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**THE ONCOMING HORROR IN JAWS:
A MULTIMODAL TRANSLATION ANALYSIS COMPARING NOVEL AND FILM**

Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso – Letras-Inglês

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ABSTRACT

“The great fish moved silently through the night water, propelled by short sweeps of its crescent tail” (Benchley 9). That is the opening line of Peter Benchley’s best-selling novel *Jaws*. Represented on the pages by means of detailed descriptions of the fish lurking over its victims, the horror in the film is portrayed by a giant man-eating creature whose presence is more suggested than seen. By a multimodal analysis describing translation phenomena within an intersemiotic scope, this study aims at analyzing how information such as the fear and the horror affect portrayed by the nightmarish presence of the shark were built in the opening scene of the novel and how they were translated by Steven Spielberg to the big screen.

Keywords: adaptation, multimodality, horror affect, Steven Spielberg

RESUMO

“O enorme peixe movia-se silenciosamente pelas águas noturnas, impulsionado por movimentos curtos da cauda em forma de meia-lua” (Benchley 9, tradução minha). Essa é a frase de abertura do best-seller de Peter Benchley *Tubarão*. Representado nas páginas por meio de descrições detalhadas do peixe espreitando suas vítimas, o horror no filme advém de um gigantesco “devorador de homens” cuja presença é muito mais sugerida do que explicitada. Através de uma análise multimodal com o intuito de descrever fenômenos tradutórios em um escopo intersemiótico, o presente estudo busca analisar de que forma o medo e o efeito do horror – representados pela apavorante presença do tubarão – foram construídos na cena de abertura do romance e como foram traduzidos por Steven Spielberg para as telas do cinema.

Palavras-chave: adaptação, multimodalidade, horror, Steven Spielberg

Sharks are like ax-murderers, Martin. People react to them with their guts. There's something crazy and evil and uncontrollable about them.

Benchley

Martin, it's all psychological. You yell barracuda, everybody says, 'Huh? What?' You yell shark, we've got a panic on our hands on the Fourth of July.

Spielberg

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1. Introduction

“The great fish moved silently through the night water, propelled by short sweeps of its crescent tail” (Benchley 9)¹. That is the opening line of Peter Benchley’s best-selling novel *Jaws*. Represented on the pages by means of detailed descriptions of the fish lurking over its victims, the horror in the film, backed by our primal fear of being in the water without knowing what could be swimming right below, is portrayed by a giant man-eating creature whose presence is more suggested than seen.

According to Lundén, novels become scripts through major adaptation in order to “make them more fit for the screen” (22). *Jaws* was no exception. By eliminating subplots, such as the mayor’s involvement with the mafia and the marital crisis between the main character and his wife, the result is an adventure motion picture from A to Z. To the shark, which, according to Bowles, “occupies only a few scant pages in the novel and serves only as a catalyst to provoke certain character relationships” (213), was given all the spotlights.

Despite being a secondary character in the novel, the fish is still there, and it was expected that Steven Spielberg, back then aged 27, would translate its menacing presence to the big screen. Concerning the terror/horror affect² that novel and film seek to unleash upon their respective audiences, some distinction is important. In the iconic opening scene, can we say that, by revealing from the very beginning the great white shark prowling the girl before she was attacked, Benchley conceived a horror moment, while Spielberg pursued the path of terror by hiding the monster all the time?

For Stephen King, there are three emotional levels. He says: “I recognize terror as the finest emotion [...], so I will try to terrorize the reader. But if I find I cannot terrify him/her, I will try to horrify; and if I find I cannot horrify, I’ll go for the gross-out” (22). For the author,

¹ Since this is a literary study, I chose to use the MLA guidelines for its formatting and styling.

² Carroll, the main source of the theoretical framework of this study, is not interested only in the result or consequence of horror, so he does not refer to it as a horror *effect*, but as a horror *affect*, verb that, according to Nichol, can be used as a noun for describing emotion in a psychological context (online).

terror is the fear of the unknown; it is the menace we can just feel, leaving room for the imagination. Horror comes from the revelation of that menace; it is the monster taking form right before our eyes. The revulsion caused would be due to a monster so horrendous that it would even provoke a reaction in our stomachs.

In this regard, Carroll explains: “Like suspense novels or mystery novels, novels are denominated horrific in respect of their intended capacity to raise a certain *affect*. Indeed, the genres of suspense, mystery, and horror derive their very names from the affects they are intended to promote—a sense of suspense, a sense of mystery, and a sense of horror (14).

In the beginning of *Jaws* the novel, Benchley, a self-described admirer of the sea life, does not spare the reader of what he thinks would happen if a bloodthirsty shark encountered a fragile and defenseless bather in its way: “[...] the fish attacked from below. It hurtled up under the woman, jaws agape. The great conical head struck her like a locomotive, knocking her up out of the water. The jaws snapped shut around her torso, crushing bones and flesh and organs into a jelly” (Benchley 12).

Considering King and Carroll’s concepts, we are before a classic horror moment. It is a matter of death. And “dying is when the monster gets you” (King 67).

In *The Making of Jaws*, Spielberg argues that a noteworthy point in his film is that very few of us have been in the water with a shark, but we are all familiar with the water (00:19:24 – 00:19:41). According to him, the idea of a girl going swimming and suddenly being attacked by a Leviathan that comes out of the water with its jaws agape, falling on her, devouring her, could have resulted in a spectacular opening for the film, however, there would be nothing primal about it (00:19:41 – 00:20:03).

Accordingly, the film version is a true ballet of death, which is conducted by the most perfect combination of cinematic techniques. From the shark’s point of view, we are about to see this woman’s soft skin being violently struck by a pile of teeth. Then, the attack takes

place, but, unlike Benchley, Spielberg leaves the dirty job to our imagination, translating a moment of pure horror in the novel into one of the most terrifying moments in all film history.

In view of the above, considering the same premise – the presence of a giant man-eating creature –, the following research questions can be raised: How were fear and the horror affect represented in the pages of the novel? And how were such fear and affect translated in the motion picture?

In order to answer those questions, this study proposes an analysis of how information such as fear and the horror affect in *Jaws* was portrayed in the opening scene of the novel and how Steven Spielberg translated that information to the big screen. To that end, the analysis shall resort to the multimodal approach, within an intersemiotic scope, in an attempt to interpret the portrayal of fear and horror.

1.2. Organization of the study

The paper is organized as follows: at the outset, introductory remarks and contextualization of the themes are provided. Section 2 carries out a literature review about the way in which horror stories are conventionally structured and about features that sustain interest in such narratives. Subsequently, a subsection called *Imaginative horror* is presented, which aims to investigate the power of suggestion in horror films, its most striking elements. The following subsection discusses the translation phenomena observed in the film, such as strategies and adaptations, from an intersemiotic perspective and grounded on the concept of multimodality. Section 3 introduces the method and explains the procedures adopted for data analysis. Section 4 analyzes the data of the study, providing excerpts from the opening scene in the novel and its respective translated scene in the film, properly illustrated by movie frames. Section 5 presents the final remarks of the study and, finally, section 6 lists the works cited.

2. Literature review

This section will be divided into three subsections. The first one provides a contextualization of features that sustain interest in horror stories and the way in which such stories are conventionally structured, based on Carroll's systematic examination on the most common narrative structures, whether in literature or cinema. The second one investigates the power of suggestion in horror films, its most striking elements, often derived from technical shortcomings. The last one carries out a multimodal analysis in order to describe translation phenomena from an intersemiotic perspective.

Authors like Stephen King, and theorists such as Noël Carroll and Lars Svendsen, among others, will be quoted as a theoretical background in the first two parts of this section.

2.1. "This shark, swallow you whole!" – Fear and horror narratives

Despite being an agonizing feeling, fear is a natural tool of organisms "against perceived threat to their integrity or existence" (Javanbakh and Saab, online). Among the actions that it provides in our body, there is emotion, which unleashes adrenaline and puts the brain on alert (idem). When we look at narratives that contain violence and terror, we experience this state of fear and our body may respond with two antagonistic feelings: anguish and pleasure. According to Svendsen: "Fear lends colour to the world. A world without fear would be deadly boring. Biochemically speaking, fear is related to curiosity, something that can be an important reason why exciting films and experiences are so entertaining" (74).

When in contact with narratives that contain violence and terror, whether through books or movies, it seems that we are faced with a pleasurable fear, such a seductive opportunity of being against some sort of danger without actually taking any risk. Our taste for fear, "our reason for doing so is that these experiences somehow give us a positive feeling

and fulfil an emotional need (Svendsen 75). Thus, how can fear and horror be artistically created and conducted in order to fulfill those emotional needs?

There are several features that sustain interest in horror narratives, such as the discovery of the unknown, the element of suspense, the terror/horror affect, and what Carroll calls *The Complex Discovery Plot* (99), which is a plot structured by four essential movements that even suggests a direct influence on the way suspense is translated from one medium/channel to another.

Basically, the first movement, called *onset* or the arrival of the monster, establishes menace. For example, in *Jaws* the film, it is represented by the shark attack in the opening sequence. The subsequent movements are: *discovery* (when marine biologist Matt Hooper and chief of police Martin Brody are totally sure about the presence of the shark, but cannot convince others); *confirmation* (when the authorities, in our case the mayor of Amity Island, are convinced about the menace); and, finally, *confrontation* (the man-against-beast moment we all have been waiting for).

