptual precision is necessary to prevent multimodal analysis from collapsing into impressionistic visual description; Liu [21] demonstrates that systemic-functional multimodal discourse analysis accounts for the interaction among modes in constructing unified meaning; and Hiippala [22] contends that multimodal corpora should be treated as interconnected sign systems rather than isolated channels. In particular, Bordwell and Thompson [23] provide the descriptive vocabulary of shot scale, camera angle, lighting, and movement utilized in Section 3.4, while Bateman and Schmidt [24] provide a methodical explanation of how films mean.

2.3 Novel-to-Film Adaptation Theory

A whole different storytelling strategy is needed to turn a book into a movie. A film depends on movement, sound, performance, composition, rhythm, and visual design; a novel offers interior narration, detailed description, irony, and introspection. According to Hutcheon [5], adaptation is an act of interpretation in which the adapter chooses, highlights, and re-mediates aspects of a source text to produce a new aesthetic experience for a new audience. Therefore, fidelity to the source is not a criterion for evaluation in this case.

Belau [25] demonstrates how narrative trauma can be transferred when a literary work is adapted for film, causing storytelling to deviate from the original. Chen [26] shows that adaptation is an act of interpretation rather than transcription in a case study of intellectual property film adaptation, and Pasopati et al. [27] observe that literary adaptation in the modern media landscape is simultaneously shaped by medium, audience expectation, and cultural strategy. Luhrmann's film uses an overtly maximalist visual approach; Suleiman and Hussein [8] demonstrate how movement, music, and image all work together to heighten the dream theme; and Fu [16] places the film in a larger context of cultural representation that includes materialism, hegemonic culture, and social stratification.

2.4 Conceptual Delimitation: Reconstruction and Related Terms

In this discipline, a number of terms are frequently used interchangeably. In order to prevent this, the article only employs one primary analytical term and only uses the others in the contexts listed in Table 1. The technique and observable outcome of re-articulating a meaning previously expressed in a unit of the novel's verbal-narrative text in the film through a unique arrangement of audiovisual modes is known as *multimodal reconstruction*. Three criteria must be satisfied for it to be operationalized at the level of the thematic unit: a novel passage must be recognized as the source of a representational meaning; a film scene must be found that re-articulates that meaning; and the modal means by which the film accomplishes this must be described and contrasted with those of the novel. The name was chosen because it conveys the idea of rebuilding using various materials rather than copying, and it does not imply faithfulness or loss.

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Table 1. Reconstruction Distinguished from Related Concepts

Concept	Core sense in the literature	Relation to multimodal reconstruction in this study
Adaptation	Product, process of creation, and process of reception of a transposed work [5].	The broad umbrella. Reconstruction is a narrower analytical lens used inside one adaptation; it examines the re-articulation of meaning at unit level and does not address the whole adaptive process or audience reception.
Reinterpretation	The adapter's interpretive act of selecting and emphasizing [5].	Reinterpretation is the interpretive act; reconstruction is the observable semiotic outcome through which it becomes traceable. Reinterpretation is inferred at Stage 5, not assumed in advance.
Remediation	Representation of one medium within another, governed by logics of immediacy and hypermediacy [40]	A media-theoretic notion not developed here. It is invoked only where the film visibly re-presents the novel's own medium, for example Nick's written words appearing as on-screen text.
Transformation	General change of form and content in transfer across media, including translation [7].	Reconstruction is one specific kind of transformation: the re-building of an already represented meaning from different semiotic materials, analysed through the five stages.
Representation	Production of meaning through signs, language, and images [18].	Representation supplies the meaning to be traced (Stage 2). Reconstruction is the re-articulation of that meaning in another sign system; it presupposes representation, but not the reverse.

2.5 Previous Research and the Research Gap

There are three pertinent lines from previous work. The first defines the novel's meaning: the dream is a delicate combination of illusion, hope, and class aspiration [9]; [10]; [13], strengthened by symbols and spatial structure [12]; [15]. The second focuses on characters and class, including readings of class conflict in Gatsby's society [11] and Daisy as a figure influenced by gender and social status [28]. The third looks at the movie: it re-presents cultural values [16], uses colour contrast [14], intensifies the theme through image, music, and movement [8], and, in comparative readings, tends to emphasize emotional effect over thoughtful commentary [17].

A detailed and straightforward explanation of the transition between the two texts is what these studies do not provide. In particular, variations between the texts are frequently summed up in general terms, the evidence for meaning shifts is rarely connected to individual page-referenced passages and location scenes, and cinematic elements are rarely detailed one by one. A unit-by-unit evidence matrix, an explicit coding technique, an operational definition of reconstruction, and a language for characterizing shifts as relative emphases (continuity, amplification, attenuation, and relocation) are all added in this study. Its additional contribution is the five-stage framework shown in Figure 1, which is presented as a suggested framework whose applicability outside of this particular instance is yet to be determined.

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3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This research utilizes a descriptive qualitative framework, suitable due to its focus on meanings, symbols, characters, contexts, and changes in representation rather than quantifiable occurrences. Thelwall and Nevill [29] assert that qualitative data are crucial for comprehending social and cultural phenomena, whereas Bohm and Sundqvist [30] emphasize the necessity of systematic qualitative content analysis to provide accountability and transparency in interpretation. The examination employs a directed qualitative content analysis [31] that integrates both deductive and inductive reasoning: the framework of the American Dream and the analytical criteria were pre-established through theoretical foundations (deductive), whereas the thematic elements were extracted from a meticulous reading of the novel (inductive). The investigation is limited to literary, cinematic, and multimodal analysis; it excludes classroom methodologies, educational results, or audience response.

3.2 Data Sources

The principal sources are F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel The Great Gatsby (1925/2021, Planet eBook edition) and Baz Luhrmann's 2013 cinematic adaptation in its 143-minute theatrical version. In-text references for the novel indicate the page number of the Planet eBook version. Film timestamps are shown in hours and minutes, are approximate (rounded to the nearest minute), and have been verified against publicly accessible scene-by-scene breakdowns of the film; lengths are similarly rounded approximations. Curated film stills (Figures 2 to 7) are presented exclusively for academic examination and are marked by timestamp. Secondary data consist of contemporary journal papers indexed in Scopus and Sinta regarding the American Dream, representation, adaptability, and multimodality, utilized to corroborate interpretations and contextualize the results.

