

Towards literary narrative perspective

The relationship between narrative
perspective and perceived literariness

Research master thesis Comparative Literary Studies

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Summary

In this thesis I investigate the relationship between the narrative perspective of Dutch works of bestselling fiction and the perceived literariness of those novels. Combining literary-sociological and computational methods, I take an interdisciplinary approach to identify what literary narrative perspective looks like in the eye of the early 21st century Dutch reader. This research is partially methodological in nature because it builds upon the operationalisation of narrative perspective as the ratio of first person pronouns in a text.

I have found no direct effect of narrative perspective on perceived literariness. Rather, I make the case that the perceived literariness of narrative perspective is influenced by the sociologically structured places where the reader expects to encounter it. However, based on a broad overview of the Dutch literary market, I do argue for some text-intrinsic properties of literary narrative perspective, as some kinds of narrative perspective are more concentrated within certain contexts such as genre and translation.

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1. Introduction: Defining literary style in a computational age

1.1. Research questions

In this thesis I will explore how narrative perspective relates to perceived literariness. Using the Dutch mid-2010s literary field as a case study, I will relate the reader literariness ratings of 401 bestselling novels with pronoun ratio indices of those novels. The objective of this research is to find out what (non)literary perspective looks like in this particular spatiotemporal context to work towards a more conclusive empirical definition of literary style.

The very term 'narrative perspective' implies its structural importance to storytelling. In a work of fiction, narrative perspective situates the described events and signals the complexity of that internal narrative framework to the reader. However, the boundaries of a text's narrative perspective can also be more porous, for instance when it takes on (non)literary meaning in relation to other texts.

While it is plausible that narrative perspective carries text-internal *and* intertextual prestige connotations, (non)literary narrative perspective in the Dutch literary context has remained unmapped. In other words, there currently lacks a survey of narrative perspective as a socio-textual marker of literary style, which I will work towards combining two approaches: literary-sociological analysis and empirical textual research.

Integrating these two methods to outline what (non)literary perspective looks like in the eye of the Dutch reader of the early 21st century, my main question is:

How does narrative perspective relate to readers'
perceptions of literary quality?

To answer my main question, I will consider the following sub questions:

1. To what extent is literary narrative perspective text-intrinsic?
2. To what extent is literary narrative perspective structured by genre?
3. How is literary narrative perspective distributed across genre and translation?

1.2. Expanding literary style

1.2.1. Empirical literary studies

Situated within the advancing discipline of digital literary studies, my thesis builds on the computational modelling of narrative perspective, a complex narratological concept, into a rule-based measure. My mixed methods approach is informed by the introduction of new digital methods into the Humanities, which have traveled from disciplines such as computer science.

The turn to digital methods has also come to bear on literary stylistics and produced the need to redefine literary style as a set of stylistic features that can be verifiable through theoretical as well as empirical scientific observation (Herrmann et al., 2015). Making room for both the traditional and new digital research paradigms in their redefinition of literary style, Herrmann et al. speak of style as "...a property of texts constituted by an ensemble of formal features which can be observed quantitatively or qualitatively" (2015, p. 14).

Within the school of quantitative observation, most of the markers of literary style that are currently computationally attainable remain limited to

the sentence level. Mean sentence length or frequency distributions of words of word classes, all examples of such 'lower-level' textual qualities, can be indexed using relatively simple tools. However, more complex types of stylistic analysis into abstract literary textual qualities have long existed in qualitative literary studies and disciplines such as conversation analysis (Herrmann et al., 2015), and expertise from these disciplines combined with machine learning or rule-based methodologies present promising new research opportunities for their operationalisation in computational literary studies.

Only a few of the directions for such 'higher-level' stylistic analysis that I want to highlight here include the automatic distinction between narrative and dialogue text, such as work on dialogue isolation in German by Annelen Brunner (2013, 2019), thematic research into bestselling fiction by Joris van Zundert and Karina van Dalen-Oskam (Chin-A-Fo and Jaeger, 2020), or the development of a method to measure narrative perspective in personal work for the research project *The Riddle of Literary Quality* (Van Rossum et al., 2020).

One use of these different empirical ways of making observations about formal qualities of literary texts is their integration into an 'ensemble' of features of literary style (Herrman et al. 2015, p. 44). With this thesis, I want to contribute tentative knowledge of narrative perspective as one textual property of literary style. In this way, my research explores how narrative perspective relates to literariness as a set of socially informed practises and attitudes.

1.2.2. The new sociology of art

My choice to integrate empirical textual and reader perceptions of literariness is based on ongoing theoretical discourse regarding the nature of aesthetics. The new sociology of art has placed the computational (re)turn to the text in a literary-sociological light. Underlying this turn in both qualitative and quantitative research is a larger questioning of the late-20th century sociological approach to literature, a discipline heralded most notably by the work of Howard Becker and Pierre Bourdieu (De la Fuente, 2007, p. 410). Most critical inquiry following from these late-20th century thinkers understands literature as a purely contextual value construct while paying little attention to the artwork itself.

However, critics such as Antione Hennion have challenged the underpinnings of traditional art sociology and reintroduced the aesthetic dimension of the artwork itself back into the consideration of literature (2007). Next to this, the new sociology of art pays increased attention to the “concrete work that aesthetic factors perform in social life” by scholars such as Tia DeNora and Harvey Molotch (as cited in De la Fuente, 2008, p. 423), among others. Ori Schwarz has perhaps best encapsulated the objectives of this new sociology of art as a “how question: how people use art and how art effects people” (2013, p. 419).

Similarly foregrounding the users of art, Hennion posits the so-called amateur (in its etymological sense of the ‘lover’) as the bridge between the object and society. He advocates for the study of the amateur because they¹ show how taste can be understood as a collective technique of paying attention, which unifies experiential sensitivity to the object itself with the taster’s self-reflexive positioning towards it (2007, p. 111). Ori Schwarz, in turn, nuances Hennion’s account of taste by highlighting the socially stratified distribution of habituated, culturally specific modes of attention that the

¹ In this paragraph I have used ‘they’ in its singular gender neutral sense.

taster can use to access an object, which shapes their judgment and plays an important part in its own reproduction (2013, pp. 423-424). To paraphrase, what the ordinary reader regards as literary is embedded in a socialised mode of encounter with the aesthetic qualities of that text itself, which morphs the amateur's tastes after those of the professional.

1.3. The Riddle of Literary Quality

The Riddle of Literary Quality (henceforth: The Riddle) is a research project that was set up in 2012 by prof. Dr. Karina van Dalen-Oskam and her team at the Huygens Institute for the History for the Netherlands.

Building on Hennion and Schwarz in foregrounding both the amateur and the professional, the project takes into account both text-intrinsic or aesthetic factors, and text-extrinsic or social factors in its study of the meaning of perceived literariness (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 3). The Riddle thus bridges the hermeneutical gap in previous empirical literary research on literary qualities, which often foregrounds its textual workings, but often leaves the concept of literariness itself as a socially embedded notion undefined.

By combining the actual texts of prose fiction with reader's opinions on the literariness of those novels, the project's central aim is to arrive at a bottom-up definition of literary style in the eye of the early 21st century Dutch reader (Koolen et al., 2020). As part of The Riddle of Literary Quality project, my thesis will adopt this theoretical approach with a more specific focus on the formal quality of narrative perspective.

The first results of the Riddle project have now been published (Koolen et al., 2020) and the next stage of the research is its extension beyond the Dutch situation to monitor the meaning of literariness across different cultural contexts. Currently, the Riddle team is making preparations for a follow-up project called Novel Perceptions in the United Kingdom in collaboration with researchers at the University of Wolverhampton (Novel Perceptions: Towards an inclusive canon, 2020).

1.4. Reflecting the Dutch literary field

By drawing on the data compiled by the Riddle project, this thesis will be equally specific to its reflection of the Dutch literary field of the early 2010s.

To investigate empirically which overarching textual properties are associated with the appraisal of the literary quality of works of prose fiction across the Dutch literary field, the Riddle project required a large amount of reader opinions on a large set of novels. The resulting cross-section of the Dutch literary field is entrenched in its selection of a corpus and of respondents.

1.4.1. Selecting novels

The Riddle team compiled the 401 most frequently sold and borrowed novels that were published in the Dutch language between 2009 and 2012, including works translated to Dutch (Koolen et al. 2020, p. 5).²

All novels were first published in 2007 at the latest to minimise respondent preconceptions (Het Nationale Lezersonderzoek, 2013). The nationally most frequently loaned novels were also included with the accessibility and inclusivity of the survey in mind. Nonetheless, the sales and loans list overlapped largely (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 5). To safeguard authors' privacy, the sales and loans numbers were based on estimates from the Dutch organisation Collectieve Propaganda voor het Nederlandse Boek (abbreviated CPNB, roughly translatable to 'Collective Propaganda for the Dutch Book')³ (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 5).

1.4.2. Regarding the ordinary reader⁴

To gather reader responses, the Riddle's project team set up het Nationale Lezersonderzoek ('National Reader Survey') in 2013. The online survey was openly available to the general Dutch public during a span of six months, from March 4 to 27 September 2013 (Het Nationale Lezersonderzoek, 2014).

2 Corina Koolen has noted that, while the focus of the survey is on the social production of literary value, the selected novels are entangled in economic value production such as sales revenue (2018, p. 20). Also see Bourdieu (1993).

3 The CPNB is a collective of booksellers, librarians, publishers and authors that is tasked with organising the annual Dutch Boekenweek (Book Week) (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 5).

4 I use the term 'ordinary reader' in an ironic sense - my preferred term is 'lay reader' because it sounds less patronising.

The choice of The Riddle project to recruit lay readers in this way is part of examining the socially structured use of literature according to the sociology of art. It can also be placed within a broader surge in scholarly attention to the ordinary reader, in which empirical literary studies have not always followed suit. Rather, recent work in empirical literary studies has focused predominantly on the analysis of textual traits that foreground literary language to the reader in the reading process. However valuable these contributions may be, as Koolen et al. phrase it: "...there is more to literary quality than aesthetics" (2020, p. 3). This means that the receptive meaning of literariness is also enmeshed in social factors that should not be excluded from any computational and large-scale research into lay reader's perceptions of literary quality.

Considering the importance of the lay reader in studying literary quality has been present since the 1960s, with scholars such as Roland Barthes (1968) and Wolfgang Iser (1974) highlighting the inherent communicative patterns in the literary text as opposed to the authoritative voice of the author that governs the meaning-making process. In cultural studies, this interest in examining the ordinary reader's relationship with (genre) fiction has been long and firmly anchored, for instance by Janice Radway's now-canonical work *Reading the Romance* (Wood, 2004, 147). In Radway's pivotal interdisciplinary work from 1984, she examined the romance genre as a spatially and temporally specific literary phenomenon (p. 3) by asking its American and largely female readership *why* and *how* they read romance novels.

In the Humanities today, we are gradually starting to witness a similar repositioning of the study of literature towards its connection to everyday life, evidenced by work from Robert Pippin (2009) as well as Anderson, Felski, and Moi (2019). They raise concerns about how fiction warrants responses from lay audiences rather than academic audiences to combat the

false dichotomy that scholars are disinterested and vigilant readers, as opposed to naive and absorptive lay readers, who do not truly 'know' what they read (Felski, 2019, 119). Ultimately, the turn towards the lay reader advocates the critical embrace of literature as a shared cultural practise to expand the understanding of its social function beyond an object of scholarly scrutiny.

I should, however, challenge the admittedly attractive image of the 'ordinary' reader. Namely, the Riddle team made extensive efforts to ensure an optimally inclusive dataset, with nation-wide advertisement of the National Reader Survey in different newspapers and regional promotion in cooperation with local libraries, the addition of best-loaning books to the top 400 list to promote participation among respondents with less disposable income, and parts of the survey being accessible to those who reported reading less than one novel a year (Koolen et al., 2020). Nonetheless, the average respondent to the National Reader Survey is markedly different from the general Dutch population.