Considering that “the shark does not fully appear in a shot until one hour and 21 minutes into the two-hour film” (Hutchinson, online), Carroll’s plot theory suggests a gradual revelation of the monster. Considering that and the *onset* created by Spielberg, by resorting to audio and visual codes alike, with less verbal than nonverbal, the oncoming horror present in the first appearance of the beast might be more effective in the film than in the novel. We will return to this topic later.

On how monsters are constructed in films, Carroll (qtd. in Lundén) points out “that the basic feature for the infamous evil is to be threatening and dangerous, and have the capacity—for example—of triggering ‘certain enduring infantile fears, such as those of being eaten or dismembered’” (29). *Jaws* does not bring to the surface only a killer white shark, but

also our ancestral fear of the dark, of the unknown; the fear that the living thing in the depths of the abyss might have claws and teeth as sharp as knives.

Below (see Figures 1, 2 and 3) are some pieces of work by artist Rick Melton (a great *Jaws* aficionado) illustrating the ancient nightmare of being eaten alive. His art is inspired by horror movies, the concept of “the beauty and the beast” and the erotic horror, which can be considered a creative exploration “that opens many doors beyond conventionally accepted notions of both fear and sex” (Donaldson, online).

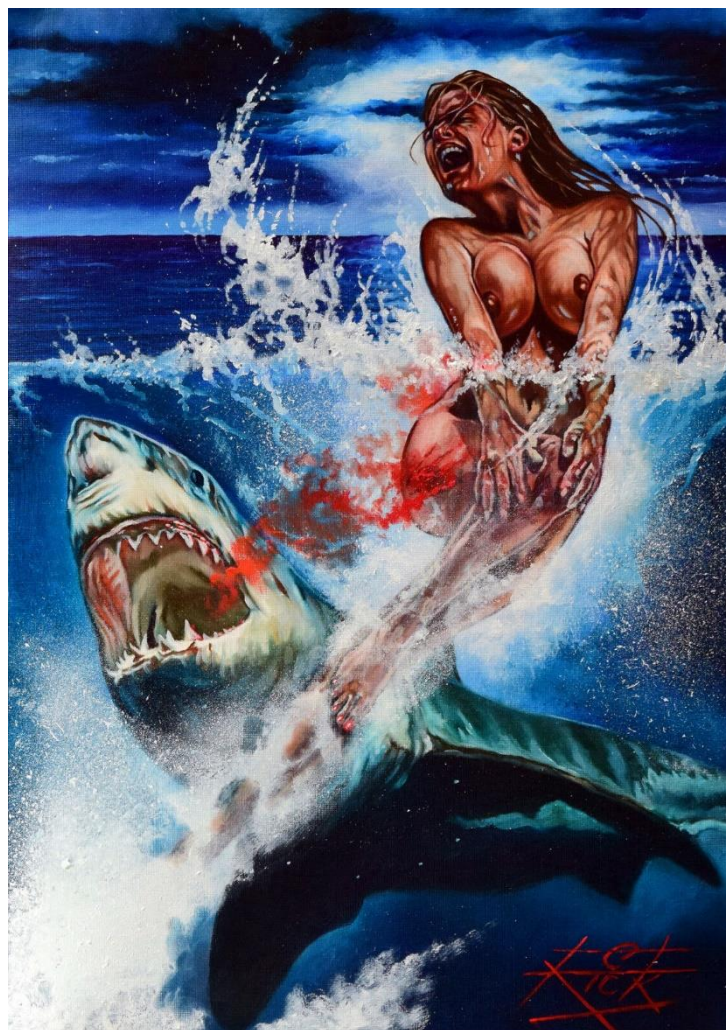


Fig. 1

Melton, Rick. *Jaws*. Classic horror. Web. 07 September 2019.

<https://www.stunninglysavage.com/jaws_176431.html>



Fig. 2

Melton, Rick. *Blood Surf*. Trash horror. Web. 07 September 2019.

<https://www.stunninglysavage.com/blood-surf_45531.html>



Fig. 3

Melton, Rick. *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. Oil Painting. Web. 07 September 2019.
 <<https://paintingvalley.com/creature-from-the-black-lagoon-painting#creature-from-the-black-lagoon-painting-34.jpg>>

With regard to monster descriptions in horror novels, Carroll points out that “character’s affective reaction to the monstrous in horror stories is not merely a matter of fear of being frightened by something that threatens danger” (22). Emotionally, a monster, as a violation of nature, is so “fulsome and revolting” (idem) that it could produce in characters the conviction that mere physical contact with them can be lethal.

That relation between the characters in the story, whether in literature or cinema, and the monster they encounter, is also essential to distinguish a horror story from a story with monsters. “In works of horror, the humans regard the monsters they meet as abnormal, as disturbances of the natural order. In fairy tales, on the other hand, monsters are part of the everyday furniture of the universe” (Carroll 16).

The excerpt below could be taken from a chapter of *Jaws*, but the disturbance of the natural order description belongs to an item published in the New York Times in 1916:

Hundreds of men and women and many children were on the beach this afternoon when a swimmer, far out beyond the outer life lines, raised a cry for help. [...]

As the life guards drew near him the water about the man was suddenly tinged with red and he shrieked loudly. A woman on shore cried that the man in the red canoe had upset, but others realized it was blood that colored the water [...]. As the life guards reached for the swimmer he cried out that a shark had bitten him and then fainted.

They dragged him into the boat and discovered that his left leg had been bitten off above the knee and the right leg just below the knee. The shark also had nipped his left side, for there were marks of teeth beneath the arms. Women fled when the man was placed on the beach, but the life guards and other men tried to bandage his wounds while a doctor was called. Before one arrived however the man was dead.

(“Shark Kills Bather Off Jersey Beach”. *The New York Times* 7 July 1916.)

To this day, scholars have speculated which shark species might have been responsible for that – and if it was just one animal. Benchley claimed that the “Jersey Shore shark attacks of 1916” (3), alongside the item in a newspaper he read in 1964 “about a fisherman who harpooned a 4,500-pound great white shark off Long Island” (1), inspired him to write his novel about man vs. nature. Based on the idea that “a monster or a monstrous entity is a necessary condition for horror, [but] such a criterion would not be a sufficient

condition” (Carroll 16), *Jaws*, both novel and film, with their great white, a creature from the real world doing things that it normally would do not, can be considered “perhaps the most perfectly constructed horror story in our time” (Knight, online).

2.2. Imaginative horror

The novel and the film reverse one of Alfred Hitchcock’s conceptions of suspense: complicity with the villain, that is, to leave the characters in ignorance, while, on this side of the screen, we have a good picture of what is about to happen. Just like the English director in several moments of *The Birds* “has [...] played with the audience’s fear of the unknown” (Webber 108), Spielberg also knew that “everyone has experienced the uncanny fear that there is something in the dark outside your window peering in at you” (idem). Reasserting the young director’s “ability to manipulate storytelling” (Lundén 27), we can say that the way he constructs the monster omniscient anonymity works somehow as in silent movies: it makes us respond to visual stimuli in an instinctive and visceral way (Hollander, *The Shark is Still Working*, 00:28:12 – 00:28:14).

Although technical shortcomings, such as the mechanical shark that did not work as expected, have influenced some artistic decisions in the film (Lundén 30), the strategy of hiding the source of fear is powerful. It had already been used successfully by filmmakers like Jacques Tourneur in the 1940s, who masked the poverty of some productions based precisely on the fear of the uncanny (King 72), inducing us to create a nightmarish monster in our minds. *Cat People*, considered Tourneur’s best work and “almost certainly the best horror film of the forties” (King 71), is a perfect well conducted ballet of suggestion where menace (until its last ten minutes) is always in the shadows, suggested by a branch swaying in the wind, by the roar of a panther that cannot be seen.

Since the dawn of cinema, there have been registers of horror movies. In the first year of the cinematograph, in 1896, George Méliès made a three-plus minute short film called *Le*

Manoir du diable (a.k.a. *The Haunted Castle*), which, basically, tells the story of a huge bat transforming into Mephistopheles, who then, using a caldron, conjures up some phantoms, skeletons and witches (Jones, online). Concerning literature, “graphic descriptions of menace and dismemberment by monsters are as old as *Beowulf* and much, much older still, though it wasn’t until Horace Walpole’s 18th century novel *The Castle of Otranto* inspired the gothic romance novel that horror-qua-horror came into fashion” (online).

Coming from literature, horror stories started being filmed in later decades, but it was only in the German expressionism era that the genre gained prominence. *Der Golem* (a.k.a. *The Golem*), by Paul Wegener, *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (a.k.a. *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*), by Robert Wiene, *Nosferatu*, by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, and others served as a source for several films from the 1930s, such as *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*, both directed by James Whale.

The gothic character reflected in the settings of the plot which were terrifying old mansions, castles and fortresses and misty dark places. The protagonists were inhuman, supernatural beings such as vampires, madmen, demons, unfriendly ghosts, monsters, zombies like Frankenstein, split personalities like Jekyll/Hyde, satanic villains, werewolves, mad scientists and freaks. Sometimes it was an invisible immaterial evil, which filled the surroundings. (Prohászková 137)

In German expressionism, we can find an intensification of the imagery elements; we can say that they represented an exteriorization of a state of mind, a spiritual materialization, and their aesthetic potency came from this confrontation between the external and the internal. What then characterized expressionist terror would be the expressive assimilation of a psychological element.