3.3 Unit Selection and Category Formation

The seven thematic units were established by a blend of deductive and inductive processes. The American Dream was systematically defined in the literature (Section 2.1) as a blend of optimism and ambition, affection and prestige, material achievement, social stratification, and deception accompanied with its ethical evaluation. Initially, a thorough examination of the entire text identified potential excerpts, which were subsequently categorized by recurring themes and narrative roles. A candidate was accepted as a unit solely if it satisfied four conditions: (1) *textual anchoring*, indicating a connection to a quotable excerpt; (2) *thematic relevance*, signifying that the excerpt conveys at least one aspect of the dream as previously delineated; (3) *structural salience*, denoting that the element appears repeatedly throughout chapters or signifies a narrative pivot; and (4) *filmic correspondence*, implying that a recognizable scene in the film reinterprets it.

Seven units fulfilled all four requirements: the green light, Daisy Buchanan, Gatsby's estate and gatherings, social environments (East Egg, West Egg, and the Valley of Ashes), Gatsby's fabricated persona, the past, and Gatsby's demise (Table 2). Alternative candidates were recognized but not maintained as distinct entities. The gaze of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg and Myrtle Wilson's ambitions were integrated into the social milieu; Meyer Wolfshiem and the origins of Gatsby's fortune were assimilated into Gatsby's fabricated persona; and the vehicular incident along with Myrtle's demise were regarded as the sequence of events culminating in Gatsby's

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death rather than as an independent occurrence. Tom Buchanan's racial apprehension and Nick's personal aspirations in the bond industry were momentarily disregarded, as they pertain more to a framework of supremacy and the narrator's stance than to the axis of aspiration and delusion that characterizes the dream in this context.

Table 2. Thematic Units, Novel Locus, and Dimension of the American Dream

Unit	Principal novel locus	Principal dimension of the dream	Candidates absorbed or set aside
1. Green light	Chs. 1, 5, 9	Hope and aspiration	None
2. Daisy Buchanan	Chs. 1, 4, 7	Love, status, access to a class world	None
3. Mansion and parties	Chs. 3, 4	Material success as performance	None
4. Social space	Chs. 1, 2, 3	Class barrier	Eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg; Myrtle Wilson's aspiration (absorbed)
5. Gatsby's identity	Chs. 3, 4, 6, 9	Self-invention	Meyer Wolfshiem and sources of wealth (absorbed)
6. The past	Chs. 4, 6, 8	Dream oriented backward	None
7. Gatsby's death	Chs. 7 to 9	End of illusion; moral critique	Accident and Myrtle's death (treated as causal chain); Tom's racial anxiety and Nick's ambition (set aside)

Saturation was assessed in a conceptual manner rather than by numerical means [32]. Engagement with the text and film persisted until more iterations yielded no new passage-scene combinations that conveyed a representational significance not already addressed by the seven units; the remaining options either replicated an existing unit or did not meet one of the four requirements. Saturation is thus asserted solely in relation to the American Dream framework as delineated here and to this specific novel-film duo, rather than as a comprehensive analysis.

3.4 Analytical Procedure and Coding Protocol

Each unit underwent examination via five consecutive phases (refer to Table 3 and Figure 1) and was documented on a standardized coding sheet. Stage 4 employs the eight dimensions outlined in Table 4, which are informed by the descriptive lexicon of film critique [24]; [23] and the social semiotic classifications of salience, framing, gaze, colour, and composition [19]. Stage 5 articulates each distinction as a relative alteration of focus utilizing four terms: continuity, amplification, attenuation, and relocation. These phrases serve as heuristic labels established for this research; they do not suggest that one text is comprehensive while the other is lacking.

Table 3. Five-Stage Reconstruction Procedure and Coding-Sheet Output

Stage	Analytical focus	Procedure	Coding-sheet field
1	Novel unit	Locate the passage(s) associated with the unit through close reading and select direct quotations.	Quotation; page or chapter
2	Representational meaning	Interpret the ideological and symbolic meaning of the	Theme; dimension of the dream

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		quotation using Hall's (1997) representation theory.	
3	Film scene	Identify the scene(s) in Luhrmann's film that re-articulate the same unit and record the approximate timestamp.	Scene description; timestamp; duration
4	Multimodal articulation	Describe the scene through the eight parameters in Table 4, drawing on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic categories.	Values for each parameter
5	Relative shift of emphasis	Compare Stages 2 and 4 and state the result as continuity, amplification, attenuation, or relocation, following Hutcheon's (2013) view of adaptation as interpretation.	Shift label; memo with rationale

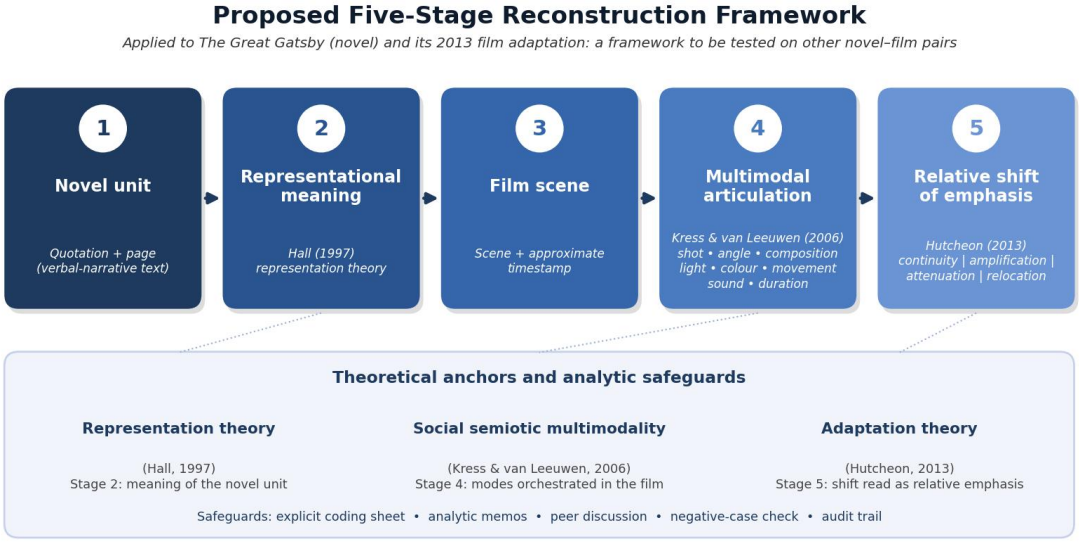


Figure 1. Proposed Five-Stage Reconstruction Framework Applied to The Great Gatsby and Its 2013 Film Adaptation