Out of 13,782 respondents to the National Reader Survey, 71% reported to be female, as opposed to 28% male and 1% unspecified (Koolen et al., 2002, p. 4), a large deviation from the 49.5% male Dutch citizens alive in 2013 (Central Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2020a). The average respondent age was 52 years old, with a median of 58 and 54 years old for men and women respectively, noting that respondents under the age of 16 were barred from partaking in the survey due to legal reasons (Koolen et al., 2002, p. 4). In reality, in 2013, men and women aged between 45 and 65 composed 27.9% of the general Dutch population, with an average age of 40.8 years old (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2020b). Moreover, the respondents were generally highly educated, with 37.6% reporting higher vocational and 34.2% reporting university level education (Koolen et al., 2002, p. 4), as opposed to

28% of the general population in 2012 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2020a).

Consequently, I want to challenge the reading and filling out of the National Reader Survey as a representative practise, because it was dependant on those respondents who had the means, e.g. the time or electronic access, to participate. It is, however, expected that its respondents are representative of the average Dutch reader of fiction, based on recent inquiry in the Netherlands (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 4). As such the response to the The National Ready Survey illustrates how the average early 21st century Dutch reader is someone who has the resources to read, who can read Dutch-language fiction, who is able to interact with actors in the literary field such as the media to encounter the survey - and who has the time to engage with it. Reading in the Netherlands therefore appears a pastime that is not guaranteed to the general population. This realisation suggests, like Schwarz (2013) argues, that engaging with works of fiction is a socialised practise, and our closer look at The National Reader Survey's respondents provides a sobering nuance of the 'ordinary' reader as an idealised theoretical construct.

1.5. Initial findings

The first stage of the Riddle project has already produced several insights into Dutch readers' perceptions of literary quality. These results are based on open and closed responses to the novels in the Riddle corpus by participants of the National Reader Survey.⁵

⁵ I will explain the survey set-up in more detail in the Methodology section.

First of all, a spatiotemporally specific consensus seems to exist among readers on the notion of literary quality (Koolen et al., 2020; Koolen, 2018, p. 25), although foci per age group varied slightly. For instance, younger respondents often reflected on the pleurability of a novel, while older respondents mentioned translation more often (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 8). These findings reinforce Jonathan Culler's assertion that people have a very strong internalised sense of what literature is even while a prescriptive definition of it remains lacking (1997, p. 20). Broadly, the readers' perceptions of literariness mirrored those of the establishment, which shows the great social influence of gatekeepers such as reviewers or juries who put forward in implicit and explicit ways that a stable meaning of literariness exists (Koolen, 2018, pp. 24-25).

Accordingly, the respondents seem to associate literariness strongly with extra-textual factors such as genre (Koolen et al., 2002, p. 7; Koolen, 2018, p. 95). In other words, if a novel is considered to be 'genre fiction,' such as suspense, fantasy, or romance, its chances of obtaining a high literary rating are minimal. The romance genre, for instance, which features predominantly female authors, received the lowest average literariness ratings overall. The genre was even invoked as a mutually exclusive factor for its literary quality in the reader motivations (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 8). Moreover, for genre novels, being translated from English was widely regarded as a positive trait, while for those works labeled as 'literary fiction' it diminished literariness ratings (Krans, 2017, p. 4), displaying a "skewness along the lines of genre and translation" (Koolen, 2018, p. 95). Additionally, originally Dutch novels were valued as more explicitly literary in the open responses, while translated works were often described in the reader motivations in terms of genre and their use of suspense (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 8).

Textually, readers describe literariness in their motivations mostly in narratological terms such as “style structure, plot and layers” (Koolen et al., 2002, p. 1). I will expand on the mostly sentence-level textual features that were found to be more commonly associated with literariness, indicating that literariness is to a degree textually substantiated (Koolen et al., 2020). Several of these textual features were explored by Andreas van Cranenburgh in the PhD dissertation which he wrote as part of the Riddle project, in which he modelled reader perceptions of the literary quality of the novels in the project corpus (2016). Van Cranenburgh puts forwards that a longer average sentence length, lack of cliché expressions, a wider vocabulary, and a lower amount of quoted speech are correlated with more literary texts (2016, p. 110), textual properties which factor into the overall increased semantic complexity found in works deemed literary (Koolen et al., 2020).

Moreover, there seems to be a certain aesthetic limit that a novel must not cross to be deemed literary. While readers locate literariness explicitly in extraordinary or poetic language, ‘true’ perceived literariness seems to be marked by restraint in the use of literary devices to avoid illegibility and gaudiness (Houweling, 2016). Lastly, it seems that readers think that narrativity, such as a clear plot and fully rounded characters, may not be sacrificed in favour of beautiful language for a work to be perceived as literary (Houweling, 2016).

To put it shortly, as Corina Koolen phrases the Riddle project’s definition of literariness: “literary quality is a consensus, influenced by the literary establishment, which consists of a combination of extra-textual and textual qualities” (2018, p. 25). In my own words, according to The Riddle, literary style lies in the jointly understood balance between structural and semantic complexity, and it is correlated with social factors surrounding the work itself, such as translation and genre.

1.6. Multivariate approach

Before diving deeper into the relationship between a text's narrative perspective and the perceived literariness of that text, it is important to note that perceived literariness does not hinge on any single factor alone. Rather, the social factors and textual features that enter into a reader's (non)literary appraisal of a work cannot not be clearly predetermined (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 9). The statistical strategy adopted by the Riddle project, therefore, is a 'multivariate normal distribution,' or, as project members Joris van Zundert and Karina van Dalen-Oskam describe their approach: "...we think that literary phenomena can be confidently studied as combinations of a great many variables, all of which have a certain probability" (2019, p. 368, my translation).⁶ While some variables such as sentence length may have a high probability to influence literary rating, they are not directly determinant, e.g. they do not guarantee a high perceived literariness. There are often exceptions to the rule, such as a work that is regarded as highly literary but has a short average sentence length (Van Zundert and Van Dalen-Oskam, 2019, p. 368).

In fact, a stylistic deviation from the norm can be argued to encapsulate the very notion of literariness, as Derek Attridge puts forward (2004). Attridge maintains that Western works of literature are often regarded as literary because of their formal deviation from formulaic genre characteristics (2004, p. 2). Attridge terms this inventiveness the singularity of a work (2004), where the literariness of a work lies in its resistance of, rather than adherence to stylistic conventions. In literature, there are always exceptions, and especially these exceptions can provide valuable information about what literariness looks like.

⁶ "...we denken dat literaire verschijnselen zich goed laten beschrijven als combinaties van zeer veel variabelen die allemaal een probabilliteit kennen" (368).

We can therefore try to predict the optimally literary text, but we will always have to work with the fluidity of actual fiction. In reality, every text has its own unique stylistic patterns that may in some ways adhere to or deviate from formal expectations. For a predictive model of literary style, this means that single textual variables are not enough to explain the literary quality of a work, although they do each hold their own (non)literary significance. By integrating different textual variables, literary style becomes more of a predictive outline that is sharpened by every added factor.⁷ As such, we need information on how different variables behave across large corpora of texts to see how they factor into literary style together. One of these factors that to date has remained missing is narrative perspective.

1.7. Narrative perspective

As part of The Riddle's quest for a descriptive definition of literary quality, I investigate how perceptions of literariness in the Dutch literary field are structured by the textual variable of narrative perspective. Like the multivariate approach taken by the Riddle project, I do not only consider narrative perspective as a direct determiner of perceived literary quality. I will also take other textual factors such as dialogue and and social factors such as genre and translation into account. In this way I will map what (non)literary narrative perspective looks like across and within the three largest genres in the Riddle corpus. A computational account of narrative perspective is central to this project.

⁷ This is the idea of an 'ensemble' or 'collage' of features that Herrmann et al. describe (2015, p. 14)

Much has been theorised about narrative perspective, and how it is channeled through one or several cognitive entities that govern the text. The rather intricate earliest models of narrative perspective, such as the eight types of 'point of view' as proposed by Norman L. Friedman (1955) and the 'narrative situations' divided among three perspective scales introduced by Frans Stanzel (1971; 1973) were replaced by the structuralists, who proposed a more concrete treatment of narration and perception as two separate activities.⁸ An important concept in this structuralist line of thought is the focaliser as introduced by Gérard Genette (1972) and further developed by Mieke Bal (1985) and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983), among others.⁹ To date, the focaliser remains in conceptual use as a text's anthropomorphic "center of perception" (Herman and Vervaeck, 2019, p. 71) as opposed to the narrative agent, who may be either verbally overt or covert (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005, p. 99).

In their recent critical overview of narrative analysis, however, Herman and Vervaeck (2019) have described how traditional structuralist narratology is concerned with delineating the narrative borders of a story, while current constructivist theory is interested in how narratives are transitional and contextual.¹⁰ My approach takes after both narratological traditions in that it takes the text *and* its context into account, albeit in less traditional methodological ways.

So, while I acknowledge the rich multitude of narratological work that has been done to explore the conceptual dimensions of narrative perspective, they fall outside the working scope of this research because

8 For a summary of the tradition of point-of-view, see Lintvelt, J. (1981). *Essai de typologie narrative: Le 'point de vue'* (Essay of narrative typology: 'Point of view'), Paris: José Corti, pp. 111-76.

9 For a state of the art of the early development of focalisation, see Edmiston, W.F. (1989). Focalisation and the first-person narrator: A revision of the theory, *Poetics Today*, 10(4), pp. 729-744 <https://doi.org/10.2307/1772808>.

10 For an excellent overview of current ideas in constructivist narratology see Herman and Vervaeck's (2019) chapter 'Post-Classical Narratology' in *Handbook of narrative analysis*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. pp. 103-176.

they are still much too abstract to operationalise. Rather, I have approached the notion of narrative perspective from a relatively pragmatic standpoint. My computational method expresses narrative perspective as an index value that the degree to which all pronouns in a text are first person pronouns.¹¹

Although the socio-textual theoretical background of this thesis overlaps with that of *The Riddle*, and I hope to eventually contribute the variable of perspective to the project's predictive model of literary style, my research veers off into its own methodological direction. Instead of using a larger predictive machine learning model which would fall outside of the scope of this thesis, I use my own rule-based definition of narrative perspective as a first-to-third person spectrum to test a series of theoretical hypotheses about narrative perspective as a sociotextual marker of literary style.

Because this research is so tentative and experimental I will use a series of qualitative and quantitative case studies to reflect on the sensitivities of working with literary narrative perspective empirically. My choice for reflexive interdisciplinary case studies in this thesis is built upon two arguments that might seem initially paradoxical. The first is that literature is much too culturally and textually diverse to fully capture its individual richness using tools that use broad strokes - all works of fiction resist categorisation in their own right. The second is that literature is a systemic phenomenon that requires a wide lens to see its more panoramic qualities - those that might otherwise be missed by even most accomplished naked eye. What I attempt to demonstrate with this thesis is that both scales of reading fiction can interlink to create a deeper understanding of how literature functions socio-textually.

¹¹ In the Methodology chapter I further explain how I operationalise narrative perspective as a first-to-third person spectrum.

2. Hypotheses: Perspective as a horseshoe model

In the previous chapter, I established three sub questions to investigate how narrative perspective relates to the perception of literariness across the Dutch literary field:

1. To what extent is literary narrative perspective text-intrinsic?
2. How is (non)literary narrative perspective distributed across the three largest genres in the Dutch literary landscape; literary fiction, romance, and suspense?
3. To what extent is (non)literary narrative perspective structured by social factors such as genre and translation?

To evaluate the empirical outcomes to these three sub questions, I will use theoretically informed hypotheses on the basis of previous research. Each section is devoted to one sub question and I will return to these questions at the end of this chapter.