Back to King’s definition of terror, horror and revulsion, the force of expressionist terror would be exactly the result of fear alongside imagination, thus, since the earliest days

of the genre, “the tension between the seen and the unseen has been a driving force behind terror/horror” (Colavito 07). Lovecraft used to say that “Just enough is suggested, and just little enough is told” (42), that is, according to Carroll, “the best horror works by suggestion, by getting the reader to imagine what is the case” (219). The idea is that the reader – and the spectator of a horror story as well – are able to scare themselves better than any detailed description that the author or the filmmaker could provide in order to try to cause fear.

For director Roger Corman, who signed in the 1960s several films inspired by Edgar Allan Poe’s stories, “the essence of the horror is fear of the unseen – the image behind the door” (Nasr 27). He says: “Some of the most frightening sequences I’ve shot are simply a dolly coming up to a strange door and hearing some strange noise – not necessarily a violent noise” (idem).

Equivalent to the Expressionism’s lights and shadows, the music in *Jaws*, as a major role in framing the story by providing sound elements that help the audience to decode the actions, is as important as the storytelling itself (Lundén 30). The biggest challenge of composer John Williams was to give a voice to what we cannot see on the screen, and that famous *leitmotif*, that two-note progression, ended up being “the element that replaced the absence—or better said malfunction—of the mechanical shark” (Lundén 31).

Probably the most important code used to express the oncoming horror in *Jaws*, John Williams’ score can be heard, according to Langkjaer, in at least three different ways:

First, the music is ‘heard even before’ we see a shark. As such it is a sound event that attracts attention in itself. It is a tuning mechanism alarming our attention system by saying that something new is going on. Second, the quote is about hearing emotions as the music is heard as expressive of some menacing quality. Third, this event and its menacing character are given a specific reference: the shark. (70)

Alongside other elements, such as the point of view shots of the monster, when music fills the room and we are not even seen a fin cutting the surface of the water, Spielberg, different from Benchley, who had the support of verbal codes to do that, establishes that a menacing monster is coming around. Arguably, that is also the equivalent to what Corman says about the dolly shot up to a closed door with some strange noise coming from the other side.

As Stephens points out about *Jaws*, “the ‘less is more’ idea is one of the film’s greatest attributes and one that comes to the fore on the big screen. It is also the reason it is so effective” (online). Like *The Exorcist*, where director William Friedkin, instead of throwing all the horror itself onto the screen, decided to shoot Ellen Burstyn’s character reaction to the horror she was seeing, “Spielberg hides the shark beneath the water so the monster remains largely unseen. We are therefore shown the reactions of others to build our own interpretation of what lies in wait” (Stephens, online).

In addition, “Spielberg uses visual motifs to represent the shark’s existence and predatory prowess while hiding its actual form” (Stephen, online). Those visual motifs are, mainly, the barrels harpooned into the shark in order to wear it down, dragging in its wake.

In the scene where two men are trying to catch the shark by using a chain and a huge meat hook, Spielberg also makes use of a dock so he can illustrate the monster’s presence. The shark grabs the chain with so much violence that half of the dock is destroyed, being dragged away and making one of the men fall into the water. To the sound of John Williams’ *crescendo* of terror, the image of that floating wood (symbolizing the menacing dorsal fin) turning around and toward the man, “play of the audience’s perception of the monster” and “...builds the tension while we await the full reveal, akin to a magician hiding the rabbit” (Stephens, online).

As Spielberg originally intended to show the shark more often, three pneumatic prop sharks – all nicknamed Bruce after Spielberg’s lawyer – were built (see Figure 4).

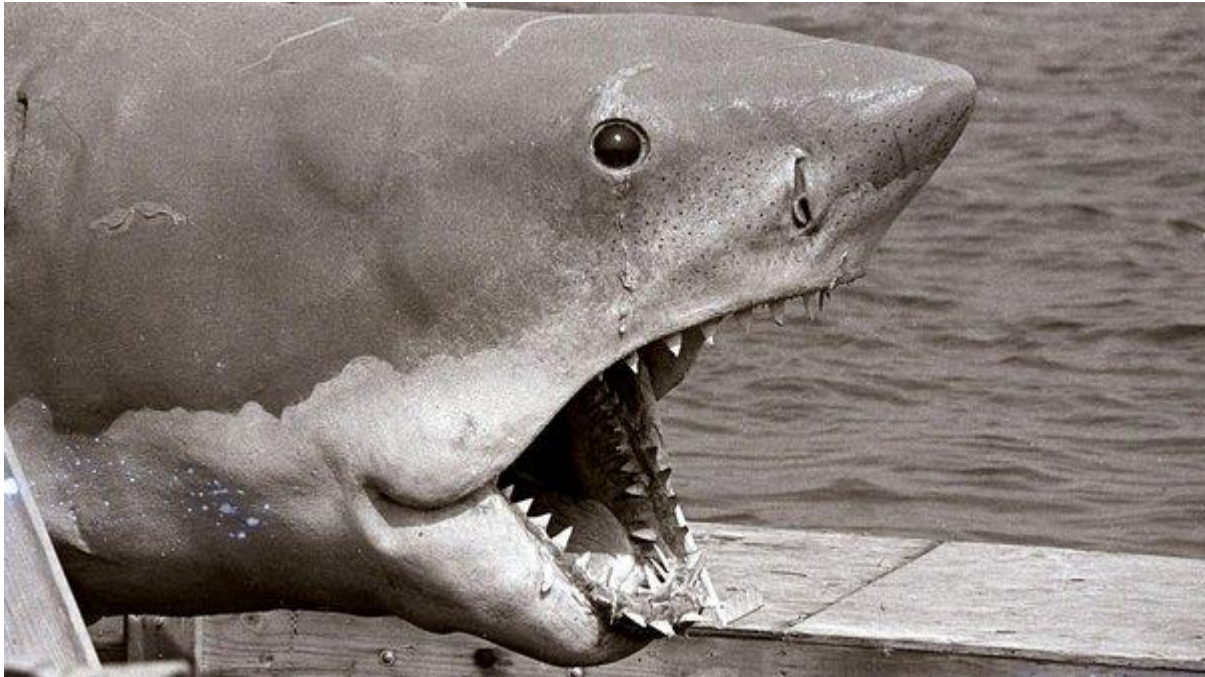


Fig. 4

Blake, Edith. *Tested*. The Robot Shark Technology of Jaws. Web. 08 September 2019.

<<https://www.tested.com/art/movies/456576-robot-shark-technology-jaws/>>

“One was a full-body prop that was towed with a 300-foot umbilical cable, and the other two were ‘platform sharks’ that were attached to a 12-ton steel platform that sat on the ocean floor” (Nastasi, online). According to Konow, unfortunately, none of the Bruces had been tested in the water, and when they got in Martha’s Vineyard, one of them immediately sank. During the second test, its hydraulic system exploded (online).

As claimed by producer David Brown, there were a lot of complaints about the prop sharks that were not able to perform, but, in the end, that failure contributed to the success of *Jaws* and ended up being “the artistry of the film” (Hollander, *The Shark is Still Working*, 00:43:43 – 00:43:55). Accordingly, Spielberg says that nowadays he “would have had the

digital tools to have much more of the shark [...]”, therefore, that “would have ruined much more of the movie” (Hollander, *The Shark is Still Working*, 00:43:55 – 00:44:07).

Producer Richard Zanuck claimed that, for instance, the idea of the barrels came during the production and “out of frustration of not having the shark”, since they “didn’t have anything else to shoot” (Hollander, *The Shark is Still Working*, 00:44:11 – 00:44:27). Zanuck also claimed that “in the very first scene with the girl being pulled back and forth, the shark was supposed to be there [...]”, and the only reason why they showed it later was because they did not have it earlier (Hollander, *The Shark is Still Working*, 00:44:28 – 00:44:40).

While the stories of the malfunctioning of the Bruces are legendary, Konow points that designer of production Joe Alves does not remember if originally they intended “to show the shark much”, though he did “all the sketches, [...] 300 storyboards to Jaws” (online). Figure 5 illustrates some examples, as follows:



Fig. 5

Alves, Joe. *JAWS 1973 Pre-Production Illustration*. JoeAlvesMovieArt.com. Web. 08 September 2019. <<https://joealvesmovieart.com/product-category/illustrations/>>

Contradicting Zanuck, Konow also points out that it was never supposed to be a shark, “whether it was working or not”, during the scenes of the first attack and when the fishermen are trying to catch the shark off the dock (online).

[...] cinematographer Michael Chapman [...], who was the camera operator on *Jaws*, says, “There was always at least some of that in the script that were not going to see it for a while. It was just lurking and lurking.” Susan Backline, who was the first shark victim, recalled that in her scene and the scene on the pier, “They never, ever considered showing the shark. That’s exactly how Steve wanted it filmed.” (Konow, online)

On account of that, it is worth mentioning that the creative process of translating a written text into a multimodal one involves semiotic choices that, at times, are unplanned or come up along the way. If Spielberg, since pre-production, had already decided not to show the shark until the scene in which it eats the boy on the raft, or if the choice was derived from technical shortcomings throughout shooting, the young director followed a long tradition that comes from literature, going through canonic authors of the genre, until reaching the cinema. His *arrival of the monster* was orchestrated in such a way that nothing could be more threatening than the invisibility of the predator; after all, according to Susan Backline, “visually, you are right with it, but if your imagination runs wild, then it can be anything” (Hollander, *The Shark is Still Working*, 00:44:57 – 00:45:04).