Table 4. Analytical Parameters and Coding Values for Stage 4

Parameter	Operational definition and coding values	Principal source
Shot scale	Apparent distance of subject: extreme long, long, medium, close-up, extreme close-up.	Bordwell & Thompson (2019)
Camera angle	Vantage relative to subject: eye-level, high, low, overhead; point-of-view where relevant.	Bordwell & Thompson (2019)
Composition	Framing, centrality or margin, salience, depth, symmetry, direction of gaze.	Kress & van Leeuwen (2006)
Lighting	High-key or low-key, source, contrast, warmth or coolness.	Bordwell & Thompson (2019)

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Colour and saturation	Dominant hues, degree of saturation, chromatic contrast, symbolic function.	Kress & van Leeuwen (2006); Tang (2023)
Camera movement	Static, pan, tilt, tracking, zoom or push-in, aerial or virtual movement; speed.	Bordwell & Thompson (2019)
Music and sound	Diegetic or non-diegetic; musical register; voice-over; ambient sound; silence.	Bateman & Schmidt (2011)
Duration	Approximate scene length and editing tempo (slow, moderate, rapid).	Bateman & Schmidt (2011)

3.5 Trustworthiness

A multitude of approaches was utilized to bolster the authenticity and clarity of the interpretation [33]. To begin with, triangulation consisted of correlating the primary textual data (the novel) with the audiovisual data (the film) and the secondary academic literature, and thorough readings and viewings confirmed that no interpretation relied on a singular interaction with either text. In addition, a clear coding process was implemented: every unit was noted on a uniform coding sheet (Table 3) using the same eight characteristics (Table 4), and the criteria for unit acceptance were predetermined before the final selection (Section 3.3). Third, analytic memoing entailed the creation of a memo for every unit, capturing interpretive decisions, alternative readings evaluated, and the reasoning behind the shift label allocated at Stage 5.

Fourth, peer evaluation: the two authors engaged in discussions regarding unit selection, quotations, and shift labels, addressing any disputes by referring back to the passage or scene. As the study is interpretive rather than reliant on frequency, no inter-coder reliability coefficient was determined; instead, consensus was reached through discussion. Fifth, the analysis of negative cases entailed the purposeful search for passages and scenes that contradicted the emerging pattern, including moments where the film heightens critique rather than diminishes it, or where the novel is notably emotive; these instances influenced the delineation of relative, as opposed to absolute, differences in Section 4.8. In conclusion, the methodology was captured in an audit trail that included coding sheets, notes, and a documentation of candidate units that were preserved, combined, or excluded. This approach is based on the guidelines set forth by Alyaqoub et al. [31] for transparency in directed content analysis and by Fazeli et al. [34] for examining the relationship between visual and spoken signals in video data. The primary drawback is that the video was assessed from a singular watching version, with the timestamps being imprecise.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Each of the seven units is accompanied by an identical evidence matrix: a direct excerpt from the novel along with its reference point, the thematic and representational significance, the relevant film sequence with an estimated timestamp and duration, the examination of the cinematic elements outlined in Table 4, and the consequent shift in focus. A little discourse ensues after each matrix. Timestamps and durations are estimations, as detailed in Section 3.2, and all shifts are expressed as relative emphases instead of substitutions of one meaning for another.

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4.1 The Green Light: Hope That Is Visible yet Out of Reach

Table 5. Evidence Matrix for the Green Light

Analytical field	Evidence and analysis
Novel quotation	"he stretched out his arms toward the dark water in a curious way … a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock" (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 24). Later echoes: "Now it was again a green light on a dock" (p. 100); "Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us" (p. 193).
Theme and meaning	Hope and aspiration: a desire concentrated in one distant object, perceived tentatively ("I could have sworn he was trembling", p. 24) by a narrator who does not yet understand what he sees. The dream is visible yet unattainable.
Film scene, timestamp, duration	Nick sees Gatsby reaching toward the light from the dock, at the end of the film's first segment (≈ 0:13:30, before the transition at 0:14:31); ≈ 1 min. The light recurs in the mansion scene (≈ 1:03–1:04) and in the closing sequence (≈ 2:05–2:10).
Shot scale and camera angle	The scene combines an extreme long shot of the light glowing in mist, taken level with the water, and a close-up silhouette of a hand reaching toward it.
Composition	The light sits at the centre of the frame, its reflection falling as a vertical line across empty dark water; in the close-up the hand is a large foreground silhouette against the backlit glow, so that the gesture and its object appear within one visual field.
Lighting	The light is the only source, a diffuse halo in the mist; the hand is rendered as a backlit silhouette.
Colour and saturation	A hazy teal-green field in which the light is the brightest point; the surrounding water and mist fall away into darker, desaturated teal.
Camera movement	A fast, computer-assisted forward movement across the water toward the light, replacing the novel's stationary observation.
Music and sound	Nick's voice-over frames the gesture over hushed night sound, so that a verbal and an audiovisual mode operate together.
Shift of emphasis	Continuity of the symbol's function; amplification of visual and affective immediacy; attenuation of interpretive openness, because the image states what the prose leaves tentative.



Figure 2. The green light in the film: (a) the light glowing in mist and (b) the silhouette of the reaching hand (Luhrmann [41], ≈ 0:13:30)

The narrative presents illumination via a circumscribed, reflective viewpoint: Nick can merely "have sworn" that Gatsby quivered, and what he observes "might have been the terminus of a pier" [35]. Significance is constructed from ambiguity, separation, and a storyteller who has yet to comprehend the situation. The illumination diminishes in intensity when Gatsby is in the presence of Daisy (p. 100) and reemerges in Nick's final contemplation as a symbol of a future

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that "year by year recedes before us" (p. 193). According to Hall [18], the unit embodies desire as both evident and elusive.