2.1. Textually structured literary narrative perspective

Due to the empirical precedent set by *The Riddle*, which makes use of multiple textual variables to explain the literariness of a work, I do not expect that a single variable such as first or third person narrative perspective¹² directly determines literary prestige in the eye of the Dutch reader. Empirically, I will test this hypothesis by correlating the literariness ratings of

¹² I will go into the first-third person narrative perspective distinction, and its limits, at more length in the Methodology chapter.

novels with the pronoun indices of those novels. However, on the basis of previous research and theory, I hypothesise that several text-imminent factors may still contribute to the perception of first person perspective as higher in literary quality than a third person perspective, even if they are not immediately visible in correlations.¹³ Two text-imminent features of first person narrative perspective that I expect to play a role in perceived literariness are structural complexity and psychological representation.

2.1.1. Structural complexity

First person perspective appears to be more structurally ambiguous than third person perspective. Kate Hamburger and others maintain that the distinguishing feature of third person narration lies in “the disclosure of the thoughts and mental events of persons other than the narrator” (cited in Richardson, 2009, p. 155). Third person perspective according to this interpretation signals a contrast between character and narrator, as opposed to first person narratives, in which an ‘experiential I’ and ‘narrative I’ can merge (Boven and Dorleijn, 2013). Because the boundaries between character and narrator are less distinct in first-person narratives, this might result in heightened textual ambiguity for the reader.

My own empirical research into the narrative nature of dialogue text underwrites the blurring of narrative contrast in first person narratives. During a pilot study during my internship for *The Riddle*, I have concluded that isolated dialogue text has a relatively strong disposition to first person narrative perspective in comparison with isolated narrative text. I inferred this similarity from the high relative presence of first person pronouns and

¹³ Rather, I will address these two text-intrinsic factors in light of the outcomes of this entire research in the Discussion.

present tense verb forms in dialogue text excerpts.¹⁴ The prevalence of first person pronouns and present tense verb forms that I found in this corpus of dialogue text correspond to the features of the stylometric ‘dialogue dimension’ outlined by Jesse Egbert (2012, p. 189) and by first person narration outlined by Mieke Bal (1985, 45), which suggests that dialogue text and first person narrative text are in these aspects stylistically resemblant. I therefore expect that in first person narratives, the distinction between dialogue and narrative text is less clear-cut than in third person narratives. The resulting narrative ambiguity might require more effort from the reader to bridge gaps in meaning and therefore be more complex.

In turn, one outcome The Riddle project is that increased textual complexity is associated with a higher perceived literariness (Koolen et al. 2020). Although these examples are all of semantic-level features such as vocabulary span and sentence length, I expect that the link between perceived literariness and increased textual complexity will also apply to a higher-level textual feature such as narrative perspective. I argue this because the respondents to the National Reader Survey explicitly described literariness in terms such as “structure” and “plot” (Koolen et al. 2020, p. 10), which shows an awareness of higher-level narratological terms in literary appraisal.

In short, because first person perspective applies less contrast between character and narrator, it could be more textually complex and as such the more literary type of narration in comparison to third person perspective.

¹⁴ I will discuss this pilot study in more depth in the Methodology chapter.

2.1.2. Character subjectivity

First person narrative perspective appears to be more closely associated with character engagement than third person narrative perspective, which is more descriptive. This portrayal of subjectivity, in turn, is a factor that has been suggested to elevate perceived literariness.

The connection between literariness and thought representation is illustrated by Sterre Houweling's master thesis for the Riddle project on excessively literary style (2016). For the selection of highly literary novels she studies, Houweling concludes that literariness ratings suffer when the reader feels that a character's thoughts are not sufficiently represented (2016, p. 73). Moreover, Houweling attributes thought representation to narrative perspective: she writes that the three novels that are rated as highly literary are at least partly written from a first person perspective, which she argues gives the reader insight into character's mental processes (2016, p. 73).

In another master thesis for the Riddle project on historical novels, Nynke de Groot (2015) makes a similar observation. She writes that readers perceive excerpts written in a first person perspective as more personal in nature than those written in the third person (2015, p. 60). Additionally, De Groot's respondents explicitly point to narrative perspective when motivating their appraisal of some excerpts as more stylistically 'personal' than others (2015, p. 60). Although De Groot's and Houweling's respective angles are slightly different, they both signal in the same direction: that first person perspective seems to be more representative of a character's subjectivity than third person perspective. And that this factor has a positive effect on perceived literary quality.

Despite the fact that respondents in De Groot's research explicitly pointed to narrative perspective to motivate the increased perceived personal nature of historical novels, I still maintain that extent to which narrative perspective determines literariness in this research will be minimal.

I argue this because this thesis takes on the broader scope of The Riddle project, where reader ratings of 401 whole novels present a wider and more indirect frame of comparison than the direct reception of excerpts from two novels, like in the research conducted by De Groot.

Next to affecting perceived literariness, De Groot also describes how the perception of a historical novel as 'personal' may lead to a perception of heightened authenticity of that work (2015, p. 60). In science communication a parallel effect of narrative perspective has been described by Lise Saffran et al., who found that the use of first-person perspective contributes to higher impression of personal integrity and authenticity on the lay reader (2020). While this parallel between historical fiction and scientific report is certainly interesting to note, the link between first person narrative and authenticity cannot be applied to the largely non-historical fiction corpus of The Riddle. Both for science communication and historical fiction, authenticity is part of its truth claim, which shapes the contextual meaning that first person narrative perspective takes on for the reader. For fiction which claims no bearing on reality, first person perspective might not be interpreted as authentic, but as unreliable, and this can in turn impact perceived literariness.

This is where the textual basis of literary narrative perspective becomes increasingly complex. Evidence of how narrative perspective functions within different communicative contexts illustrates how narrative perspective might structure reader perceptions, but more so how these perceptions are at interplay with genre. It suggests that reader interpretations of narrative perspective can shift depending on the context in which it is encountered.

2.2. Socially structured literary narrative perspective

Just as I hypothesise that narrative perspective will not be a decisive factor in perceived literariness, I do not expect there to be unified textual characteristics of (non)literary narrative perspective across the Dutch literary field. Rather, I expect that genre is the factor that ultimately makes the difference in the perception of narrative perspective as more or less literary. The influence of genre, after all, is one of the main findings of the Riddle project (Koolen et al., 2020). I will test this hypothesis by looking at the mean and standard deviations in literariness and pronoun indices within the genres fiction, suspense, and romance.

I will illustrate the point that genre overpowers narrative perspective in influencing perceived literariness with a case study. Although first person narrative perspective might have text-intrinsic qualities such as increased textual complexity, psychological depth, and in select cases factual authority, it also appears on the lower end of the literariness spectrum in connection to women's genre fiction. Janice Radway's work on romance fiction (1984, p. 64) and Corina Koolen's work on chicklit (2018, p. 190), for example, both establish the predominance of first person (female) perspective in those genres. And in a small corpus of 16 chicklit novels published between 1991 and 2011 accumulated by Kim Jautze et al. (2013), for instance, the ratio between first person and third person perspective is 8 to 6, with one novel left uncategorised (annotated and cited in Koolen, 2018, pp. 275-276). Although certainly not representative to the chicklit genre at large, the ratio in Jautze et al.'s corpus suggests that first and third person perspectives are at least equally prevalent.

The case of women's fiction underwrites that narrative perspective is not an end-all when it comes to perceived literariness. A highly literary novel and a chicklit novel might both feature a first person perspective, but their

perceived literariness could not be more opposite. Rather than operating on stylistic extremes, therefore, (non)literary narrative style might be structured like a horse shoe model, where the farthest ends of the literary spectrum share narrative commonalities and become stylistically convergent. The difference in literary appraisal then lies less in text-internal factors, but likely more in text-external factors such as genre.

But the discussion does not end with genre. Yes, two stylistically identical texts that inspire contrary reactions could be promising when, in Bourdieuan fashion, we want to learn more about habituations and preconceptions in readers' encounters with works of fiction (1984). For example in high literature, a first person perspective could be classified as deeply reflective narrative style, while for genre fiction it might be regarded as informal thought representation. Nonetheless, there are more formal aspects to consider. To date we have limited quantitative understanding of the stylistic differences between low and high literature. And it would be dubious to claim that novels are 'stylistically identical' when they only appear to be similar in one particular aspect; first or third person narrative perspective, or somewhere in between.

Tentative research has been undertaken by Kim Jautze et al. to explore the difference between low and high literature. They argue that the syntactic features of chicklit resemble colloquial language more than high literature, which they argue is more richly descriptive (2013, p. 8). Such stylistic differences, Jautze et al. conclude, can be further pinpointed when the dialogue-narrative distinction is operationalised (2013, p. 8). This thesis will to an extent deal with this methodological challenge.

In short, it is likely that both textual factors and social factors are at play in the distribution of literary narrative perspective in Dutch literary field of the early 21st century. From a sociological standpoint, literary narrative perspective is expectedly located in particular, genre-governed places:

Predominantly in the fiction genre, to a lesser extent in the suspense genre, and not at all in the romance genre, as the Riddle project has pointed out (Koolen et al. 2020). Literary narrative perspective is then not a stable set of textual characteristics but more a question of socially structured time and place. And textually speaking, there might still be stylistic patterns discernible that can help discover literary narrative perspective in *unexpected* places, as a small signal in an ongoing venture to map literary prejudice.

2.3. Distribution of literary narrative perspective

Although narrative perspective might not be completely determined by social factors, it cannot be seen separately from it. I will therefore also look at the distribution of literary narrative perspective along the lines of genre and translation. To test these hypotheses, I will use scatter plots of pronoun indices and mean literariness rating that foreground both genre and translation categories.

2.3.1. Genre

I argue that narrative perspective in genre fiction such as suspense and romance is more stylistically uniform than in literary fiction, which I expect to be more stylistically diverse. I also expect that narrative perspective in genre fiction will be less ambiguous than in literary fiction, with pronoun indices

that indicate novels are consistently written in either first or third person perspective.

Apart from the prevalence of first person perspective in Dutch chicklit novels, particular descriptions or overviews of the characteristics of narrative perspective within Dutch language fiction are hard to come by. The formulaic nature of genre fiction at large, however, has been widely theorised. Suspense novels, for instance, are rooted in the tradition of detective serials in the 19th century and revolve around the investigator's quest 'whodunnit?' among a bandwagon of dubious suspects. Academic interest in crime fiction has surged from the late 20th century onwards, where especially the structuralists have characterised crime fiction as formulaic (Horsley, 2005, p. 1). The structuralist reading of crime fiction's response to societal shifts is that the very function of the genre is "...to impose its fixed shape on the material that is put into it" (Cobley, 2000, p. 123).

Romance novels, the other category of genre fiction that I will investigate, revolve around the ultimately successful strife for romantic unification of the heroine with her love interest. Acknowledging its culture-defining influence, Lynne Pearce has defended contemporary romance fiction from the critical view that it is an economic perversion of the age-old literary romance tradition¹⁵ (2004, p. 521). But what advocates for the reevaluation of popular romance fiction have in common with worst critics is that they agree that romance novels work according to a template (Pearce, 2004, p. 521) and that they are based on popular formula (Cawelti, 1976, p. 2; Vivanco, 2011, p. 15). Against these broader qualitative accounts of genre fiction, it is conceivable that its thematic and structural formulaicness has its echoes in formal qualities: as Christiana Gregoriou states, "[a]nother internal or textual factor pertaining to popular fiction is the issue of simplicity" (2007,

¹⁵ In the sense of medieval Francophone literature of the court with magical elements that is centred on chivalrous values and quick-witted interaction between the sexes.

p. 15). The pronoun scores that I use to express narrative perspective, as such, would look relatively similar within the categories of suspense and romance. Remarkably, five years before the start of The Riddle project, Gregoriou also writes that “[t]he question of ‘literariness’ - though developed in distinguishing literature from non-literature - is therefore also of relevance here, in discussing whether crime fiction is a popular form or not” (2007, p. 16).