The following section introduces some particularities of the multimodal approach, adopted in this study to substantiate the main analysis.

2.3. Multimodality and translation phenomena

The term multimodality refers to the different possible modes and channels through which information is conveyed, most of the times acting in a combined way, which is why it requires the prefix “multi” (Gambier 98). Therefore, multimodal texts combine and integrate features of meaning creation of more than one semiotic modality, such as language, gestures, movements, images, sounds, etc., to produce a specific meaning in the text (Thibault 230). A multimodal analysis/approach encompasses such aspects in a way to consider how and/or why they were represented or used in a particular manner rather than another.

In the scope of translation or adaptation, analyses normally tackle intersemiotic transfers from one medium/channel to another, sometimes regarding the transposition of information perceived by one human sense which was transmuted to be perceived by another human sense, such as from audio to visual, from visual to tactile, from verbal to visual. The latter is the point in question in the present study, more precisely from verbal (the novel) to audiovisual (the film).

In intersemiotics, audiovisual components are regarded as signs, or semiotic codes, which are intertwined into a single proposal, such as in an opera concert, a film, a live show, a music video. According to Kress, “The semiotic effects are recognizable in many domains and at various levels, [such as] the level of *media* and the *dissemination* of messages – most markedly in the shift from the book and the page to the screen” (6). These multiple codes and semiotic effects are simultaneously assimilated by the viewer into a whole that can be fully appreciated under a nonconflicting interaction.

In this vein, if we consider that “no text is monomodal” (Gambier 100), the concept of multimodality precisely implies a multiplicity of semiotic signs co-operating simultaneously. Such signs, referred to by Zabalbeascoa (24) as the four components of the audiovisual text, are illustrated in Figure 6:

	Audio	Visual
Verbal	Words heard	Words read
Nonverbal	Music + special effects	The picture Photography

Fig. 6

The four components of the audiovisual text (Zabalbeascoa, 2008, p. 24)

Zabalbeascoa (24) considers the nuances in the use of meaning codes, which may be more or less present and analyzed at levels of relevance according to the type of audiovisual material produced. The author (24) illustrates different combinations of different signs, systems and channels, as shown in Figure 7:

	A	B	C	D	E
1			+ verbal		
2					
3	+ audio				+ visual
4					
5			+ nonverbal		

A: only audio
B: more audio than visual
C: audio and visual alike
D: less audio than visual
E: only visual

1: basically verbal
2: more verbal than nonverbal
3: both verbal and nonverbal alike
4: less verbal than nonverbal
5: only nonverbal

Fig. 7

The two axes of audiovisual communication (Zabalbeascoa, 2008, p. 26)

Just for illustration purposes, an audiovisual production located in C3 could be a movie trailer, in the particular case the trailer of *Jaws* (“*Jaws* - Theatrical Trailer (HD) (1975)”), which has audio and visual codes working symbiotically (C: audio and visual alike; 3: both verbal and nonverbal alike). Based on Zabalbeascoa’s illustrations (Figures 6 and 7), this trailer consists of a narration/voiceover (verbal and audio: words heard), background music (audio and nonverbal: music + special effects) and the video recording itself (nonverbal and visual: the picture/photography). We will return to this issue in the analysis session.

Mayoral et al. point out that “although the channels or media may vary, we must consider the message to be a whole created as a result of the concurrence of different signals” and warn that “this does not imply, however, that the sum of signals would transmit the sum of the meanings” (360).

It is worth stressing that audiovisual creations adapted/translated from books, whether artistic or not, are formed from a simultaneous complexity of components that can pose to the translator numerous difficulties. This concept emphasizes the fact that some target texts, due to the nature of their genre or their multimodal communication medium, operate under certain sensorial constraints (Snell & Hornby 7). The translator, therefore, faces the challenge of translating a multimodal text containing several resources deliberately employed to convey a particular message – in our case, the fear, the horror rendered into the film.

It should be borne in mind that, in light of the purpose for which the translation is intended, the translator is often compelled to convey only part of the semantic – linguistic and cultural – content of the original work, at times omitting information or adding extras; it can be even regarded as a simplification process. Put differently, a film based upon a novel has

its narrative, to a certain extent and non-derogatively, simplified, and “simplifying a narrative mirrors how our brain naturally makes sense of situations” (Lundén 22).

In view of that, the term *adaptation* rather than *translation* is often invoked to define such a process. It is worth remembering that, in the cinematographic context, *adaptation* is the term much more often used to indicate the rendering of a written work into an audiovisual modality. It can be said that too many alterations, from novel to film, can characterize the translation as an adaptation due to the semantic distancing from the original. As Milton (59) explains, an adaptation usually contains omissions, rewritings, additions, and can only be recognized as a work of the original author if the purpose of the enunciation is maintained.

Given the above, one final remark should be made: the use of the terms *adaptation* and (*multimodal*) *translation* will have the same meaning for the purposes of the present study.

3. Method and data analysis procedures

The method of the present exploratory research consists of comparing excerpts from a given passage in the novel with its respective translated scene in the film; in other words, it attempts to analyze how fear and horror, which were originally conceived to be sensed in the reading of the print, were adapted in the motion picture, now intended to be sensed in the watching of the film. The intent here is to spot some semantic and intersemiotic correspondence between the modes, which will contribute to conducting the analysis.

Regarding data collection, the main sources are Peter Benchley’s best-selling novel *Jaws*, published in February 1974, and its movie adaptation directed by Steven Spielberg and written by Benchley himself in partnership with Carl Gottlieb, released during the summer of 1975.

In order to improve the analysis, both the cover of the book (designed by artist Paul Beacon) and the poster of the film (by artist Roger Kastel) will be compared, since the first

one is an illustrative element for the reader, which might as well have influenced in the film “translation”.

Screenshots, collected from the *Jaws* DVD, run on Windows Media Player Classic, shall illustrate such comparisons, which, along with the film analysis that I will conduct and with Carroll’s theories on particular aspects of narration and narrative in horror stories, whether in literature or cinema, will substantiate the proposed multimodal analysis.

4. She was the first – A shark attack from print to film

“There is a creature alive today who has survived millions of years of evolution, without change, without passion, and without logic. It lives to kill. A mindless eating machine. It will attack and devour anything. It is as if God created the Devil, and gave him jaws (“Jaws - Theatrical Trailer (HD) (1975),” 00:00:04 – 00:00:37).

In the opening scene of *Jaws*, the reader is introduced, without delay, to the monster. The author tells us, in the very first paragraph, that the creature “might have been asleep, save for the movement dictated by countless millions of years of instinctive continuity” (Benchley 9). Carroll explains that the effectiveness of the monster should be “clearly demonstrated in the earliest lethal or demoralizing encounters with humans” (141). Based on that, the *onset* movement – alongside details concerning the anatomy of a great white shark introduced right from the beginning in the novel and throughout the attack itself – is important in order to make the reader familiar with the monster’s striking abilities. Furthermore, it establishes that this is not a fairy-tale monster since it is an extraordinary being in an ordinary world.

The monsters of horror, however, breach the norms of ontological propriety presumed by the positive human characters in the story. That is, in examples of horror, it would appear that the monster is an extraordinary character in our ordinary world, whereas in fairy tales and the like the monster is an ordinary creature in an extraordinary world. (Carroll 16)

That concept is reinforced in the movie trailer, with Percy Rodriguez's narration telling us that "None of man's fantasies of evil can compare to the reality of *Jaws* ("Jaws - Theatrical Trailer (HD) (1975)," 00:03:02 – 00:03:07). About the right tone, voice artist Rodriguez said:

They had an idea of doing a very high horrifying delivery, which I disagreed with. And we discussed it and finally around they came around to the idea that I had in mind that we would do it at a moral level devastating presentation rather than trying to ride over this terrifying visual that they had. I felt that I should go underneath it and let the visual sell. (Hollander, *The Shark is Still Working*, 00:20:00 – 00:20:34).

Besides describing an effective (or shall we say affective?) combination of different systems and channels of signs, in a way that the visual/nonverbal code would stand out against the voiceover, Rodriguez's dulcet and mysterious tones were the perfect anticipation for the reaction that the opening scene of the film was supposed to cause in the audience.

Zabalbeascoa (26) points out that due to the great importance of video image in a video clip material, for instance, based on Figure 6, the audio/nonverbal code (music and special effects) and the visual/nonverbal code (picture and photography) stand out against the audio/verbal code (words heard – the voiceover). Based on that, the images accompanied by the incidental music in the trailer of *Jaws*, even though classified as a C3 according to Figure 7, perhaps do outweigh the narration as Rodriguez suggests. However, since several modes are always used together in order to communicate a particular message, "in modal ensembles, designed so that each mode has a specific task and function" (Kress 28), it may be a bold or even pretentious decision to define which code take precedence over others in this particular case or in any other audiovisual production. On the other hand, it can be beneficial when it comes to translation, as a greater weight ascribed to a particular code can help the translator consciously choose to prioritize one aspect/mode over another.