The film allocates this task variably across different modalities (Figure 2). The hand, outlined in a close-up against a luminous backdrop, along with the light reflected on the water, situates both gesture and object within a singular visual realm, while a rapidly advancing virtual camera transforms distance into a tangible experience for the audience rather than a conveyed narrative. Hue enhances the overall impression: the illumination serves as the most luminous element inside a misty teal-green expanse. According to Kress and van Leeuwen [19], meaning is derived from the interaction of salience (the light as the most luminous element), framing (the hand as a prominent silhouette), and movement, rather than from colour alone [20]; [22]; [14] notes that colour contrast plays a crucial role in conveying meaning in the picture; this analysis further asserts that the light gains its impact in this scene solely when paired with depth, movement, and voice-over.

The transition is hence three-dimensional. The symbol's role remains consistent with the narrative, its immediacy is heightened, and the openness generated by the narrator's qualifications is diminished. The film does not entirely eliminate reflecting distance; rather, the voice-over contextualizes the action, and the light reemerges subsequently, allowing thoughtful resonance to be maintained by repetition instead of mere description.

4.2 Daisy Buchanan: Love, Status, and an Unattainable World

Table 6. Evidence Matrix for Daisy Buchanan

Analytical field	Evidence and analysis
Novel quotation	"blew curtains in at one end and out the other like pale flags" (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 10); "a bright passionate mouth" and "a singing compulsion, a whispered 'Listen'" (p. 12); "a beautiful little fool" (p. 20); "the basic insincerity of what she had said" (p. 21); "Her voice is full of money" (p. 128).
Theme and meaning	Love, status, and an unreachable social world: Daisy's charm is vocal and class-coded, while Nick's commentary qualifies it with scepticism. Her choices are conditioned by gender and class position (Wangmu, 2025).
Film scene, timestamp, duration	Daisy's introduction at the Buchanan house, within the film's first segment (before 0:14); ≈ 2 min. The reunion at Nick's cottage, ≈ 0:51–0:59, serves as a second reference scene.
Shot scale and camera angle	Medium and medium close-up shots of Daisy and Jordan on a sofa; eye-level, from Nick's point of view as he enters the room.
Composition	Two figures in white dresses at the centre of an airy frame, bounded by fluttering curtains; Daisy's face and laugh are the most salient elements. At the reunion (≈ 0:51), Daisy is framed in medium close-up between banks of orchids, with a stormy sky visible through the window behind her.
Lighting	High-key, soft, diffused daylight; bright whites and few hard shadows. At the reunion, soft warm light on her face against a darker, stormy exterior.
Colour and saturation	Low-saturation whites and pale tones with warm highlights, evoking softness, luxury, and fragility. At the reunion, yellow and white flowers frame her face against a blue-grey sky.
Camera movement	Slow, floating movement through the billowing curtains toward the women, echoing the novel's curtains in motion.
Music and sound	Diegetic wind and fabric sound with a light, unobtrusive score; the breathy, charming delivery of Daisy's first lines carries the "voice" the novel describes.

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Shift of emphasis	Strong continuity of setting and class coding (curtains, white dresses, couch); amplification of romantic fragility; attenuation of Nick's sceptical commentary and of Daisy's ironic self-presentation.



Figure 3. The reunion at Nick's cottage: (a) Daisy framed by orchids and (b) Gatsby (Luhrmann [41], ≈ 0:51)

In the narrative, Daisy is primarily depicted through her vocal qualities and outward appearance: a "vivid fervent mouth" and "an irresistible urge to sing" [35] and subsequently described by Gatsby as possessing a voice "rich with wealth" (p. 128). Nick does not merely hold her in esteem, however. Following her description of her daughter as "a beautiful little fool" (p. 20), he perceives "the fundamental insincerity of her words" (p. 21), therefore the portrayal of Daisy as an object of desire is perpetually tempered by the narrator's doubt. She symbolizes affection, prestige, and a societal realm that Gatsby yearns to rejoin, although her autonomy is constrained by gender and social class [28].

The movie closely mirrors the visual elements of the novel: the flowing drapes, the ivory gowns, and the relaxed figures on the sofa all originate from Nick's depiction of the space (p. 10). The scene presents them via a camera that navigates through the billowing fabric, bright lighting, and a muted colour scheme, collectively conveying the novel's "voice" as gentleness, movement, and an airy performance. The outcome is a Daisy who is radiant and delicate prior to becoming shrewd. The attire, setting, and floral richness of the reunion sequence (Figure 3) maintain the focus on class distinctions, while the cinematography and soundtrack encourage the audience to empathize with Gatsby's yearning rather than evaluate it as Nick does.

The unit demonstrates significant consistency in terms of setting and class coding, enhancement of romantic delicacy, and reduction of the narrator's critical observations. This aligns with the discovery by Suleiman and Hussein [8] that multimodal staging amplifies the dream motif, but the evidence indicates that this amplification pertains to more than just class significance, which is still discernible in attire and setting. The film thereby prioritizes the romance aspect while yet retaining the social dimension.

4.3 Gatsby's Mansion and Parties: Luxury and the Host's Isolation

Table 7. Evidence Matrix for Gatsby's Mansion and Parties

Analytical field	Evidence and analysis
Novel quotation	"In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars" (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 43); "the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music" (p. 44); "People were not invited—they went there" (p. 45); "A sudden emptiness seemed to flow now from the windows and the great doors, endowing with complete isolation the figure of the host" (p. 61).

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Theme and meaning	Material success as performance: sociability without intimacy, a host who finances the gathering yet remains outside it, and wealth that fails to purchase acceptance.
Film scene, timestamp, duration	First party sequence, ≈ 0:23–0:35; ≈ 12 min, including Gatsby's entrance (≈ 0:29–0:30). The deserted mansion in the closing sequence (≈ 2:05–2:09) provides a counter-image.
Shot scale and camera angle	Sweeping extreme-long and aerial establishing shots of mansion and crowd alternate with medium and close shots of dancers; high and aerial angles over the crowd, eye-level among guests.
Composition	Dense, crowded frames with layered foreground and background (revellers, fireworks, architecture); movement and bodies fill the frame, leaving little empty space.
Lighting	Warm, glittering practical light and fireworks; high-key and high-contrast spectacle.
Colour and saturation	A teal-blue night punctuated by warm golden points of light; fireworks and bokeh make the frame glitter, so that colour signals abundance and display.
Camera movement	Fast tracking, swooping virtual-camera movements, and rapid zooms, synchronized with rapid cutting.
Music and sound	Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* at the entrance (≈ 0:29) and a contemporary, hip-hop-inflected non-diegetic soundtrack across the party; crowd noise and fireworks.
Shift of emphasis	Amplification of spectacle and seduction; continuity of excess and of the host's apartness; relocation, at least in part, of the novel's explicit emptiness to later sequences.