I *do* argue that literary and non-literary texts can be textually distinguished. I believe that the conventionality of narrative perspective in the literary fiction category will look different than in genre fiction, because the essence of literariness has been identified as deviation from the formal norm by scholars such as Derek Attridge. To repeat in a nutshell, Attridge (2004) puts forward that literariness is located in the stylistic singularity of a work, or to paraphrase, that the main convention of literariness is its very resistance to convention. For works in the literary fiction category, I expect to see this view reflected in a wide variety in the pronoun ratio scores that I use to operationalise narrative perspective. And because literary language is characterised by deeply ambiguous language that obscures straightforward communication by John Wood (2005) in his essay “Seven types of obliquity”, narrative perspective values for literary fiction novels might be somewhat less conclusive in first and third person narrative distinction than those for genre fiction.¹⁶

¹⁶ The literary fiction in this corpus is bestseller fiction and therefore technically also popular fiction. Its narrative perspective might look less ambiguous than would be expected for entirely ‘niche’ high literature.

2.3.2. Translation

Next, it also appears that literariness perceptions are influenced by translation, as Anna Krans has described in her master thesis for *The Riddle of Literary Quality on Spanish novels in the Riddle corpus* (2017). She writes that, within the Riddle corpus, translations within some genre categories such as suspense and romance are more highly valued in terms of literary prestige (2017, p. 67). I suspect that this translation literariness hierarchy will also have a bearing on the perceived literariness of narrative perspective in translated novels versus untranslated novels.

I base this argument on Karina van Dalen-Oskam's finding that Dutch novels feature the first person pronoun 'ik' ('I') significantly more frequently than translated works in the Riddle corpus (2020, unpublished manuscript).¹⁷ Van Dalen-Oskam expresses that she remains unsure what causes this difference. She hypothesises that the relative frequency of 'I' might be due to different dialogue ratios for each language category, but it could also be caused by a stronger disposition of untranslated Dutch fiction to a first person perspective than translated works. I will be able to test this hypothesis because my findings distinguish between dialogue and narrative text in determining a novel's narrative perspective.

¹⁷ At the time of writing, this work was still unpublished.

2.4. Summary

1. To what extent is literary narrative perspective text-intrinsic?

I predict on the basis of text-intrinsic factors that literary narrative perspective is more likely to resemble a first person perspective than a third person perspective, but that a first person narrative perspective will not determine a novel's perceived literariness.

2. To what extent is literary narrative perspective structured by genre?

I predict that what functions as literary narrative perspective in the eye of the early 21st century Dutch reader will be shaped mainly by genre expectations. As such, literary narrative perspective can be easily sociologically predicted by genre, but locating literary perspective on a textual basis will be more challenging because it is not stylistically stable.

3. To what extent is literary narrative distributed across genre and translation?

As opposed to genre fiction, I argue that literary narrative perspective is marked by its resistance to formal conventions. This deviation could be intertextual in that narrative perspective within the literary fiction genre has a high standard deviation, and be text-internal in that it is difficult to attribute a single narrative perspective to a novel. Translation will also play a role in literary narrative perspective, most likely in connection with genre.

The next chapter will explain my methodology to test these three hypotheses.

3. Methodology: Indexing and isolating

3.1. Quantifying social factors

I will use different sets of already existing metadata to relate perceived literariness to narrative perspective. These sets of metadata quantify abstract sociological notions such as translation, literariness, and genre. I will explain my approach to each of these notions in the subsections below.

3.1.1. Perceived literariness¹⁸

In the footsteps of the Riddle project, I understand perceived literariness in terms of ‘mean literary rating,’ or the average of all literariness ratings awarded to a novel by respondents of the National Reader Survey. The National Reader Survey featured a preselected list of bestselling and best-loaning novels, sorted by popularity estimates provided by Dutch libraries and the Dutch organisation CPNB. The novels were presented to the respondents without cover image, but with author included. Readers could scroll freely through the list and mark which novels they had read. The respondents were then offered a random selection of seven titles they had read and asked to rate each novel’s literary quality on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7, 1 meaning ‘definitely not literary,’ and 7 meaning ‘definitely literary.’ The ratings took place without an explicit definition of literary quality so respondents would answer according to their own interpretation.¹⁹ For

¹⁸ This report of how literariness ratings were approached in the Riddle project is based on Koolen et al. (2020).

¹⁹ The respondents were also asked to motivate their opinions through open questions, which resulted in 11,951 short responses of 15.6 words on average (Poetics 8). I will not investigate these open responses with regards to this research.

each novel in the Riddle corpus, the mean of these reader ratings on a scale from 1 to 7 represents its perceived literariness.

A pilot study for the National Reader Survey determined the minimum number of respondents to obtain a sufficient number of ratings, at least 50, for each novel. All in all the survey was successful, garnering 13,782 respondents. Because only 16 novels received less than the intended minimum of 50 ratings and were discounted from the corpus, I will not correct for the weighting of the number of responses per novel. Rather, I will work with the mean literariness ratings under the assumption that they are based on a sufficient number of responses.

3.1.2. Genre

Genre is a complex and multifaceted notion. In this thesis I follow the working definition of genre as formulated in Riddle project, such as in Corina Koolen's dissertation on author gender and the perception of literary quality (2018), and Andreas van Cranenburgh's dissertation on the narratological traits of literary language (2016). Their literary-sociological understanding of genre aims to leave socially specific categorisations of the Dutch literary field intact, but to make manual corrections when those categorisations may not support computational analysis (Koolen, 2018) or deviate greatly from the formal properties of the text itself (Van Cranenburgh, 2016).

Concretely, this means that the genre labels I use as metadata for the novels in my subcorpus are modified publisher classifications, which in the Dutch context are used to position books and improve sales. At the time of the National Reader Survey, the most frequently used classification system on the Netherlands was the NUR (an abbreviation for *Nederlandstalige Uniforme Rubrieksindeling*, or roughly translated 'Dutch-language Uniform

Classification') (Van Cranenburgh, 2016, p. 212).²⁰ NUR codes were located in the small print of a text's front matter (Van Cranenburgh, 2016, p. 93), though readers would predominantly encounter NUR codes in bookstores because they functioned as guidelines for booksellers to arrange their books in-store (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 5).

The Riddle team has grouped these NUR codes into so-called 'Riddle codes' to work with standardised genre labels across the project (Koolen, 2018, 29). The main change made to the NUR coding system was the division of NUR code 302, the catch-all label for 'Translated literary novel,' into different subgenres such as 'literary fiction' (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 5). This label is perhaps confusing for a project that aims to explore the meaning of literary quality. 'Literary fiction' as a genre, however, does not translate to highly literary fiction but is more general in nature, in reflection of the specificities of the Dutch literary field. Dutch publishers often use the literary fiction categorisation as an umbrella term because it is an effective sales strategy to market genre fiction (Koolen, 2018, p. 30). The label has become engrained into Dutch reading culture and is widely recognised by readers (Koolen, 2018, p. 28), for instance in navigating a bookstore (Van Cranenburgh, 2020, p. 93).

The Riddle team has further condensed The Riddle codes, such as those of smaller subgenres such as 'romantic comedy,' into the three main genres of (literary) fiction, suspense, and romantic, which together account for 95% of the Riddle corpus (Koolen et al., 2020, p. 5). The remaining 5% of novels fall into the category 'miscellaneous,' which includes NUR-categories that are not large enough for comparison (Koolen, 2018, p. 30), such as fantasy or the accidental work of non-fiction (Van Cranenburgh, 2016, p. 94). I adhere to these broader main genre categories to select and label my data set.

²⁰ In response to an increasingly globalising market, the American BISAC system and the British BIC (or "Thema" since 2017) are currently gaining international traction (Vlahos, "American Publishing Industry"). At the time of the National Reader Survey this shift had not yet taken place.

3.1.3. Translation

I work with a simplified coding system to indicate whether a novel has been translated. All novels in the Riddle corpus are Dutch language novels. Some of these novels have been first published in Dutch, other novels have been imported into the Dutch market are translated into Dutch. The Riddle project metadata that was provided to me lists the source language of each work. I have used these source language labels to select a data set that is reflective of translation practises in the Dutch field.

I used a basic labelling scheme to group the different source languages under larger analytical categories. Accordingly, I distinguish between works published first in the Dutch language (not translated) or first in a non-Dutch language (translated). Moreover, for the translated works, I distinguish between the two subcategories English and non-English to compare the narrative styles of Anglophone literature and ‘world literature.’²¹

3.2. Corpus

This thesis draws on the corpus compiled for the 2013 National Reader Survey by the Riddle team, which consists of 401 best-selling and most frequently loaned novels in The Netherlands between 2007 and 2012.

Because the data preparation for this project was labour intensive, I aimed for a representative study. For a data set representative of the larger Riddle corpus I used samples of 10% the length of the average novel in the Riddle corpus,²² about 10,000 words per excerpt. For the number of samples,

²¹ World literature is perhaps a generous name for this miscellaneous category.

²² This information was provided to me by Joris van Zundert.

I initially aimed for a representative 10% of the 401 novels in the Riddle corpus, or 40 samples. However, due to extra time becoming available due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, my final sample corpus encompassed 60 samples, or slightly over 15% of the Riddle corpus. To achieve a similar corpus composition I implemented the same genre and source language ratios as the larger Riddle corpus.

First I calculated genre ratios by calculating the ratio of the three main genres in the Riddle corpus, fiction, suspense, and romance, and then applying that percentage to my desired amount of samples. I used the higher base number 65 to calculate the ratios in order to arrive at a round number of 60 fragments. The other 5 novels fall into category ‘miscellaneous,’ which I have excluded from this research because the amount of (sample) material is too limited to draw substantiated conclusions from.²³ The ratio conversion chart is pictured in figure 1 below.²⁴

Figure 1: Conversion chart of genre ratios in the Riddle corpus to achieve a representative subcorpus.

| Genre | Number of books in Riddle corpus | Rounded percentage of Riddle corpus | Resulting number of books in sample corpus | Final rounded number of books in sample corpus |
|----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Fiction | 147/401 | 37% | 24,05 | 24 |
| Suspense | 186/401 | 46% | 29,9 | 29 |
| Romance | 41/401 | 10% | 6,5 | 7 |
| Total | 375 | 95% | 60,45 | 60 |

It must be noted that this method of calculating the size of the genre subgroups required manual adjustment to arrive at whole novels, and

²³ This already proved to be a problem for the small romance subcorpus, see below.

²⁴ Figures 7 and 8 are based on the unpublished work of Karina van Dalen-Oskam (2020).

ultimately at a round number of samples. These adjustments are displayed in the two right-hand columns of figure 1. One major adjustment I made was rounding the calculated number of novels for the suspense category down from 29,9 to 29. Because suspense is the largest genre present in the Riddle corpus, I rounded its number down in favour of rounding up for the smallest genre of romance. My reasoning behind this was that an increase from 6 to 7 books for romance would yield less marginal returns than an increase from 29 to 30 books for suspense.

The next step in assembling a representative sample corpus was selection by source language to reflect the international nature of the Dutch language book market as accurately as possible. As pictured in figure 2, I used the number of books per source language for each main genre in the Riddle corpus to calculate their respective percentages. I then applied these source language percentages to the number of books I had determined for each genre and rounded to whole novels.