Except for the narration, the film begins with the same image presented in the trailer. While the main titles are rolling, there is a point of view shot that allows the audience to see from the eyes of the monster, besides suggesting its movement as described in the novel. Added to that, there is the powerful non-diegetic music that does not only represent the shark, but becomes the shark, “anticipating the movie’s argument and subsequently referring back to the menace when played in other contexts” (Lundén 31).

Here, differently from the novel, fear lies in the fact that we know nothing about the monster yet, but still, the music and the cinematic techniques tell us that there is a presence to be feared – and we know it is a shark just because the synopsis tells us that, otherwise the threatening presence could be any other creature. Those elements are codes simultaneously assimilated by the viewer into a whole that can be fully appreciated under a nonconflicting interaction; in other words, Spielberg, by using audiovisual codes to express fear, renders into image and sound the (verbal) narrative of the novel.

Music, as a multimodal resource to convey meaning in a movie, goes beyond the primal idea of communicating a threat, working side by side with (verbal) narrative. Langkjaer points out the importance of a *leitmotif*: “[...] the *motif* gives the viewer advance knowledge of the narrative threat. Having knowledge about a narrative threat is no longer only hearing things in the music, but acknowledging and taking for granted a dramatic situation within the action. Hearing things in the music becomes part of what we know is the case in the fiction (72)”.

By the emphasis of the two-note *motif* “on prediction of a later appearance and (unseen) presence of something, it is presupposed that the music can make us know things about what is the case in the fiction, even though it is not visible” (Langkjaer 72). That is, music and the events in this particular fiction leave it to us to notice that the shark *motif*

coming up means that a new event is about to happen, or “to detect primitivism (contextual matters) and a menacing quality (emotions)” (72).

Back to the novel, after Benchley’s introduction of the monster, the reader meets a young woman who is going for a swim in the beaming moonlit waters off Amity Island. Her name is Chrissie Watkins, but that information will come afterwards. The shark feels her presence.

A hundred yards offshore, the fish sensed a change in the sea’s rhythm. It did not see the woman, nor yet did it smell her. Running within the length of its body were a series of thin canals, filled with mucus and dotted with nerve endings, and these nerves detected vibrations and signaled the brain. The fish turned toward shore.

(Benchley 10)

As the woman continues swimming away from the beach...

The vibrations were stronger now, and the fish recognized prey. [...] The fish smelled her now, and the vibrations – erratic and sharp – signaled distress. The fish began to circle close to the surface. Its dorsal fin broke water, and its tail, thrashing back and forth, cut the glassy surface with a hiss. (Benchley 11)

For the first time, the woman felt fear, though she did not know why. Adrenaline shot through her trunk and her limbs [...] (Benchley 11)

Considering King and Carroll’s concepts, we could do nothing but feel completely horrified by witnessing the attack, described by Benchley with an impressive wealth of details, as we are about to see in Figure 8.

At first, the woman thought she had snagged her leg on a rock or a piece of floating wood. There was no initial pain, only one violent tug on her right leg. She reached down to touch her foot, treading water with her left hand. She could not find her foot.

She reached higher on her leg, and then she was overcome by a rush of nausea and dizziness. Her groping fingers had found a nub of bone and tattered flesh. [...]

The fish had moved away. It swallowed the woman's limb without chewing. Bones and meat passed down the massive gullet in a single spasm. Now the fish turned again, homing on the stream of blood flushing from the woman's femoral artery, a beacon as clear and true as a lighthouse on a cloudless night. This time the fish attacked from below. It hurtled up under the woman, jaws agape. The great conical head struck her like a locomotive, knocking her up out of the water. The jaws snapped shut around her torso, crushing bones and flesh and organs into a jelly. (Benchley 12)



Fig. 8

Brown, Jerrod. *Jaws (Chrissie)*. Web. 08 September 2019. <
<https://www.comicartfans.com/gallerypiece.asp?piece=514339>>

Chrissie did not even have a glimpse of the shark, so that feeling of imminent danger and horror, the conviction, according to Carroll (22), that a single scratch from the beast can be lethal was totally directed to us. Even the “the menacing quality in the music is positioned within a complex web of character relations and audience concerns” (Langkjaer 74). Accordingly, mentioning the very same scene from *Jaws* as an example of what Hitchcock calls “complicity with the villain”, Carroll states:

When the heroine is splashing about with abandon as, unbeknownst to her, a killer shark is zooming in for the kill, we feel concern for her. But that is not what she is feeling. She’s feeling delighted. That is, very often we have different and, in fact, more information about what is going on in a fiction than do the protagonists, and consequently, what we feel is very different from what the character may be thought to feel. (90)

That complicity with the monster, as the oncoming horror likewise, was already evident on the cover of the book designed by Paul Bacon, later raised to another level in the poster of the film, this time designed by Roger Kastel (see Figure 9):

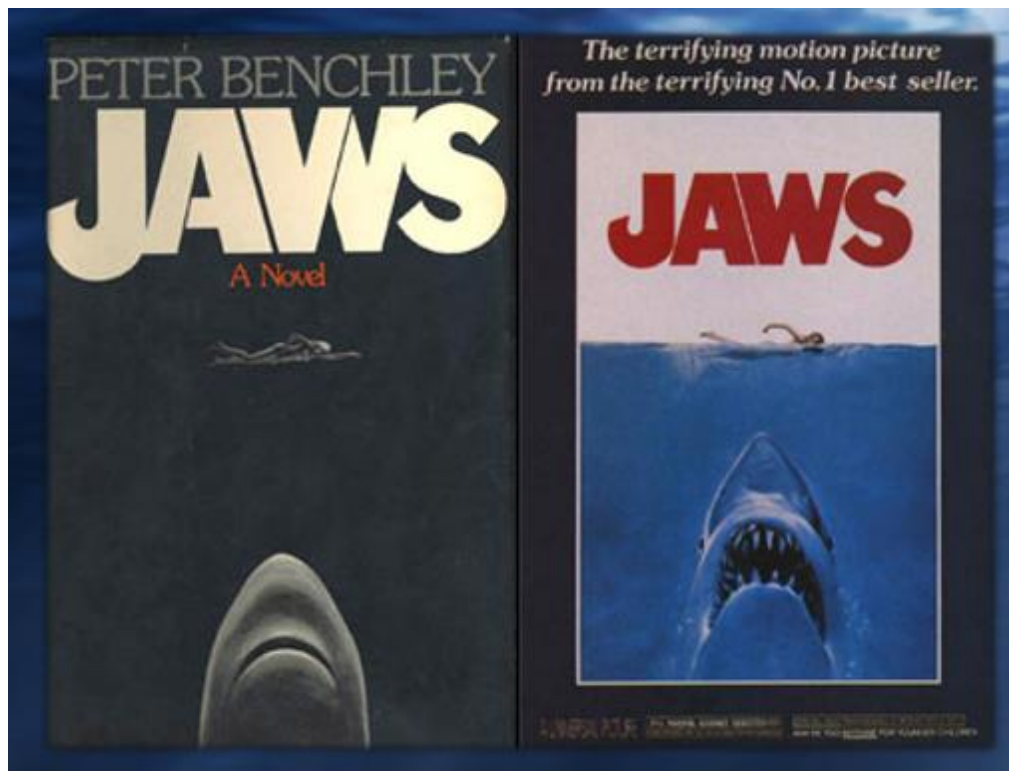


Fig. 9

Bacon, Paul. Artwork for Doubleday's hardback novel.

Kastel, Roger. Artwork for the movie-poster.

The image in the poster, with a scariest shark heading towards a naked swimmer, strongly influenced the marketing visual of the movie; hence the importance of looking for a connection and steering it towards the multimodal approach.

According to Scallera (online), "Kastel teased the features and benefits of buying a ticket to see a giant shark eat people, including a naked lady". That primal image, perhaps, tells us more than the picture of a real and fateful encounter between a shark and a beachgoer would do, thus creating an effect that starts in the imagination and consequently triggers our instincts of self-preservation and the feeling of pleasure by sensing fear. We can apply here

the concept of Barthes (qtd. in Lundén) concerning the *Studium* and the *Punctum*, the duality about what makes an image interesting.

[...] Barthes defines the range of meanings available in an image, and obvious to everyone, as the *Studium*. This unified and self-contained meaning of the image can be taken in at a glance. We see the picture, we see the shark and we see the girl, we can anticipate her death, a horrible one we are reminded of over and over each time we confront the image. (35)

Different from the *Punctum*, there is no subjectivity in the *Studium*. We see the eminent horror in the art of Kastel because that is what the natural order linked to the cultural context of the image is telling us – great monster about to devour fragile human being. The multimodal elements used in order to translate the sense of fear conveyed by the novel can be considered the equivalent to the “natural order event” that that image evokes.

In *Jaws*, both readers and viewers know about the menace lurking over the woman. In the novel, the reader can visualize the 25 feet long monster based on all the information that Benchley provides. In the film, although the image of its poster gives us a preliminary idea of the beast, “The key element which makes Chrissie’s attack so profoundly effective is the unsettling sense of the unseen and unknown” (Hughes 16).