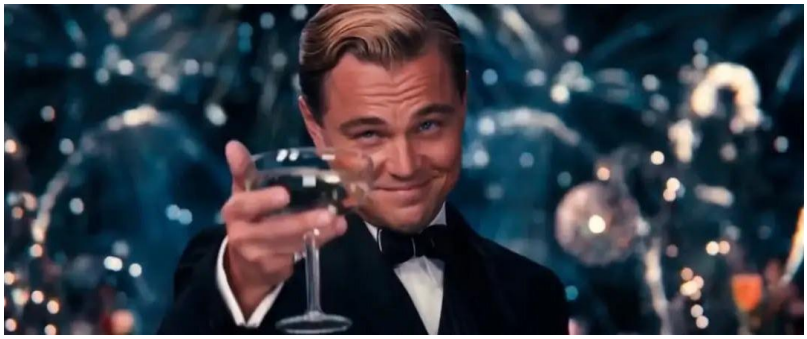


Figure 4. Gatsby's entrance at the first party (Luhrmann [41], ≈ 0:29:59)

The narrative depicts the gatherings through a meticulous assemblage of sensory elements, such as "blue gardens," champagne, and an orchestra "performing yellow cocktail music" [35], which is both alluring and ironic: attendees "were not invited—they went there" (p. 45), while the host exists beyond the social interactions he sponsors. The initial gathering concludes with an abrupt void that secludes him (p. 61).

The movie transforms accumulation into rhythm; Figure 4 illustrates Gatsby's arrival. Aerial and virtual camera manoeuvres, swift transitions, vibrant gold and red illumination, pyrotechnics, synchronized crowds, and a retro, hip-hop-inspired score amalgamate into a cohesive audiovisual spectacle. According to Liu [21], significance in these scenarios emerges from the interaction of several modalities, while Markhabayeva et al. [36] demonstrate that multimodal coherence during transitions influences viewers' interpretation of visual content. Cohesion is achieved by tempo: the synchronization of movement, editing, and music intensifies, captivating the audience before the film reveals its protagonist. The modern music connects the 1920s backdrop to a contemporary audience, a feature absent in the novel, which can only reference jazz by name.

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The spectacle intensifies, the feeling of excess and the host's detachment persists, and the overt vacuity of the novel's party conclusion is partially transferred to the subsequent abandoned mansion scene. The movie entices initially and reveals subsequently, thereby rearranging the novel's concurrent allure and irony without inverting it. Fu [16] interprets the film's depiction of materialism and social hierarchy as culturally important, a view that is corroborated by the design elements, while the data also indicates that the film maintains the host's seclusion.

4.4 East Egg, West Egg, and the Valley of Ashes: Space as a Map of Class

Table 8. Evidence Matrix for Social Space

Analytical field	Evidence and analysis
Novel quotation	"a pair of enormous eggs, identical in contour and separated only by a courtesy bay" and "the bizarre and not a little sinister contrast between them" (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 7); "the white palaces of fashionable East Egg glittered along the water" (p. 8); "a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills" (p. 26); dust that "veiled everything in the vicinity—except his wife" (p. 29); "East Egg condescending to West Egg" (p. 49).
Theme and meaning	Class barrier mapped onto geography: old money, new money, and labour. Gatsby's wealth places him near the upper class but never within it.
Film scene, timestamp, duration	Valley of Ashes (train, garage, billboard), ≈ 0:14–0:17; ≈ 3 min. East Egg is established in the Buchanan house sequence (first segment, before 0:14).
Shot scale and camera angle	Extreme-long and long shots of ash heaps with silhouetted labourers shovelling; the billboard eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg are seen from below, looming over the figures.
Composition	A flat horizontal landscape of ash heaps with small, silhouetted workers, and on-screen lettering formed from drifting ash dust across the horizon, so that text and setting become one image; the billboard dominates the upper frame in the Eckleburg shots. East Egg, by contrast, is ordered, bright, and symmetrical.
Lighting	Flat, hazy, low-contrast daylight in the Valley of Ashes, in which the workers read as silhouettes against a pale sky; bright, clean light at East Egg.
Colour and saturation	Desaturated ochre, brown, and beige for the Valley, with a pale sky; white and gold for East Egg and Gatsby's house, so that white and gold connote heredity and display while ochre and ash connote weariness and disposability.
Camera movement	Lateral tracking with the passing train; movement slows to settled framing at the garage.
Music and sound	A period jazz recording at the garage (≈ 0:16) alongside train and industrial noise; the dense, hip-hop-inflected sound of the party sequences is absent.
Shift of emphasis	Continuity of the class hierarchy; relocation of critique from the narrator's description to colour, composition, and design; attenuation of ironic subtlety.



Figure 5. The Valley of Ashes, with lettering formed from ash dust (Luhrmann [41], ≈ 0:14:35)

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The narrative structures social class in relation to location. The two "immense eggs" are "similar in shape" but distinguished by a "strange and somewhat ominous disparity" [35]; East Egg's "ivory mansions" shimmer over the bay (p. 8); and the Valley of Ashes is "an extraordinary field where ashes flourish like grain" (p. 26), whose dust "obscured everything nearby—save for his wife" (p. 29). The hierarchy is articulated by Nick and emphasized through social commentary, exemplified when Jordan's gathering signifies "East Egg's disdain for West Egg" (p. 49). Wu and Shen [12] interpret this configuration as a means by which location and social class collectively deconstruct the illusion.

The identical hierarchy is shown inside the visual domain of the film (Figure 5). East Egg is vibrant and structured, West Egg is dramatic, and the Valley of Ashes is a bleak, colourless expanse of smoke and industry, depicted in wide shots and through the train's motion, with the gaze of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg hovering above. White and gold often signify lineage and exhibition, whereas ochre and ash suggest fatigue and transience, with texture and motion enhancing the implications of colour [16]. Lettering created from floating ash particles, where the written language is depicted as a visual representation, imparts a tangible, ecological essence to the location. Class evaluation is consequently shifted from the narrator's descriptive observations to aspects of colour, composition, and design, rendering it immediately comprehensible.