Because Dutch and English are by far the most prevalent source languages in all three genres, they were easier to round to whole numbers. At this point the sample corpus was divided into three smaller sub corpora resulting in very small numbers, often below 1 novel. I divided the remaining novels for each genre as proportionately as possible among the next most prevalent source languages. For Swedish language novels in the fiction genre, for example, I rounded 0,48 novel up to 1 novel because that 0,02 roundup would lead to a broader representation of suspense in the Riddle corpus. I preferred this method over adding either an extra Italian or Spanish novel because it would misrepresent their equal presence in the Riddle corpus.

Figure 2: Conversion charts of source language ratios in three largest genre categories of the Riddle corpus for a representative subcorpus.

| Fiction | Number of books in Riddle corpus | Rounded percentage | Percentage applied to Fiction sample corpus (24 novels) | Rounded to whole novels |
|------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Dutch | 73 | 50% | 12 | 12 |
| English | 44 | 30% | 7,2 | 7 |
| Italian | 7 | 5% | 1,2 | 1 |
| Spanish | 7 | 5% | 1,2 | 1 |
| French | 5 | 3% | 0,72 | 1 |
| German | 4 | 3% | 0,72 | 1 |
| Swedish | 3 | 2% | 0,48 | 1 |
| Portuguese | 2 | 1% | 0,24 | 0 |
| Japanese | 2 | 1% | 0,24 | 0 |
| Total | 147 | 100 | 24 | 24 |

| Suspense | Number of books in Riddle corpus | Rounded percentage | Percentage applied to Suspense sample corpus (29 novels) | Rounded to whole novels |
|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Dutch | 58 | 31% | 8,99 | 9 |
| English | 89 | 48% | 13,92 | 14 |
| Swedish | 24 | 13% | 3,77 | 4 |
| Norwegian | 6 | 3% | 0,87 | 1 |
| Danish | 6 | 3% | 0,87 | 1 |
| Icelandic | 2 | 1% | 0,29 | 0 |
| Afrikaans | 1 | 0% (0,005%) | 0,16 | 0 |
| Total | 186 | 99% | 28,87 | 29 |

| Romance | Number of books in Riddle corpus | Rounded percentage | Percentage applied to Romance sample corpus (7 novels) | Rounded to whole novels |
|---------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Dutch | 5 | 12% | 0,84 | 2 |
| English | 36 | 88% | 6,16 | 5 |
| Total | 41 | 100% | 7 | 7 |

In the case of romance I made another adjustment by changing the number of Dutch source language numbers from 1 to 2. I was again motivated by the minor presence of (originally Dutch²⁵) romance fiction in the Riddle corpus, which in this sample corpus left virtually no data to work with. I made the adjustment because it would double the amount of data points for this subcategory of a subcategory, making the results slightly less anecdotal. But dividing such a small genre up into two yet smaller subsets was perhaps overly ambitious, and I want to stress that inflating a subset of one single novel to two still cannot produce a pattern.

These considerations resulted in different metadata criteria for the final list of 60 novels to select excerpts from. To select these 60 corresponding novels, I randomised all titles in the Riddle corpus. In an Excel file I attributed a random number between 0 and 1 to each novel using the [RAND] function. I then sorted these random numbers from highest to lowest using the filter tool. In the order of the randomised list, I chose the first 60 novels that met the metadata criteria for genre and source language.

For each novel, I randomly selected a 10,000 word fragment. I first exported the .txt file with the raw text of the novel to a macOS Pages document. To make sure that every part of the text had an equal chance of being selected, I counted 10,000 words from the last page of the document

²⁵ I dislike the term 'original' because it sounds dismissive of translations. What I mean is the first language version of a work.

and used that lower page number to enter the total page span into a randomiser. I started counting 10,000 words from the first full sentence on the page with the number produced by the randomiser tool. When counting the 10,000 words I made sure to keep natural sentence boundaries intact, which resulted in minor variations in word counts.

3.3. Quantifying textual factors

3.3.1. Measuring narrative perspective: The Ik-index

As Susanne Fleischman notes, “it is generally accepted that there are two modes of narration: first person and third person perspective” (2005, p. 67). In working with narrative perspective I therefore operate under the assumption that every text in my corpus has an automatically identifiable narrative perspective that lies somewhere between first and third person narration.²⁶

To measure a novel’s narrative perspective, I will work with the Ik-index (translated: ‘I-index’), an experimental computational method that I have developed earlier during my internship for *The Riddle* (Van Rossum et al., 2020). Taking after a strategy previously employed by Dahllöf and Berglund (2019), who use personal pronouns as indicators for character gender in contemporary Swedish bestseller fiction, the Ik-index takes personal pronouns as markers of narrative perspective in Dutch-language texts. Using pronoun counts, the Ik-index expresses the ratio of first-person pronouns to the total number of personal pronouns in a text (figure 3, 4). For each text, it produces a value of narrative perspective between 0 and 1. A score of 0

²⁶ However much I wish to be able to include perspective shifts, in the context of this research with mid-length excerpts, this is not methodologically attainable.

indicates that all pronouns in a text are third person pronouns, and a score of 1 indicates that all pronouns in a text are first person pronouns.

Figure 3: The Ik-index in its initial form, based on counts of the pronouns “ik” (“I”), “hij” (he) and “zij” (she). The [1+] has been placed under the line to arrive at a mathematical index range between 0 and 1.

$$I = \frac{n_{ik}}{1+n_{hij, zij}}$$

Figure 4: The Ik-index in its final form, which considers first, second, and third person pronouns, as well as possessive pronouns and plural pronouns, which were added on a trial-and-error basis to increase accuracy.

$$I = \frac{n_{(ik, wij, we, me, mij[n], ons, onze)}}{1+n_{(ik, we, we, me, mij[n], ons, onze, hij, zij, ze, je, jou[w], haar, zijn, jullie)}}$$

3.3.2. Alternative narrative perspectives

The Ik-index circumvents binary classification by expressing narrative perspective as a value situated on a spectrum between 1 and 0. However, that mathematical spectrum remains two-dimensional, while in reality narrative perspective in (literary) fiction may be much more complex. In spite of this reduction I do not want to deny the existence of alternative narrative perspectives both in theory and in practise.

Monika Fludernik, for instance, has written on variations such as second-person perspective, gender- neutral, or impersonal generalising third person perspectives, for example in experimental fiction from the 1960s-70s (1995).

More recently, pronoun use beyond first and third person narrative perspectives has garnered scholarly interest (Gibbons and Macrae, 2018).

And as a concrete example of fiction that subverts binary narrative traditions to represent a marginal voice, I would like to suggest N.K. Jemisin's Black sci-fi trilogy *The Broken Earth* (2015).²⁷ In the trilogy, the chapters narrated by Essun, a plus size woman of colour with natural hair who is subjected to racism, are written from a second person perspective. In other words: alternative narrative perspectives have more modest, but no less valid scientific and literary traditions and do important work for representation.

Nonetheless, because the Riddle corpus consists of bestseller fiction that has been selected for its popular and commercial appeal, I presume that such experimental narrative forms do not take up a notable portion of my data set. So while I do acknowledge and appreciate different varieties of narrative perspective, I will leave them mostly aside in this research.

²⁷ Many thanks to Floor Buschenhenke for alerting me to N.K. Jemisin's writing. Especially in light of the recent surge of the Black Lives Matter movement, I wanted to champion work by a Black author who is pushing at the boundaries of conventionally white literary spaces such as science fiction.

CASE STUDY 1: SECOND PERSON PRONOUNS

I will not leave second person perspective completely aside in this research, and for methodological reasons. Though it is true that most Riddle novels can be described using first and third person narrative perspective, second person pronouns are not absent from the texts themselves, but are associated with dialogue representation as Kim Jautze observes (2014, p. 6).

In direct discourse second person pronouns forms are mainly used for address, such as in David Baldacci's 2008 suspense novel *Niets dan de waarheid*, first published in English titled *The whole truth*, with my underlining to emphasise second person pronoun use, and isolated dialogue text coloured blue:

Ze zei niets, maar nam hem bij de arm, trok hem snel met zich mee naar een kamertje en duwde de deur achter hen dicht.

'Wat doe jij hier, verdomme?' beet ze hem toe.

'Je bent niet blij me te zien, lijkt het.'

'Als Frank erachter komt ...'

'Frank weet altijd precies waar ik ben en dat heb ik aan jou te danken.' Hij duwde zijn vinger tegen zijn rechterzij. 'Dat is de reden waarom ik hier ben.'

Ze ging aan een klein, houten bureautje zitten, met uit hout gesneden engeltjes in de zijkanten.

'Ik begrijp je niet, Shaw. Ik heb je nooit begrepen.'²⁸ (p. 76).

In free direct dialogue, second person forms are used for self-address and often accompanied by a shift in narrative tense, as shown here in Tatiana de Rosnay's 2009 literary fiction novel *Die laatste zomer*, first published in French titled *Boomerang*, and in English under the title *A secret kept*.²⁹ The underlining is mine to foreground the use of second person pronouns in interior monologue. Once again the dialogue text that I chose to isolate is coloured blue.

Antoine kon een glimlach om haar enthousiasme niet onderdrukken. Maar ze had gelijk. De vuurtoren die hij als kind zo had bewonderd, die hoog boven de pijnbomen uittorende, leek te zijn gekrompen. Dat komt doordat je volwassen bent geworden, vriend, dacht hij bij zichzelf, jazeker, je bent nu volwassen. Maar wat verlangde hij er ineens naar om weer dat jochie op het strand te zijn, dat jochie dat zandkastelen bouwde, dat over de pier rende en splinters in zijn voeten kreeg, dat zijn

28 The same citation in the English source language version. Again includes my underlining, but original italics. Pronoun position and frequency (four instances of second person pronouns in the English untranslated version versus five in the Dutch translated version) changes in translation.

She said nothing, but took his arm and quickly guided him into a small room and shut the door behind them.

'What the hell are you doing here?' she spat out.

'I take it you're not happy to see me.'

'If Frank finds out ...'

'Frank always knows exactly where I am, thanks to you.' He pressed his finger against his right side. 'That's why I'm here.'

She sat down behind a small wooden desk with cherubs carved into its sides.

'I do not understand you, Shaw. I never have.' (p. 60)

29 Both the French and English language versions are authored by De Rosnay.

moeder aan haar arm trok en om nog een glace à fraise bedelde.³⁰ (pp. 28-29)

The final example of second person narrative forms that appear in the novels in the Riddle corpus can not only be located in dialogue text, but also in the narrative framework. I will give examples from indefinite second person pronouns in dialogue and narrative contexts respectively. Both excerpts are fittingly taken from the 2012 Dutch hard-boiled suspense novel *Mes in de rug* (roughly translatable to '*Stabbed in the back*'), co-published under the name of the late Appie Baantjer and written by Simon van Waal. For emphasis, I have underlined second person pronouns in the indefinite sense, and again indicated the isolated dialogue text portions with blue.

'Ja,' beaamde de oude rechercheur, 'het zogenaamde junken-bakkie. Op de Warmoesstraat, zeker vroeger, waren het denk ik voor negentig procent verslaafden die we verhoorden. Misschien wel meer. En die hadden allemaal behoefte aan suiker. Veel suiker. Deed je er drie scheppen in, dan wilden ze er nog eentje bij. Of twee. En altijd een sigaretje ...'³¹ (p. 86)

30 The same citation from the English source language version. Again includes my underlining, but original italics.

Antoine couldn't help smiling at her enthusiasm. But she was right. The lighthouse he had so admired as a child, which used to tower over the pine trees, seemed to have shrunk. That's because you've grown up, buster, he thought to himself. Yup, you've grown up. But how he longed, all of a sudden, to be that kid on the beach again, that kid building sand castles, running along the pier and getting splinters in his feet, pulling on his mother's arm for another glace à la fraise. (p. 33)

31 A personal and liberal translation to English in which I have tried to strike a similar tone, rather than aim for grammatical exactness. My underlining indicates indefinite second person pronouns in dialogue text.