In order to translate fear, which was so clearly described in words in the novel, Spielberg resorts to our sensorial skills to create a feeling of mystery, mixing our senses of hearing and seeing, that is, audio and visual (or lack of visual, in this particular case). Therefore, assuming that “what we cannot see is often more frightening than what we can see” (Warner, online), the director hides the source of fear, leaving to our imagination the task of filling in the blanks. We never see the creature during the attack, just Chrissie being violently dragged from one side to another while our imagination is running wild, and “even though we knew full well what would happen to Chrissie in the movie, the sudden

unrelenting savageness of the shark attack was no less shocking nor terrifying as she was eaten alive before our horrified eyes” (Hughes 14).

Still considering the total non-appearance of the shark in the film scene, it is important to mention that Benchley’s omniscient narration never makes use of the word *shark* with the purpose of naming the assailant, either during the first attack or at any other moment in the novel. We might assume that by naming the menacing presence simply *fish* can be an allusion to the unknown biblical monster that swallowed Jonah, originally known in Hebrew as *dag dagol*, which means “*enormous fish or humongous creature*” (O’Rourke 15). It can also relate to the fear dating back to the Middle Ages when “the sea was a place of mysticism and superstition, with countless tales of leviathans, monsters, and spirits plaguing the waters” (Constantino, online). According to the author, researchers believe that many of these “monsters” were based on real creatures, but with their dimensions exaggerated, and much of this was actually derived from shark sightings (online).

Benchley brought, in his own way, this old fear of the unknown. We can assume from the description of the animal that it is a shark, after all, great whites must swim constantly in order to keep oxygen-rich water flowing over their gills (Benchley 9). Nevertheless, by calling it only “the great fish”, the author ascribes to the shark and its attacks a mythological feature, quite possibly enlarging the sense of oncoming horror. The explicit violence of an unnamed creature on the pages then becomes a complete exercise of imagination on the screen.

An aspect that is worth mentioning is the importance of using the off screen space (the blind space) to terrorize the audience, as discussed by Bonitzer (qtd. in Modleski):

Specular space is on-screen space; it is everything we see on the screen. Off-screen space, blind space, is everything that moves (or wriggles) outside or under the surface of things, like the shark in *Jaws*. If such films ‘work’ it is because we are more or less

held in the sway of these two spaces. If the shark were always on screen it would quickly become a domesticated animal. What is frightening is that it is not there! The point of horror resides in the blind space. (45)

The above description perfectly suggests the math that makes fear and the horror affect possible in a filmic way; very different from what could be the “blind space” in the pages of a novel. The movie is telling us that something terrible is coming! And it is getting closer! What is going on under the water? How big is that creature?

We see Chrissie being savagely attacked and we see her suffer beyond description, but at no time do we see her monstrous assailant. This is an undeniable testament to Steven Spielberg’s genius as a filmmaker. His ability to manifest such a scene infused with such moving emotion and gut wrenching anguish without ever revealing the actual perpetrating source is moviemaking magic at its finest. (Hughes 16)

Next, we will revisit some excerpts from the attack, but this time they are inserted in a sequence of frames (see Figures 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21) that suggest how fear and the horror affect were rendered by Spielberg from print to film.