The coherence of meaning is robust; yet this results in a diminished nuance of irony, as the audience perceives the hierarchy instantly without Nick's explanatory commentary. This segment serves as a counterexample to the assertion that the film simply transforms critique into spectacle: within the Valley of Ashes, visual immediacy enhances the critique instead of diminishing it.

4.5 Gatsby's Constructed Identity: From Narrative Mystery to Staged Revelation

Table 9. Evidence Matrix for Gatsby's Constructed Identity

Analytical field	Evidence and analysis
Novel quotation	"Somebody told me they thought he killed a man once" (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 48); "one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it" and a formality of speech that "just missed being absurd" (p. 53); "educated at Oxford" (p. 70); "Jay Gatsby of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself" (p. 105).
Theme and meaning	Self-invention: identity accumulates through rumour, performance, and delayed narratorial disclosure, revealing the dream as reinvention premised on the eras ability of the past.
Film scene, timestamp, duration	Gatsby's entrance at the first party, ≈ 0:29–0:30; ≈ 1–2 min.
Shot scale and camera angle	Medium close-up of Gatsby from the chest up, frontal and at eye level, as he raises a glass toward the viewer; a rapid push-in toward the face leads into the moment.
Composition	The face sits in the upper centre of the frame and the raised glass in the foreground reaches toward the viewer, making the gesture a direct address; shallow depth of field turns the fireworks behind him into soft points of light.
Lighting	Warm key light on the face against a darker, fireworks-lit background.
Colour and saturation	A teal-blue night and fireworks bokeh behind warm skin tones; the contrast isolates the face as the most salient element.

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Camera movement	A rushing zoom into the face, timed with the burst of fireworks.
Music and sound	Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* rises with the fireworks; party noise recedes beneath the music.
Shift of emphasis	Continuity of the smile and of the persona's artifice; relocation of mystery from rumour and narration to performance and close-up; amplification of interiority; attenuation of narratorial distance.

In the narrative, Gatsby initially emerges as a consequence of discourse. Attendees murmur that he "once took a life" [35]; he presents himself with a grin of "perpetual comfort" and a manner of speaking that "almost bordered on the ridiculous" (p. 53); and he provides a distinctly dubious life story, "studied at Oxford" (p. 70). Subsequently, Nick's narration reveals that "Jay Gatsby of West Egg, Long Island, emerged from his idealized self-image" (p. 105). Identity is thereby constructed through gossip, enactment, and postponed revelation, which collectively unveil the aspiration for self-transformation based on the conviction that the past can be obliterated [4].

The movie provides Gatsby with a magnificent arrival: a swift zoom onto a beaming visage, fireworks exploding in the background, accompanied by Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. The smile that Nick articulates is preserved and imagined, with the elevated glass directed at the observer, the slight detachment from the backdrop, and the gentle illumination on the visage presenting the character as a calculated act. Subsequent close-ups provide audiences insight into the anxiety and fragility that the novel conceals via Nick's filtered narration. Wildgen [37] conceptualizes film as a multimodal medium that integrates visual symbols, physical movement, and audience perception, elucidating how narrative proximity is transformed into intimacy.

The transition is most accurately characterized as a movement: the enigma that the novel maintains through speculation and Nick's reticence is shown by the cinema as disclosure and enactment. The grin and the facade of the character persist, inner thoughts are heightened, and the narrative distance is reduced. Gatsby continues to be a mystery; however the film renders this mystery emotionally comprehensible sooner and more explicitly.

4.6 The Past: The Dream of Repeating Time

Table 10. Evidence Matrix for the Past

Analytical field	Evidence and analysis
Novel quotation	"trying to forget something very sad that had happened to me long ago" (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 71); an officer who looked at Daisy "in a way that every young girl wants to be looked at some time" (p. 81); "'Can't repeat the past?' he cried incredulously. 'Why of course you can!'" (p. 118).
Theme and meaning	A dream oriented backward: the recovery of an idealized moment, with the past treated as an object to be repossessed (Lanneau Reeves, 2023).
Film scene, timestamp, duration	Gatsby and Nick's exchange on repeating the past, ≈ 1:20; ≈ 1 min, followed by Gatsby's recollection of a night in Louisville five years earlier, introduced by an on-screen cue. The reunion at Nick's cottage (≈ 0:51) is a second reference scene.
Shot scale and camera angle	Medium close-up of Gatsby in evening dress, frontal and at eye level; the recollection opens with an extreme long shot of a small lit house under a cloud-filled night sky.
Composition	Gatsby is centred before a dark, stormy sky, with the distant lights of the far shore visible behind him; in the opening shot of the recollection, the lit windows of a small

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	house are the only warm points in a vast dark frame.
Lighting	Low-key night lighting with a cool key; warm light appears only in the windows of the house.
Colour and saturation	Deep blue-black night with cool, cloud-laden tones; the small amber windows are the only warm accent.
Camera movement	Restrained during the exchange; a wide establishing shot opens the recollection.
Music and sound	Dialogue-driven, with the on-screen cue and voice linking the exchange to the memory and non-diegetic music supporting the recollection.
Shift of emphasis	Continuity of the backward-oriented dream; amplification of emotional urgency and visible longing; attenuation of reflective irony.



Figure 6. The exchange on repeating the past and the opening of the Louisville recollection: (a) Gatsby at night (≈ 1:20) and (b) the establishing shot that follows (Luhrmann [41]).

The character of Gatsby in the novel is characterized by a focus on time. He is "endeavouring to erase a profoundly sorrowful event from my distant past" [35] while presuming that the past may be reclaimed: "'Is it impossible to replicate the past?' he exclaimed in disbelief." Certainly, you are able to! (page 118). Jordan's narrative of Louisville in 1917, where an officer gazes at Daisy "in a manner that every young girl aspires to be gazed at some point" (p. 81), provides the recollection that Gatsby yearns to reclaim. His aspiration, therefore, reflects a retrospective inclination, while the irony of the novel is in the disparity between his conviction and the reader's awareness [38].