'Why yes,' the old detective concurred, 'the so-called cup-'a-junk. At Warmoes street station, especially in those days, I reckon that addicts accounted for ninety percent of people we brought in for interrogation. Maybe even south of that. And they all craved sugar. Badly. Even if you stirred through three spoonfuls, they'd still be asking for one more. Or two. And always a smoke to go with it...'

Peter van Opperdoes was blij dat de collega's die haar de bon hadden gegeven dit soort details onthouden hadden. Dat was toch een van de belangrijkste steunpunten van goed politiewerk; een goed geheugen. Je kon nooit weten waar iets later van belang voor bleek te zijn.³² (p. 70)

These are second person pronouns used indefinitely, in the sense of English 'one,' French 'on,' German 'man' or Dutch 'men.'³³ Because this general connotation was often reflected in no shift in verb tense from the narrative text, I have chosen to classify such second person indefinite pronouns as narrative text.

In conclusion, this case study exemplifies how second person pronouns remain present in novels classified as either first or third person narratives by the Ik-index. These qualitative looks into the novels themselves reveals how second person pronouns function on the sentence level and how I have still considered these pronouns in manual dialogue isolation.

32 Another personal and liberal translation but less stylised, as it is more narrative-descriptive in nature than the previous quotation. My underlining accents the use of the indefinite second personal perspective in narrative text.

Peter van Opperdoes was glad that the colleagues who gave her the ticket remembered those kinds of details. That, after all, was one of the most important pillars of good police work; a sound memory. You never knew where something might come in handy later.

33 These indefinite pronoun forms I generally found to bear likeness to fixed expressions of a general nature, such as aphorisms and clichés. Interesting work has been done on the topic of cliché language and literariness by Andreas van Cranenburgh (2016; 2018), and the literariness associations with indefinite second person pronouns would undoubtedly be a fascinating direction for future research.

3.3.3. Dialogue and narration

Respondents to the National Reader Survey gave perceived literariness ratings based on their impression of entire novels. These ratings were unguided, e.g. readers were not asked to focus on any particular aspect when rating novels in terms of literary quality. As such, the mean literariness rating of a novel is only directly related to the text in its entirety. To do justice to the scope of the National Reader Survey, I will therefore first take the complete (or 'full') text of the novels into account when I correlate their *Ik*-indices with their mean literary ratings. However, in studying narrative perspective I also will divide the full text up between its narrative and dialogue parts and study those separately.

I work under the assumption that a novel's overarching first or third narrative perspective can be most clearly located in its descriptive narrative framework. I will substantiate my reasoning with results from a second empirical pilot study conducted during my internship for *The Riddle*. I take after the theoretically informed methodology of this preparatory project in manually separating dialogue text and narrative text for analysis.

Namely, no conclusive automatic method of isolating dialogue text from whole novels exists to date, as evidenced from work by Annelen Bruenner (2013; 2019). Maintaining the definition of dialogue as 'text in between quotation marks', Van Cranenburgh has investigated how dialogue ratio relates to perceived literariness in the novels in the *Riddle* corpus (2018, p. 183). In this research, however, I want to look at dialogue beyond the quoted instance and have therefore opted for manual dialogue isolation. Although manual data processing has the benefit of introducing the researcher's sensitivity, it is also more vulnerable to human doubts and inaccuracies. I therefore do not claim that this approach to dialogue isolation is an infallible

or end-all endeavour, but rather a process of careful decision-making that I went about as systematically and theoretically informed as possible.³⁴

My definition of dialogue extends Van Cranenburgh's quoted text approach to non-verbal thought. Here I also diverge from Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's baseline definition of dialogue as "a rendering of language in language, every word in the text presumably standing for a word uttered in the story" (2005, p. 54), because the word "uttered" implies that words must be spoken aloud to classify as dialogue. My broader definition of dialogue is entrenched in the way that the Ik-index works: by counting pronouns. Dialogue isolation is therefore intended to provide the clearest picture of the pronouns in narrative text as possible, making the novel's narrative perspective optimally detectable for the Ik-index. As such, I aimed to isolate all direct discourse from the text, but also those instances of first-person interior monologue that textually resemble spoken utterances, characterised by Brian McHale as free direct discourse (1978). Namely, dialogue in fiction is not always mimetic, e.g. representative of spoken words, but it can also be more diegetic, e.g. integrated into the narrative text (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005, p. 109).³⁵

To isolate free direct discourse from the novel excerpts in my sample corpus, I looked to Luc Herman and Bart Vervaeck's description of what marks of free *indirect* discourse. Herman and Vervaeck write that in free indirect discourse, "tense and person are adapted to the existing narrative situation" (2019, p. 166). In principle, I focused on sentences whose tense and pronoun diverges from the text surrounding it. Nonetheless actual fiction is illusive, so in complex situations I referred to Rimmon-Keenan's reiteration of

34 My efforts are hopefully not only useful for this thesis, but also produce a corpus of 200,000 words of dialogue that can be used to work towards automatic dialogue isolation.

35 As illustrated by figure 5, dialogue in fiction can take many forms. In isolating dialogue, I have disregarded the most diegetic dialogue types because they are integrated in the narrative text, so that the thought or utterance cannot be reconstructed verbatim.

McHale's scale of diegetic-mimetic dialogue representation for guidance, which is displayed in figure 5 (2005). I have added hypothetical examples to illustrate my decision-making in each case. The dialogue types in the second column are quoted from McHale (cited in Rimmon-Keenan, 2005, pp. 111-112).

Figure 5: Hypothetical examples of decision-making process in dialogue text isolation, illustrative quotations provided and translated by myself.

| Dutch example, liberally translated to English (with isolated portions in cursive) | Type of quotation and explanation |
|---|--|
| <p>NL: Ze merkte op wat een mooi weer het was.</p> <p>EN: She remarked how beautiful the weather was.</p> | <p><i>Diegetic summary</i> The bare report that a speech act has occurred, without any specification of what was said or how it was said.</p> |
| <p>NL: Ze vertelde hoe mooi het weer was, met schitterende zonnestrallen, ze wilde nooit meer naar huis.</p> <p>EN: She told of the beautiful weather, with glimmering sunbeams, she never wanted to return home.</p> | <p><i>Summary, less 'purely' diegetic</i> Summary which to some degree represents, not merely mentions, a speech event in that it names the topics of conversation.</p> |
| <p>NL: Ze zei dat het mooi weer was en dat ze nooit meer naar huis wilde.</p> <p>EN: She said that the weather was beautiful and that she never wanted to return home.</p> | <p><i>Indirect content paraphrase or indirect discourse</i> A paraphrase of the content of a speech event, ignoring the style or form of the supposed 'original' utterance.</p> |
| <p>NL: Ze vertelde hoe mooi het weer was, god wat mooi, ze moest en zou naar buiten.</p> <p>EN: She told about how beautiful the weather was, god how nice, she was determined to go outside.</p> | <p><i>Indirect discourse, to some degree mimetic</i> A form of indirect discourse which creates the illusion of 'preserving' or 'reproducing' aspects of the style of an utterance, above and beyond the mere report of its content.</p> |
| <p>NL: Hoezo vond ze het weer zo móóí, ze lette er nooit op.</p> <p>EN: Why did she like the weather that much, she never paid much attention to it.</p> | <p><i>Free indirect discourse</i> Grammatically and mimetically intermediate between indirect and direct discourse.</p> |
| <p>NL: Ze zei: "Niet te geloven joh, wat een mooi weer het is."</p> <p>EN: She said: "Gosh, it's unbelievable how beautiful the weather is."</p> | <p><i>Direct discourse</i> A 'quotation' of monologue or dialogue. This creates the illusion of 'pure' mimesis, although it is always stylised in one way or another.</p> |

| Dutch example, liberally translated to English (with isolated portions in cursive) | Type of quotation and explanation |
|--|--|
| NL: Haar humeur verbeterde. <i>Jeetje wat is 't een mooi weer zeg, ik moet naar buiten.</i> EN: Her mood improved. <i>Oh my, the weather's so beautiful, I have to get outside.</i> | <i>Free direct discourse</i> Direct discourse shorn of its conventional orthographic cues. This is the typical form of first-person interior monologue. |

To isolate dialogue, I exported each 10,000 word novel excerpt to the text editor TextMate and duplicated the file, saving a copy of the intact sample (I call this the 'full text'). I then started manually selecting and copy pasting the dialogue text into a new .txt file. I also saved the remaining narrative text in a separate .txt file. Following these steps I produced three files for each novel sample; a full-text excerpt, a non dialogue text excerpt, and a dialogue only text excerpt. The resulting files were used to calculate the Ik-index per text type for all novel samples in the corpus.³⁶

During my internship for the Riddle I have explored the textual differences between narrative text and dialogue text in a pilot experiment. To determine whether the distinction between dialogue and narrative text was productive for future research, I used the same method of dialogue isolation on 20 randomised novel samples from the Riddle corpus of 10,000 words each. I contrasted the resulting narrative and dialogue text excerpts in R, using the Stylo tool to do a principal components analysis.

A principal components analysis (abbreviated PCA) is a statistical procedure used to explain as much of the variation in a dataset with as little variables as possible (Greatley and Hirsch, 2017, p. 30). In the case of the stylistic juxtaposition of texts using word frequencies, this is useful because there are a lot of different words present in a data set, all of which are variables for comparison. A PCA condenses these individual variables into the most meaningful opposing categories within the data set. These

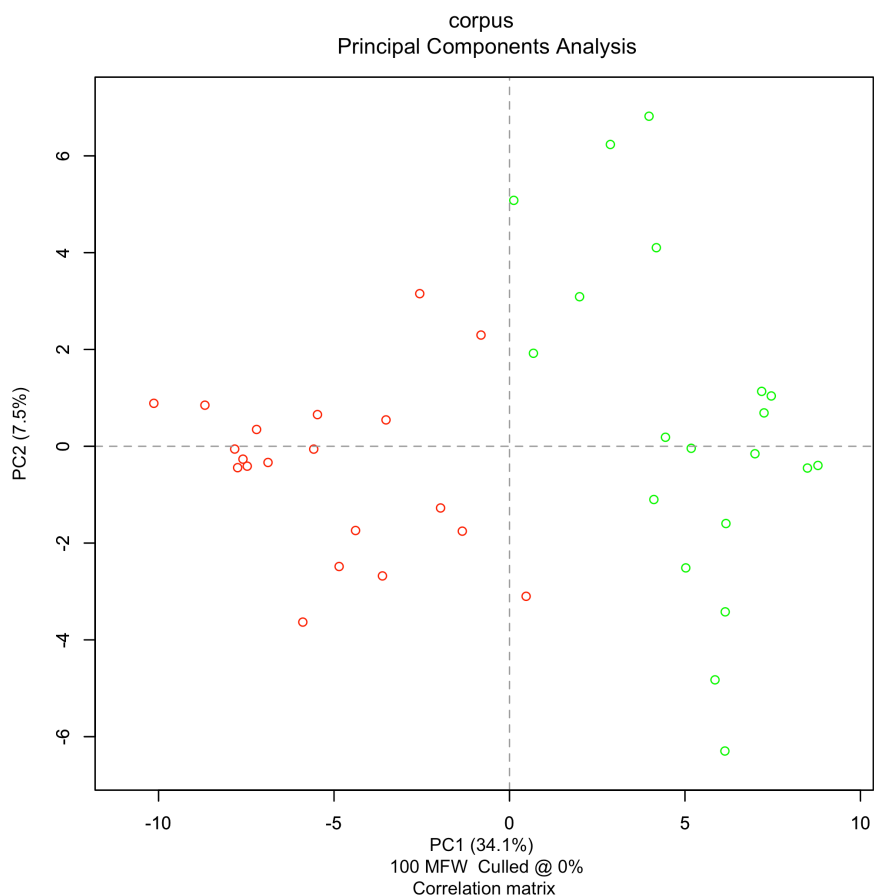
³⁶ See section 3.4. Computational procedures.

optimally mutually exclusive categories are called 'principal components.' The two strongest principal components for this corpus are plotted against one another in figure 5, represented by the PC1 on the x axis and the PC2 on the y axis. Together, the distances between the plotted dots account for 41,6% (an accumulation of PC1 and PC2) of the lexical variations between the texts.