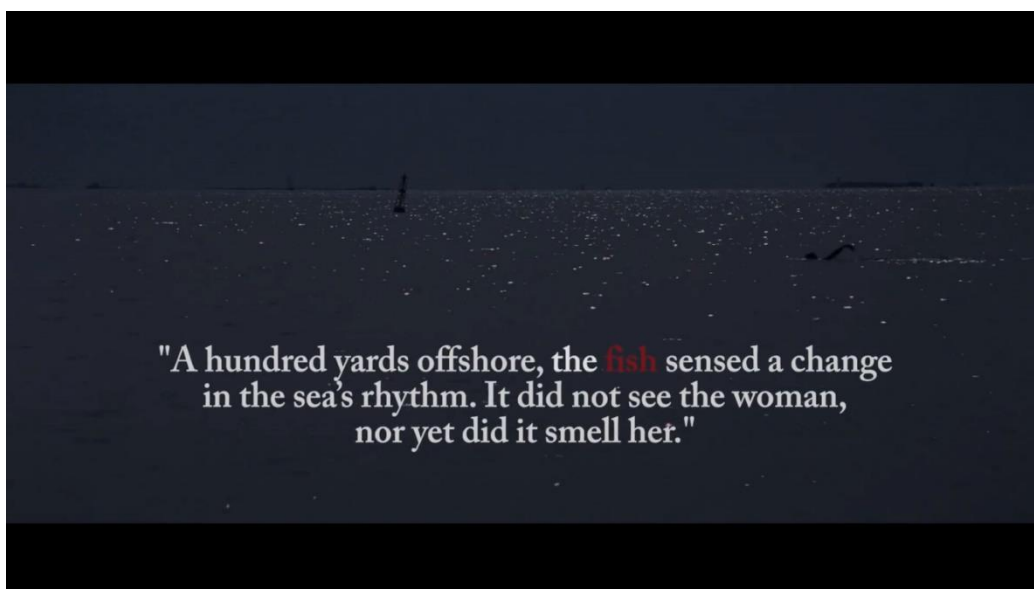


Fig. 10

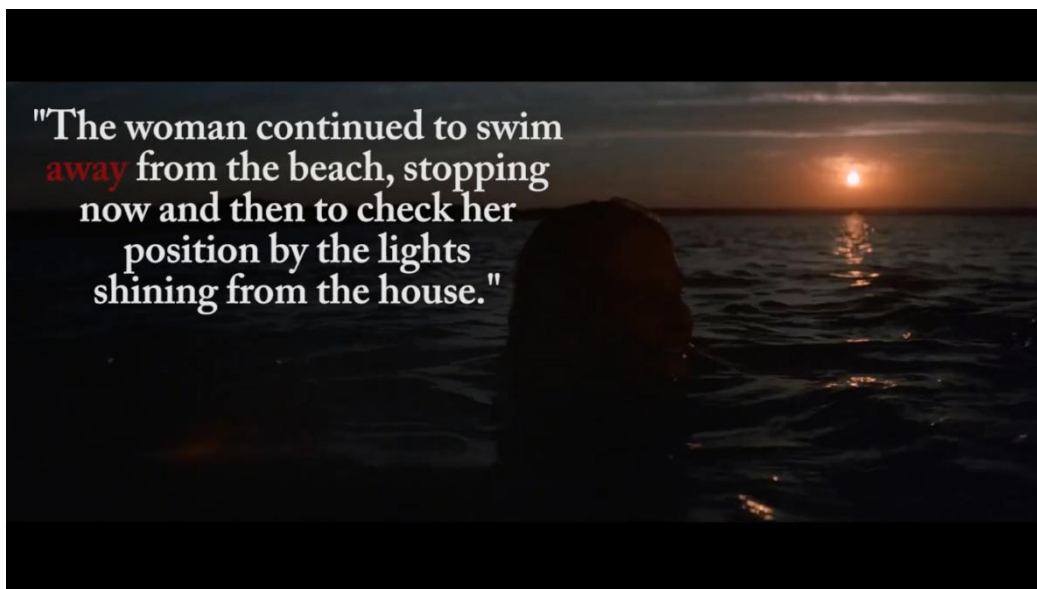


Fig. 11

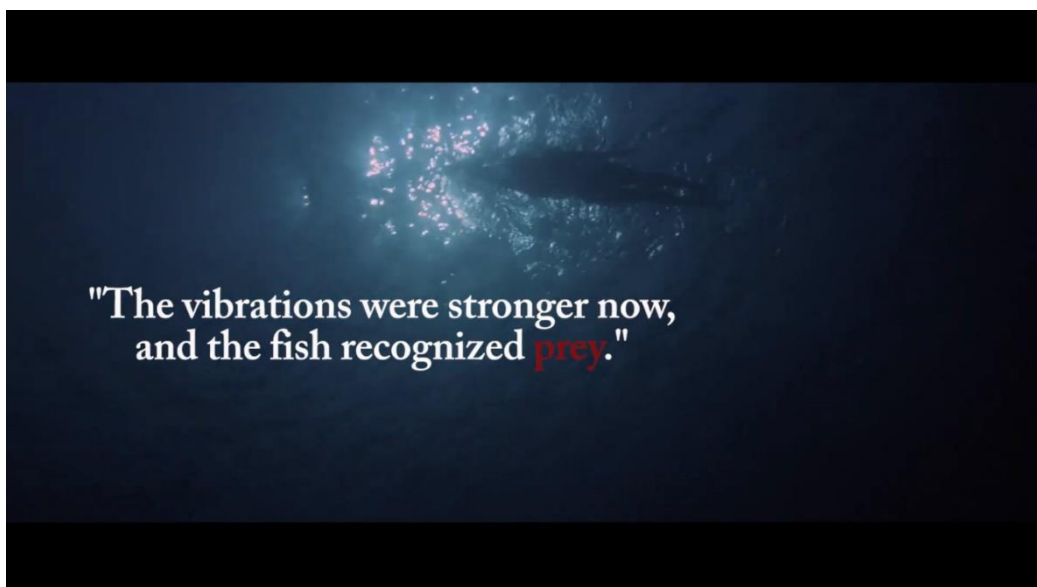


Fig. 12

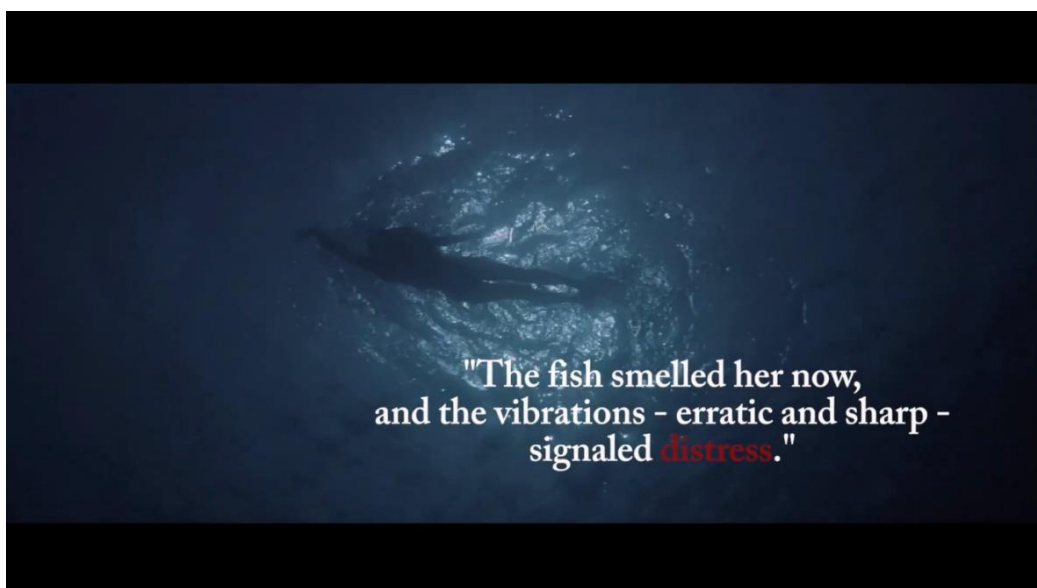


Fig. 13

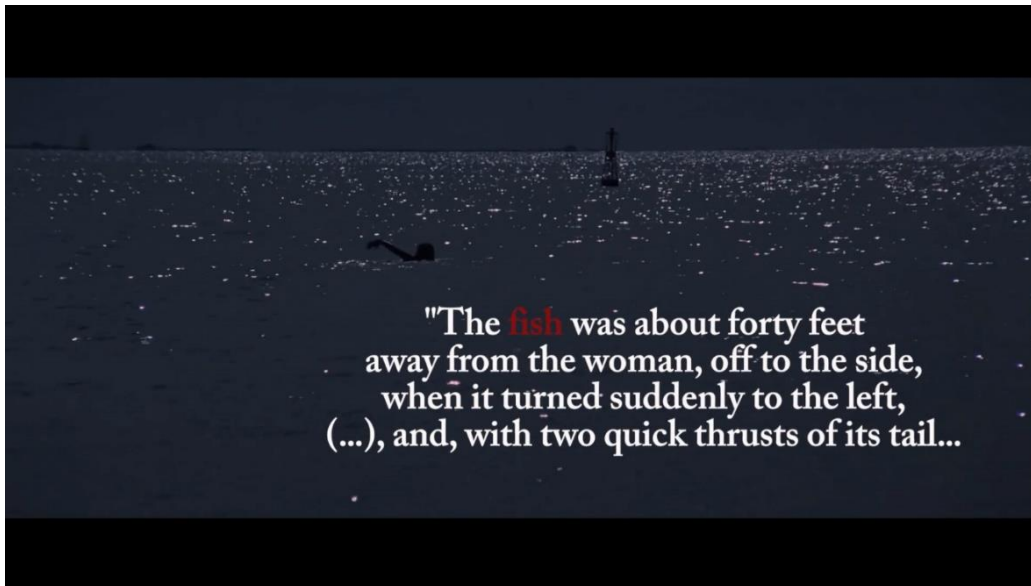


Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16



Fig. 17

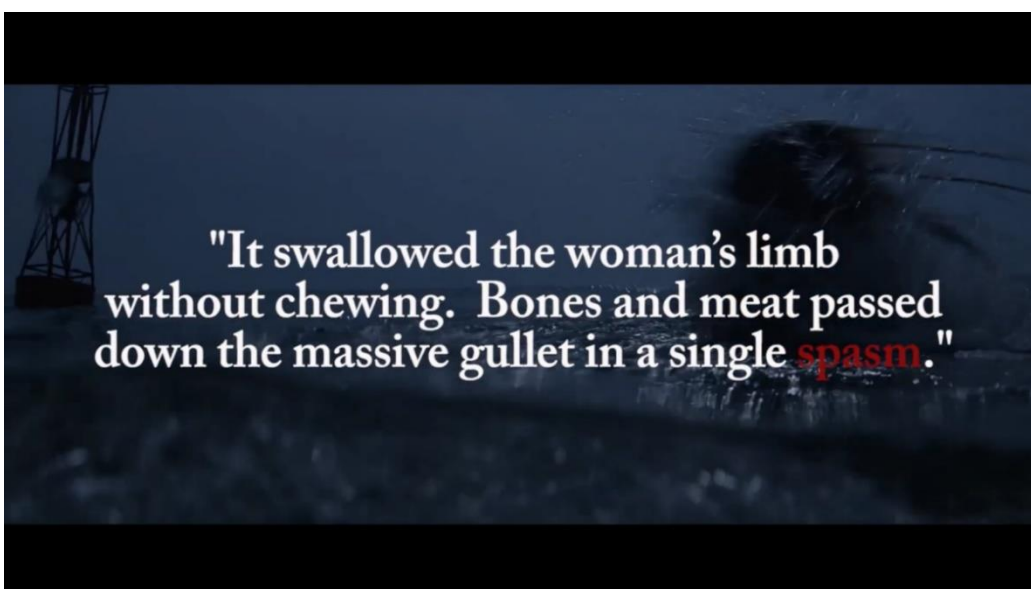


Fig. 18

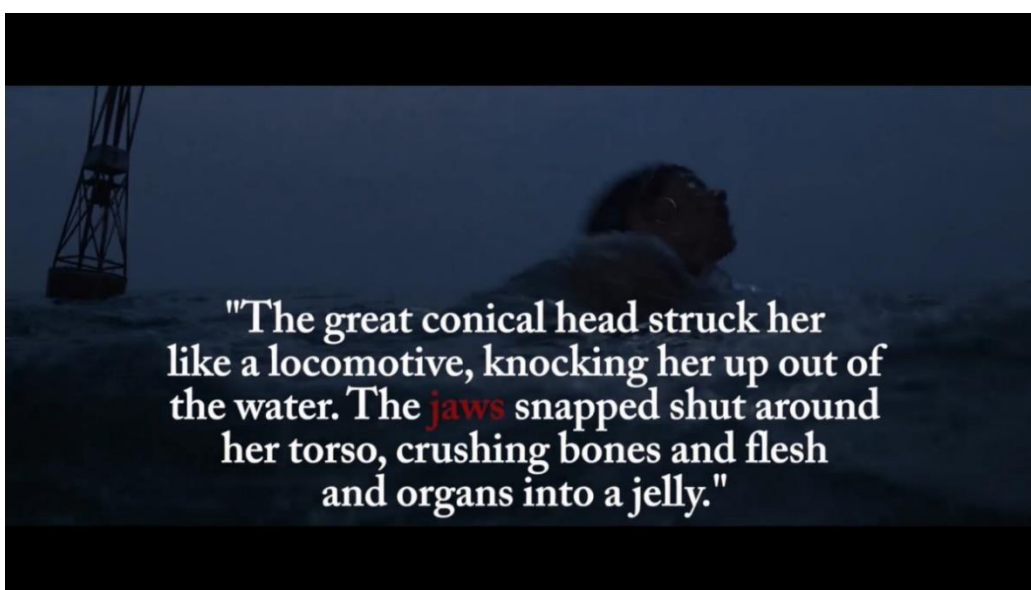


Fig. 19

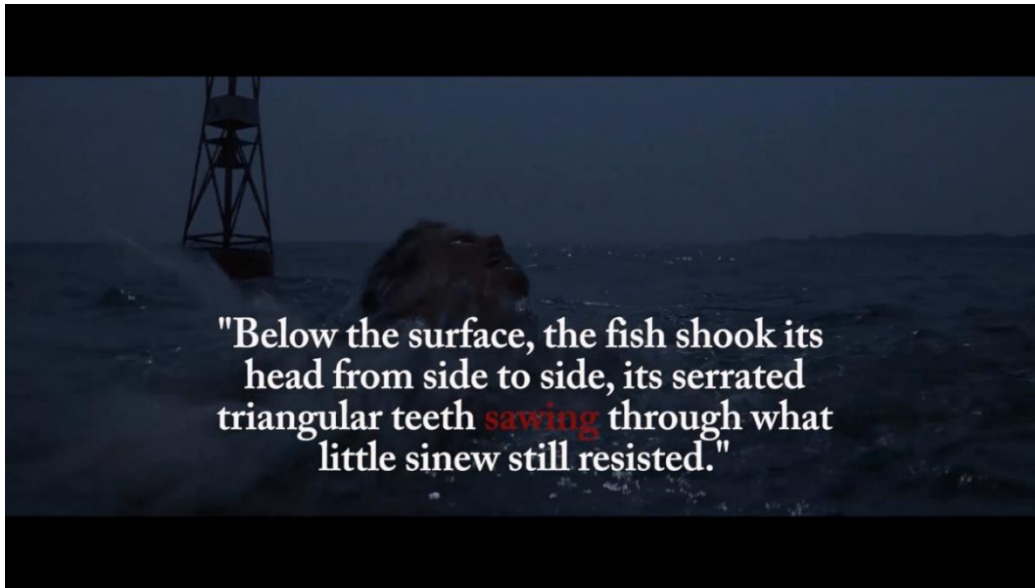


Fig. 20



Fig. 21

"Chrissie's Last Swimm." *YouTube*, uploaded by Leandro Waltrick, 27 November 2019,

<https://youtu.be/l3uhmgtHLP8>

Besides turning the monster completely unseen and allowing us to see what it sees (see Figures 12, 13 and 15), what Spielberg does is to carry us directly into the center of the ballet of death by shooting at the water level Chrissie's suffering (see Figures 17, 18, 19 and 20), which amplifies the victim's feeling of impotence and inserts the viewers into the film.