In the movie, this orientation is manifested as a representation of memory (Figure 6). Gatsby's dialog is presented in a medium close-up against a tempestuous nite sky and the far shore's illumination, followed by a memory that begins with a modestly illuminated house under a cloud-laden nite sky, with an on-screen indication marking it five years prior. Subdued, ambient illumination with a solitary warm highlight renders the past both distant and radiant. Thiele et al. [39] demonstrate that multimodal structure can guide viewers' focus toward specific interpretive signals, with light, colour, and frame evoking nostalgia: the past emerges as a tangible and yearned-for experience for the spectator.

The picture consequently prioritizes emotional intensity and seeming desire, but the novel's contemplative irony, where Nick's retrospective perspective evaluates Gatsby's confidence against its probable outcome, is notably diminished. The dream's reverse orientation persists, and the film's narrative frame maintains a retroactive perspective. The distinction lies in the equilibrium between contemplation and emotion, rather than a shift from a philosophical to a theatrical tone.

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4.7 Gatsby's Death: The End of the Dream and Its Moral Critique

Table 11. Evidence Matrix for Gatsby's Death

Analytical field	Evidence and analysis
Novel quotation	"No telephone message arrived, but the butler went without his sleep and waited for it until four o'clock" (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 172); "They're a rotten crowd" and "worth the whole damn bunch put together" (p. 164); Nick's closing return to the light: "Gatsby believed in the green light" (p. 193).
Theme and meaning	The end of illusion and the moral irresponsibility of the Buchanan world: Gatsby is abandoned, and the call that might have validated the dream never comes.
Film scene, timestamp, duration	Gatsby's shooting and fall into the pool, with the ringing telephone, ≈ 2:02–2:05; ≈ 3 min. The funeral, Nick's departure, and the closing reflection, ≈ 2:05–2:10.
Shot scale and camera angle	Medium close-up of Gatsby's torso at the pool as he looks down at the wound, shot slightly from above; at the funeral (≈ 2:05), an overhead shot of Gatsby in an open coffin.
Composition	At the pool the figure fills the frame, head bowed and a hand at the chest, with the pool as a turquoise band behind. At the funeral the body is centred and enclosed by the coffin's red lining and by dense flowers, framed vertically from above.
Lighting	Bright, warm light on the body at the pool; the funeral shot is low-key, with the white suit as the brightest element in a dark frame.
Colour and saturation	Saturated and ornamental rather than muted: turquoise water and warm skin set off a small red stain on a black vest; at the funeral, a white suit against deep red velvet and dark green foliage.
Camera movement	A slowed pace compared with the party sequences.
Music and sound	A non-diegetic electronic cue accompanies the approach to the pool and the shooting; afterwards the sound thins to the ringing telephone and near silence, and that thinning is as significant as the music.
Shift of emphasis	Continuity of the moral indictment; relocation of judgment from Nick's voice to image, colour, and sound; amplification of pathos; attenuation of explicit commentary.




I :02]) th No telephonic communication was received, nevertheless the butler sacrificed his rest and awaited it till four o'clock" [35]: the call that may affirm the aspiration remains absent. Nick's assessment that the Buchanans' social circle is "a rotten crowd" and that Gatsby is "worth the whole damn bunch put together" (p. 164), together with the sparse turnout at the funeral (p. 186), culminates in a condemnation of a society that used him and then abandoned him. Haji [9] and Chouhan and Thakur [3] interpret this result as the primary ethical proposition of the novel.

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The movie portrays the incident through several focused visuals (Figure 7). In the pool scene, a close-up of Gatsby's torso highlights a small red mark on his black vest, serving as the sole vivid red against the blue water; during the burial, an aerial view positions Gatsby, clad in white, at the heart of a red-trimmed casket surrounded by lush flowers. The hues present are vibrant and colourful, rather than subdued, creating a sense of pathos through the juxtaposition of ornate abundance and a solitary figure. Following the gunfire, the auditory landscape diminishes to the ringing of a telephone and near silence, immersing the viewer in sensations of anticipation and absence. Gehlot [17] notes that adaptations of the work often emphasize emotional impact, and the death scene corroborates this assertion. It further confuses the narrative: the framing narration continues, Nick's stroll through the abandoned estate renders a retroactive judgment on the Buchanans' existence, and the concluding section revisits his contemplation of Gatsby's potential for hope.

Moral evaluation is thus ongoing yet repositioned: the assessment conveyed through Nick's perspective in the novel is, in the film, predominantly expressed through visuals, hues, and auditory elements. Pathos is heightened while overt commentary is diminished. The movie places a comparatively higher emphasis on sorrowful emotion while yet maintaining its critique.

4.8 Synthesis: From Predominantly Verbal-Narrative Representation to Audiovisual Cinematic Orchestration

Table 12 encapsulates the seven units. The film preserves the novel's fundamental structure: ambition that devolves into delusion, a social hierarchy that marginalizes the aspirant, and a moral condemnation of the society that profits from his aspirations. The distinction is in the manner in which meaning is conveyed. The narrative is not singular in mode: it incorporates typography, structure, imagery, and a unique narrative voice. Its interpretations are mostly verbal-narrative, and its hallmark effect, retrospective irony, relies on language and Nick's intermediary viewpoint. The film employs a harmonious blend of audiovisual elements, where imagery, hue, motion, auditory cues, acting, and editing rhythm function together, immersing the viewer within the experience rather than alongside a storyteller. Nevertheless, the video maintains a degree of linguistic facilitation via voice-over and textual elements displayed on-screen.