In the PCA in figure 6, I have plotted the narrative text excerpts (green dots) and dialogue text excerpts (red dots). The red and green clusters in Figure 5 point out that narrative text excerpts are stylistically more similar to one another than they are to the dialogue excerpts from their respective novels. In other words, the stylistic signatures of individual authors do not negate the intrinsic textual difference between narrative and dialogue text. The finding that text-intrinsic difference overshadows authorship is so telling because Greatley and Hirsch state that one of the main applications of PCA is authorship attribution. "It's use in authorship attribution", they write, "relies on the fact that, when analysing word-frequency counts across a mixed corpus of texts known to be of different authorship, the strongest factor that emerges in the relationship between the texts is generally authorial in nature." (2017, p. 32).

The cluster for dialogue text is also relatively condensed which suggests that dialogue text is more stylistically uniform than narrative text throughout the novels in this data set. This suggests that the difference between first and third person perspective is more pronounced in dialogue text than in narrative text.

Figure 6: Principal components analysis of the 100 most frequent words appearing in dialogue (red) text excerpts versus narrative text excerpts (green).



To further explore the compositional differences between narrative and dialogue text, I calculated the mutual keyness of the narrative text corpus against the dialogue text corpus in AntConc. Keyness calculates the relative frequency of words in one corpus in comparison to another using a statistical measure termed log-likelihood. Within the scope of this research, it is most relevant to note that a threshold keyness value of 6.63 corresponds with a significant difference in the frequency of a word in one text in comparison with the other, meaning that all the results in figure 7 are statistically validated (The grammar lab, n.d.).

Figure 7: Mutual keyness of most frequent words in isolated dialogue versus narrative text.

| 10 most frequently appearing words in dialogue text compared to narrative text | Keyness | 10 most frequently appearing words in narrative text compared to dialogue text | Keyness |
|--|----------|--|---------|
| je ('you,' - singular informal, can also be an indefinite reflexive pronoun) | +2496.91 | haar ('her' - can also be a possessive pronoun) | +653.69 |
| ik ('I') | +976.76 | ze ('she' or 'them') | +513.55 |
| is | +796.89 | de ('the') | +401.03 |
| heb ('have') | +632.57 | hij ('he') | +335.98 |
| we | +528.62 | had | +257.37 |
| u ('you' - indefinite formal) | +500.77 | en ('and') | +216.28 |
| dat ('that') | +332.27 | zich (undetermined reflexive pronoun) | +192.08 |
| niet ('not') | +310.44 | zei ('said') | +189.2 |
| ben ('am') | +308.15 | was | +158.18 |
| jullie ('you' - plural) | +294.74 | keek ('looked') | +150.43 |

Figure 7 illustrates the importance of tense and pronoun shifts in the distinction between dialogue text and narrative text. It also signals general narrative trends: dialogue text seems to be relatively more associated with the first person present tense, while narrative text leans relatively more towards the third person past tense.³⁷ Moreover, the verbs with high keyness in the narrative text corpus, such as 'had', 'said', 'was' and 'looked', gesture towards narrator description. The dialogue text corpus, on the other hand, has a stronger relative presence of the verbs 'have' and 'am' which gesture towards character experience.³⁸ Dialogue text in this Riddle subcorpus is

³⁷ The keyness values for third person narrative perspective in narrative text are lower than those for first person narrative perspective in dialogue text, which demonstrates that first person narrative perspective is also to an extent present in the narrative text data set. Nonetheless, the keyness values remain significant and the principal component analysis supports that narrative and dialogue text appear text-intrinsically different.

³⁸ Narrative tense is an extremely interesting narratological aspect of literary perspective that I sadly cannot expand upon in this thesis.

thus not devoid of narrative perspective, but it is associated with a different kind of narrative perspective within the overarching framework of descriptive narrative text.³⁹

While it appears that a text's narrative framework can be best located in isolated narrative text, the role of dialogue text must not be discounted. Narrative text and dialogue text seem to be intrinsically different and their respective signals might interfere with one another when that difference is ignored or overgeneralised. I will illustrate this effect using an empirical case study of dialogue ratios.

³⁹ This research is only explorative, relative to the novels in this small corpus, and does not take narrative perspective shifts into account.

CASE STUDY 2: THE CHALLENGE OF ROMANCE

In terms of narrative-dialogue distinction, the three first person narratives in the romance category are one of a kind. Let me illustrate this using an example. This excerpt was taken from the 10,000 word sample from Sophie Kinsella's 2009 chicklit novel *Wat spook jij uit?*, first published in English as *Twenties girl* (and the only translated romance novel with a first person narrative perspective in this sample corpus).

Ik kan nog steeds niet geloven dat Josh met die meid naar Bistro Martin gaat. Hoe kan hij? Het is óns restaurant. We hadden ons eerste afspraakje daar, godsamme.

Hij verraadt al onze herinneringen. Het is alsof onze hele relatie op een toverleitje stond dat hij opzettelijk heeft gewist. Nu maakt hij een nieuwe tekening en vergeet die hele oude, veel betere en interessantere tekening die er eerst stond.

Trouwens, het is nog maar net uit. Hoe kan hij na zes weken al iets met een ander meisje beginnen? Begrijpt hij dan níets? Je overhaast in een nieuwe relatie storten is nooit de oplossing. Waarschijnlijk wordt hij er zelfs doodongelukkig van. Dat had ik hem kunnen vertellen, als hij mij iets had gevraagd.⁴⁰ (p. 117)

40 The same excerpt in the English source language (italics in original).

I still can't believe Josh is taking this girl to Bistro Martin. How can he? It's *our* place. We had our first date there, for God's sake.

He's totally betraying all our memories. It's as if our whole relationship is an Etch A Sketch and he's deliberately shaking it clean and drawing a new picture, and forgetting all about the old, much better, and more interesting picture which used to be there.

Besides which, we've only just broken up. How can he be dating another girl after only six weeks? Doesn't he know *anything*? Rushing blindly into a new relationship is never the answer; in fact, it'll probably make him really unhappy. I could have told him that, if he'd asked me. (p. 61)

I have chosen to highlight this particular passage because it consists almost entirely of first-person internal monologue in the present tense, which usually marks free direct discourse within narrative text in the two other genres I have examined. In other words, I would have isolated these instances if they occurred only incidentally within a narrative-descriptive framework. But in this example from *Wat spook jij uit*, there exists no narrative text outside of (free) direct discourse - the free direct discourse itself takes the place of narrative text. By my parameters for dialogue isolation, this excerpt would be all dialogue text.

Romance fiction indeed seems to be more resemblant of informal speech and character experience. To describe the style of chicklit fiction as opposed to literary fiction, Kim Jautze (2014) draws on the work of Jesse Egbert to distinguish between thought presentation and dialogue for Dutch chicklit on the one hand, and description and narrative for Dutch literary fiction on the other. The thought presentation dimension is marked by emotionally charged language (Jautze, 2014, p. 5), which is also reflected in this excerpt from *Wat spook jij uit*. The text is littered with textual characteristics that Jautze associates with thought presentation such as the indefinite pronoun “veel” (‘many’) and the affective adjective “heel” (‘very’).

By personal observation, this excerpt also features interjections such as “godsamme” (god damn it) and the prefix “dood” (used in the sense of ‘dead sure’) and accents that lay stress such as “óns” and “níéts” (indicated by cursive ‘our’ and ‘anything’ in the English excerpt). I would argue that both of these properties fit Jautze’s description of language that is indicative of thought representation as “show[ing] a character’s or narrator’s involvement, and belong[ing] to a more colloquial language register” (2014, p. 6). Moreover, Jautze writes that chicklit style is situated in the dialogue dimension because it makes use of the first person present tense (2014, p. 6), which is also the case in this excerpt.

As such, it was presumptuous to assume that romance narrative text might be more resemblant of dialogue than narrative text in other genres, but that it would not entirely classify as dialogue text. Therefore, the focus on (free) direct discourse for this dialogue isolation exercise is insufficient to reflect the narrative-dialogue text divide in romance fiction. To nonetheless maintain a sense of nuance between a descriptive narrative framework and character exchanges located within it, I have only isolated direct discourse from first person romance narratives. As a result I have marked the entire excerpt from *Wat spook jij uit* as narrative text.

I realise that this change in the definition of a variable also implies a change in its outcomes. It is difficult to predict what the exact effects of the modified definition of dialogue that I have maintained for romance fiction might be. For example, the dialogue ratio for romance fiction could either be too high because of a more narrow definition of dialogue, or too low because it downplays the dialogic nature of romance fiction. Regardless, the narrative text I-k-indices of romance dialogue still remain indicative of a first person narrative perspective, which is what this research is focused on. Moreover, about half of the romance fiction in this sample corpus is written from a third person narrative perspective and therefore circumvents the problem of its narrative text resembling free indirect discourse.

Lastly, my broader definition of dialogue text as direct discourse and first person interior monologue is a modest expansion from dialogue as 'text in between quotation marks.' In my personal experience in working with the fiction in my sample corpus, only a small portion of isolated dialogue text is composed of free indirect discourse.⁴¹ In other words: this is a minor problem for half of the novel samples in a genre subset that is already too small a basis for definitive conclusions. I therefore expect that this modified definition of dialogue will not

⁴¹ My most exaggerated estimation of the percentage of free direct discourse across my entire sample corpus would be 15%. Needless to say, this is anecdotal evidence.

interfere with my results to the point that it is completely compromised. I will, however, remain reflexive about the fact that I am dealing with limited data for the romance genre.

To conclude, a closer examination of this excerpt from *What spook jij uit* illustrates that the preconfigured approaches taken to working with fiction, such separating between dialogue and narration, are not always adequately equipped to deal with texts from less received or 'literary' traditions.

3.4. Computational procedures^{42 43}

The computational aspects to this research took place in several steps. First, the code for the Ik-index was written in the development environment Atom, which is a 'text editor' for code. The Ik-index code was written using the programming language Python. The corpus of text files containing the complete (or 'full') text, isolated narrative text, and isolated dialogue text was imported in Python. It was then converted to lowercase and punctuation was removed. For each text file, its personal pronouns were counted and used to calculate its Ik-index value, resulting in 3 times 60 Ik-indices in total. These Ik-indices were rounded off at the third decimal.

The metadata for the the factors of mean perceived literariness (1-7, with 1 the lowest and 7 the highest), genre label (fiction, suspense, romance), and source language, have been made available by the Riddle team. I have further categorised the source language data into a simplified coding system: Dutch, English, or non-English. The Ik-indices and metadata were exported to a .csv file, or comma separated values file. This is the type of file that can be loaded into R so that it recognises the data as distinct categories. R is a software environment that can be used to generate visualisations and perform statistical computations. As such, the standard deviation, mean, and linear regressions for this research have been calculated and visualised in R with the use of libraries. A library for R is a standard set of code that is offered in a certain programming language, in this case Python. In other words, it is a 'bundle' of software code that has been previously built and tested.

For the linear regressions to investigate the effect of narrative perspective on perceived literariness, the library 'Rethinking' for R has been

42 I am greatly indebted to Joris van Zundert for his enthusiasm and efforts in assisting me with the computational aspects of this research. It would not have been the same thesis without your help. Thank you.