Considering that “much of the audience’s reaction to fictional monsters often hinges on the features attributed to them prior to their being shown attacking people onscreen or prior to their being described in a particular attack scene in a novel” (Carroll 102), the first attack in *Jaws* establishes the great deal concerning the viewers’ reactions to the subsequent attacks and makes the fear of the monster grow throughout the entire film.

According to Carroll’s *Complex Discovery Plot*, although we are still in the *onset* movement, we have already seen the monster in action – and he comes quietly and it is deadly! That first encounter will lead us to the *discovery* movement, when new information about the monster’s existence and its amazing potentials will come up to the surface, increasing suspense and tension. Here it is important to mention that much of the following tension created in the novel is carried by a monster that is already familiar to the reader. The same shark that killed Chrissie Watkins did not get any bigger or scarier when it kills his second victim, Alex Kintner, the young boy. Fear comes from what is already familiar.

On screen, as already mentioned, Spielberg slowly introduces his monster. That is, when its point of view is approaching Alex on the raft, we are still wondering what shape this animal has, how big its teeth are... This time, besides an explosion of blood resulting from the attack, illustrating the gradual ferocity of the creature, the director also gives us a glimpse of its pectoral fin. Differently from the reader, the viewer just received new information and, as a result, the monster appears even more terrifying because it still is an enigma, little by little revealed.

Since it all starts with the first – invisible – appearance of the monster, it is important to highlight Carroll’s words concerning some horrific properties alongside the gradual revelation of the monster and its effectiveness: “The importance of the detailed attribution of horrific properties to the monsters when they are offscreen and unseen may be relevant to

explaining why horror movies, like mystery movies, appear to flourish most successfully after sound comes to film” (232).

Carroll is talking about the evolution in the art of creating fear. He gives the example of Bela Lugosi in *Dracula* (1931) and notes that “Bela Lugosi is not all that frightening to look at; but by the time Van Helsing finishes lecturing on vampires and what they can do, we are ready (we have been readied) to greet Dracula’s advance with a shudder” (232).

Considering that silent films were never really silent (there was always an orchestra playing along with the projections, to cadence the scenes with the emotions they intended to promote in the audience), sound was always a very important element for the genre. Let us take the trailer of *Jaws* as an example once more. The camera moving across the bottom of the sea is not a terrifying image. Now, let us add Percy Rodriguez’s narration alongside John Williams’ music to that image, and we can understand the importance of sound elements in the process of creating the perfect atmosphere. The confluence of those sound and image elements is meant to account for and do justice to the lines in the novel – and that is the creative burden of multimodal translation in this particular task.

According to Gordman, “the menacing shark theme, heard even before the camera [...] reveals the deadly shark closing in on the unsuspecting swimmers, gives the viewer advance knowledge of the narrative threat” (58). That could also explain why, after the brief contemplation moment as Chrissie goes for her late night swim, our feelings of anguish and pleasure are so triggered, while those “da-dum... da-dum... da-dum da-dum...” combined with the cinematic elements start telling us that there is an insidious observer getting closer and closer. In line with that, Hughes points that “The fact that we could not see the shark, and yet knew that Chrissie was being voraciously torn apart just under the surface, worked to fuel the flames of fear and fascination that infiltrated our imaginations full force and increased the intensity and savageness of the encounter like none other” (16).

The combination between sound and image conceive the imminent state of fear, bringing to the surface the ancient nightmare of being eaten alive, culminating in a symphony of screams and pure horror – and all that without showing a single drop of blood. Putting written ideas into sound and image, therefore.

5. Final remarks

The title holder, at the time of its release, of the biggest box office in history, *Jaws* is also considered the first high-concept film (Nall, online), which, according to Wyatt (qtd. in Nall, online) is a film whose story can be easily described in a few words or in a simple image. There are several studies concerning its socio-cultural impact around the globe (e.g. Lundén; Sutton and Wogan), besides research on its cinematic aspects, including Spielberg's techniques for increasing tension and suspense. However, few studies have compared – exclusively – book and film concerning their distinct ways of building up the sense of fear, and that was the purpose of the present study: to investigate how fear, along with the horror affect, caused by the presence of a giant man-eating creature, was transferred through translation from one medium/channel to another. As Hughes points out, Peter Benchley does not bring to the surface only a killer white shark, but also one of our ancestral nightmares: “This vivid description of Chrissie Watkins’ fateful encounter with an unseen assailant from the murky depths of the Atlantic Ocean struck the very core of one of our most primal fears with the full force of the three-ton star of this thriller - that of being eaten alive!” (2).

In this particular case, in terms of the fear of being eaten alive by the creature that lives in the depths of the abyss, we can say that the novel articulates with mastery the terror/horror affect according to its particular codes. By using different layers of intersemiotic meanings, Spielberg, with the same mastery, transferred the elements present in the literary medium and recreated that emotion, this time in the audiovisual medium – which, in the

opinion of many critics, recreates, now at sea, the same affect as that of *Psycho* in the bathroom scene.

According to McLuhan, “the medium is the message” (online): in other words, the medium, and not exactly the content it carries, should be analyzed with precision. Therefore, we can say that the medium chosen in order to tell a story has a great influence on the final product and how it will be appreciated. In *Jaws*, the reader and the viewer face their primal fears from different meaning codes and channels – verbal and cinematic codes, respectively.

Spielberg says:

When I first hear the word *Jaws*, [...], I just think of a period in my life when I was much younger than I am right now. And I think because I was younger, I was more courageous, or I was more stupid. I’m not sure which. So, when I think of *Jaws*, I think about courage and stupidity. And I think of both those things existing underwater. (Bouzereau, *The Making of Jaws*, 00:00:04 – 00:00:29)

Spielberg was “forced to act on the fly in order to save his film” (Warner, online), so, based on his statement about courage and stupidity, can we wonder if, in order to create a modern masterpiece of fear, all it needs is some balance between, let us say, audacity and naivety? David Brown emphasized that, due to technical issues, if he and Richard Zanuck had read the script of *Jaws* twice, they never would have made the film (Bouzereau, *The Making of Jaws*, 00:01:46 – 00:02:06).

There is, in the great oceans of the Internet, the scanned file of what appears to be the final draft of *Jaws* screenplay which, in fact, concerning the first attack, does not mention anything different from what we see on the big screen. In spite of that, and since this study focuses on the final result of the translation/adaptation, perhaps we can conclude that Spielberg, by the time he directed *Jaws*, still nurtured his inner child who fears the monster in the closet. Based on “the broad range of modal choices available in a society” (Kress 76),

which leaves the multimodal translator's decision to make choice to use certain modes rather than other ones in a particular environment for a particular reason (76), Spielberg might have supposed that the audience could also be affected by that fear. The result? He knew where to go to pull the right strings, just as brilliantly as Benchley did on the pages; fear and horror verbally conveyed now rendered into an audio and visual alike nightmare.

Nevertheless, do we fear or do we adore to feel those shivers crawling down our spines when we realize that a creature able to grow up to 25 feet, with a mouth full of triangular and heavily serrated teeth, can be waiting for us in the next swim? Wilson (qtd. in Kock) says: "We are not afraid of predators, we're transfixed by them, prone to weave stories and fables and chatter endlessly about them, because fascination creates preparedness, and preparedness, survival. In a deeply tribal way, we love our monsters" (online).

Just for curiosity's sake, after the huge success of *Jaws*, Benchley focused on getting closer to the sharks in order to learn more about such fascinating "monsters", often accompanied by scientists, divers and even fishermen.

One of the first lessons I learned was that sharks not only don't seek and attack human beings, they avoid humans whenever possible – we are, after all, large, noisy, ugly aliens that, for all a shark knows, may pose mortal danger – and bite them very rarely. They don't even like the taste of us, and great whites often spit humans out because they're too bony and fat-free (compared to a seals, that is). (Benchley 3-4)

Differently from what happens in popular belief, where sharks are seen almost exactly as the monster in *Jaws*, in the real world those animals are far more threatened by us than vice-versa. Though, in what concerns going deeper and deeper into elements that trigger our infantile fears, few things can compare to a dorsal fin cutting the surface of the water; an image that reminds us of death, causing symbiotically fear and fascination.

More than loving our monsters, we need them.

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