Table 12. Synthesis of Continuities and Relative Shifts of Emphasis across the Seven Units

Unit	Principal continuity	Principal shift in relative emphasis	Leading resources in the film
Green light	Symbol of hope visible yet unattainable	Amplified visual and affective immediacy; attenuated interpretive openness	Colour, depth, camera movement, voice-over
Daisy	Class-coded setting (white, curtains, couch)	Amplified romantic fragility; attenuated narratorial scepticism	Lighting, costume, soft colour, performance
Mansion and parties	Excess; host's apartness	Amplified spectacle; emptiness relocated to later sequences	Music, cutting rhythm, light, movement
Social space	Class hierarchy as geography	Critique relocated into colour and design; attenuated ironic subtlety	Colour, composition, set design
Gatsby's	Smile and artifice of	Mystery relocated into	Close-up, zoom, performance,

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identity	the persona	performance; amplified interiority; attenuated narratorial distance	music
The past	Backward-oriented dream	Amplified emotional urgency; attenuated reflective irony	Lighting, tempo, score
Gatsby's death	Moral indictment	Judgment relocated into image, colour, and sound; amplified pathos; attenuated explicit commentary	Colour, framing, sound

Four consistent trends may be discerned from Table 12. The fundamental essence remains consistent across all seven units; enhancement of emotional immediacy is evident in six (the green light, Daisy, the parties, Gatsby's identity, the past, and the death); reduction of ironic distance or narrative commentary is also found in six (excluding the parties); and the transference of meaning into non-verbal elements is present in four (the parties, social space, identity, and the death). These patterns give rise to two alluring generalizations. Initially, the film does not replace romantic tragedy with social commentary: issues of class, marginalization, and ethical shortcomings are evident in every segment, and the visual immediacy within the social-space unit enhances the critique. Secondly, the novel is not merely a contemplative work juxtaposed with an emotional film; it possesses its own emotional depth in certain sections, while the film incorporates introspective elements, particularly through Nick's framing narrative. The precise expression is comparative. In comparison to the novel, the film prioritizes emotional immediacy and visual spectacle while downplaying retrospective irony and narrative introspection.

The five-phase process depicted in Figure 1 was employed to formulate these assertions. Its utility in this research is dual. Initially, it prevents the analysis from being confined to superficial description by necessitating that each cinematic component be linked to a citation, a representational significance, and an articulated method of re-expression. Secondly, it regards colour, sound, costume, space, and camera movement as independent resources for meaning-making, aligning with Kress and van Leeuwen's [19] assertion that multimodal resources collaboratively generate meaning. Given that the framework was formulated and utilized for one novel, one film, and seven sections, it ought to be considered a proposed framework; its applicability to additional adaptations remains a conjecture for future investigation, rather than a conclusion of this study.

4.9 Relation of the Findings to Previous Research

Table 13 indicates whether the current results corroborate, augment, complicate, or oppose particular previous research. In summary, they assert that multimodal elements amplify the dream motif and that colour and spatial arrangements convey class significance; they elaborate on these conclusions by linking them to specific textual references, situated locations, and identified criteria; and they challenge the perspective that the film prioritizes emotional impact over thoughtful analysis. None of the conclusions from the examined research were explicitly refuted. The closest point of contention pertains to the notion that the film exchanges critique for emotional appeal, which the unit-level evidence substantiates without dismissing.

Table 13. Positioning of the Present Findings Relative to Previous Studies

Study	Reported focus or finding	Relation	Contribution of the present study

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Suleiman & Hussein (2024)	Multimodal comparison of the dream theme in novel and film; the film's resources intensify the theme.	Confirm; extend; complicate	Confirms intensification of affect; extends it to a unit-by-unit account with eight parameters; complicates it by showing that intensification is selective, since class meaning is largely continuous and ironic distance is attenuated.
Fu (2024)	Cultural representation of materialism, hegemonic culture, and stratification in literature and film.	Confirm; extend	Confirms the film's visual coding of stratification; shows how colour, composition, and movement relocate class critique from narration to design (Section 4.4).
Wu & Shen (2023)	Place and class destroy the dream in the novel, read from a spatial perspective.	Extend	Carries the spatial reading from the novel to the film and shows its re-articulation through colour and set design.
Tang (2023)	Colour contrast as meaning-making.	Confirm; complicate	Colour is necessary but not sufficient: in the green-light and party units it acts together with depth, movement, and sound.
Gehlot (2025)	Adaptations tend to emphasize emotional effect over reflective commentary.	Partly confirm; complicate	The past and death units support the affective emphasis; framing narration and the social-space unit show that reflective commentary persists, so the difference is one of relative balance.
Wangmu (2025)	Daisy as a complex character conditioned by position, gender, and class.	Complicate	The film's soft staging foregrounds fragility, and Daisy's calculation is conveyed less by the image than by Nick's commentary in the novel (Section 4.2).

5. CONCLUSION

In *The Great Gatsby*, the American Dream manifests as a desire that deteriorates into a delusion. Fitzgerald illustrates via Gatsby that achievement, affluence, and aspiration do not ensure societal acknowledgment, affection, or contentment. The green light, Daisy, the estate and gatherings, social milieu, Gatsby's fabricated persona, the past, and his demise collectively create a symbolic web that reveals the vulnerability of a dream rooted in materialism and social hierarchies.

Luhrmann's cinematic work reconstitutes this framework via audiovisual techniques. Throughout the seven units, the predominant themes of aspiration, exclusion, and moral condemnation persist, albeit with varying emphasis: the film prioritizes emotional immediacy, spectacle, and overt desire, while downplaying retrospective irony and narrative contemplation, and shifts some critique into the realms of colour, space, sound, and performance. The distinction between the two texts is most accurately characterized as a transition from mostly verbal-narrative depiction to audiovisual cinematic arrangement, rather than a substitution of one meaning for another. Operationally defined, multimodal reconstruction demonstrated efficacy in

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tracking this movement on a unit-by-unit basis, while maintaining its distinction from adaptation, reinterpretation, remediation, transformation, and representation.

The study presents a five-stage paradigm that includes an innovative unit, its representational significance, an associated cinematic scene, its multimodal expression, and a declaration of the relative shift in focus. Given that the data is derived from a single novel, one film, and seven thematic units, the framework ought to be regarded as a suggested, possibly beneficial instrument that requires validation in further research; the current findings do not indicate its applicability to novel-to-film adaptations broadly.

The research possesses other constraints. The movie was examined using a solitary viewing copy, accompanied by estimated timestamps and durations, and the interpretation remains qualitative, inherently influenced by the authors' discernment, despite the implementation of coding methods, memoing, peer discourse, and negative-case evaluations to ensure accountability. The research provides neither a frequency-based nor a corpus-assisted analysis, nor any evidence regarding audience reception. Subsequent investigations might utilize the framework on other adaptations of Gatsby (1926, 1949, 1974) for a temporal analysis, on other esteemed novel-to-film adaptations, and on methodologies using independent coders, so allowing for a direct assessment of its transferability.

AI DECLARATION

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in the preparation, writing, or development of this manuscript.

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