43 The GitHub repository for the Python and R code used in this research can be found here: <https://github.com/jorisvanzundert/lvrmtw>.

used. One of the functions of this library is a standard linear regression. A linear regression is a statistical calculation to find the predictive line that the best suits the trend that is present within a data set that is based on two variables. It is therefore relative to that data set. The resulting slope coefficient shows whether there is a statistically plausible linear connection between the two variables.

To investigate how (non)literary narrative perspective is distributed across literary fiction, suspense, and romance, the metadata which now included the lk-indices, was subdivided by genre and lk-index category in R. Then the mean and standard deviation for each metadata category was calculated in R. To achieve this, the corpus was first subdivided by genre and lk-index category. The mean is the average of all values in a data set. The standard deviation is the mean deviation from the mean. It expresses the spread of all data points surrounding the mean. The R library 'tables' was used to arrange the means and standard deviations into columns with headers. The results were then rounded off to two decimals after the comma and visualised in a table using the R library 'huxtable.'

To examine in detail how (non)literary narrative perspective behaves according to social factors such as translation and genre, the metadata was visualised in scatter plots using the 'plot' command in R. In the R code for the plots, the metadata was subdivided per data category for genre and translation to produce different graphs for each. In the code labels were attributed to the graphs, the axes, and the legend, as well as two outliers in the scatter plot for genre.

4. Results

4.1. Text-intrinsic literary narrative perspective

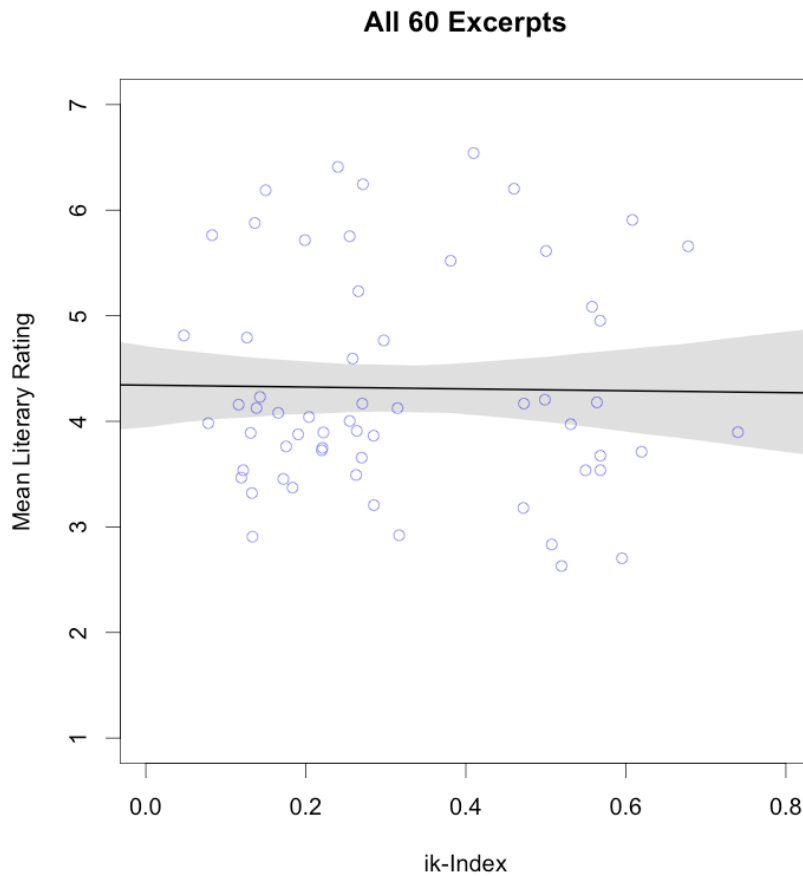
4.1.1. Full-text Ik-index and mean literary rating

To investigate to what extent narrative perspective determines perceived literariness, I did a linear regression of the Ik-indices calculated over the complete (or 'full-text') novel fragments in my sample corpus and the mean literariness ratings of those novels, depicted in figure 8. In figure 8, the x axis represents the Ik-index, or the degree to which all pronouns in a text are first-person pronouns, from 0 to 0.8.. The x axis has been capped at 0.8 because there was no text in the sample corpus with exclusively first person pronouns.⁴⁴ The mean literary rating is expressed on the Likert scale from 1 to 7 employed during the National Reader Survey. The correlation is indicated by a trend line that is relative to this data set. The blue dots surrounding the trend line are the values plotted for the each actual novel sample.

What this predictive trend line represents is that if a text were to have a lower or higher Ik-index, its mean literary rating would *most* likely correspond with that point on the trend line. It is also, but less, likely to fall in the shaded grey areas that indicate the margin of uncertainty of the correlation. The lack of slope in the linear regression line points to no correlation at all between mean literary rating and the Ik-index for the complete novel samples. In other words, if the Ik-index of a complete novel excerpt were to change, this would have virtually no impact on its mean literary rating. The flatness of the trend line also indicates that the mean literary rating of the novel samples in my sample corpus lies slightly above a score of 4 on the Likert scale.

⁴⁴ This might indicate that all literature in this sample corpus is to some extent descriptive.

Figure 8: Linear regression of full-text Ik-index with mean literary rating for all 60 excerpts in sample corpus.



While the ratio of first person pronouns in the full texts of our novel samples may not correlate with mean literary rating across the whole sample corpus of 60 samples, I also want to investigate whether there might be different literariness effects of narrative perspective per genre. That is to say: within each genre category, is perceived literariness boosted if a novel's Ik-index becomes higher?

Figure 9: Linear regression of full-text Ik-index with mean literary rating per genre in the sample corpus.

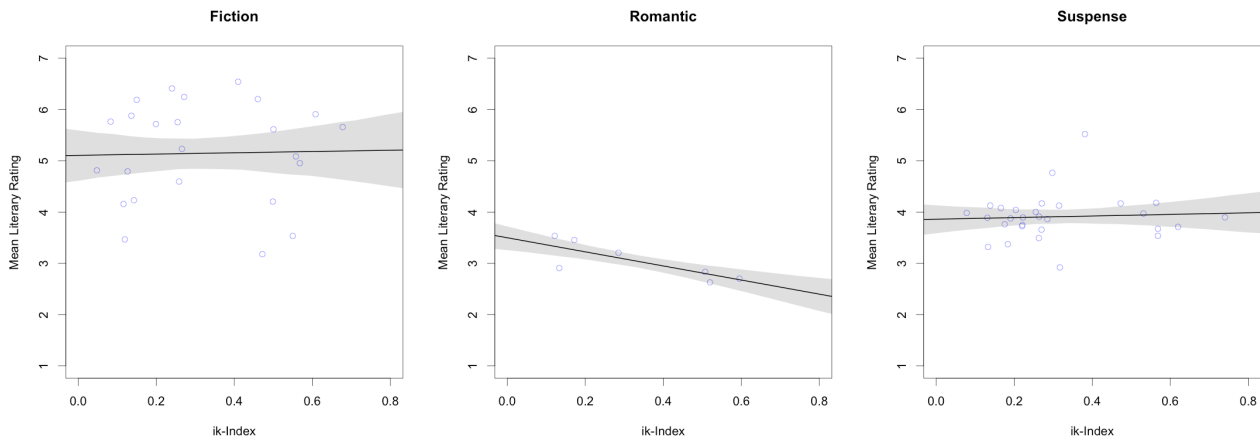


Figure 9 visualises the linear regressions of the Ik-indices of the complete (or full-text) sample fragments with their corresponding mean literary ratings, subdivided by genre. Because the trend line is extremely flat, the graph for (literary) fiction again shows hardly any if no correlation. It might appear as if a higher Ik-index is related to a marginally higher literary rating. However, there is a large margin of uncertainty as indicated by the grey shaded areas, which suggests that for the same x axis value, the predicted literariness could lie anywhere within that area. It is not very certain where the actual mean literary rating for that Ik-index value lies. This might indicate less consensus in respondent's literariness ratings within the fiction genre. It appears that the average literary rating for the fiction genre is quite high.

The trend line for romance fiction has a steeper downward slope, but this has been calculated based on limited and few data points. As such, the progression of the line has been roughly approximated. It would suggest that literariness diminishes somewhat once the Ik-index rises for the texts in this genre, although these observations are not statistically validated either. The margin of uncertainty is relatively small, which suggests more consensus in

respondent's literariness judgments for romance. That average literary rating is low.

Finally, there is also no correlation between perceived literariness and narrative perspective in the case of suspense. There appears to be a slightly upward slope in literariness once the Ik-index heightens for this genre but this effect is also not significant. The margin of certainty of the trend line is again small, suggesting that respondent's judgments for genre fiction are rather consistent. Compared to the average literariness of the novel samples in our corpus, readers seem to strongly agree that suspense enjoys a moderately literary status.

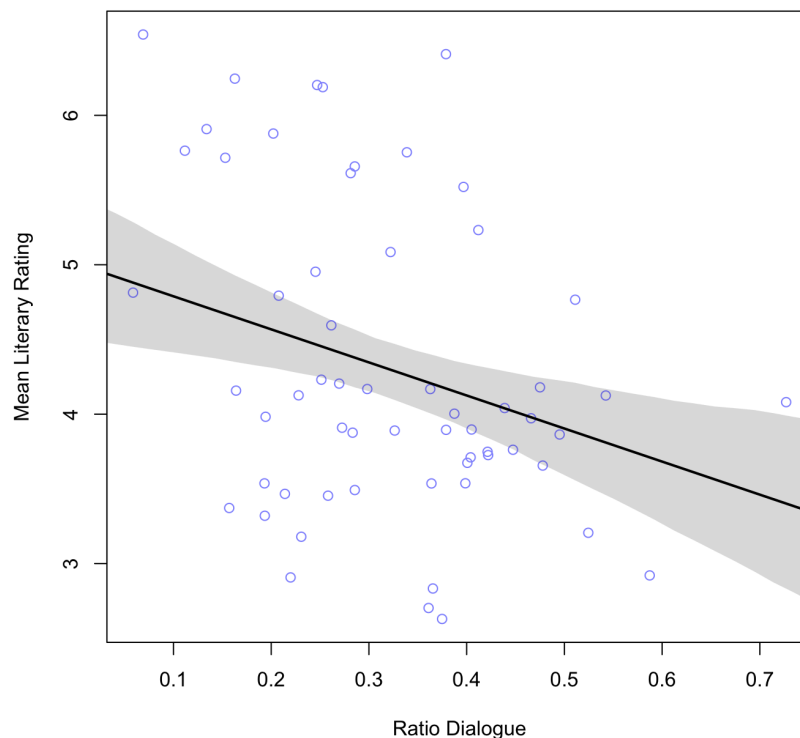
CASE STUDY 3: DIALOGUE RATIO AND PERCEIVED LITERARINESS

This case study illustrates that it matters whether I correlate complete text (or 'full text') I_k-indices or narrative text I_k-indices with mean literary ratings. The relative amount of first person pronouns for the full text says nothing about where in the text those pronouns are located; in the narrative framework or in dialogue text. Dialogue text has a higher presence of first personal pronouns than narrative text. If novel sample has a high dialogue ratio, then its full text I_k-index is inflated and it might appear that the novel has a first person narrative perspective. But that would be a misrepresentation of the novel's actual narrative situation and relating that to perceived literariness would lead to a warped image of literary narrative perspective. For example, it could give the impression that a 'first person perspective' is connected to a lower literariness rating while it is the high amount of dialogue that lowers mean literary rating. Therefore, what matters for literariness ratings is how many of a text's first person pronouns are located in dialogue text. In short, dialogue *ratio* has its own textual impact on literariness.

Figure A displays the dialogue ratio for all novel samples in the sample corpus, as indicated by the x axis. The dialogue ratio is the percentage of dialogue in a text.⁴⁵ An x value of 0.4, for example, corresponds with a dialogue count of 4,000 out of a 10,000 word fragment, or 40%. The y axis represents the Likert scale from 1 to 7 with which the respondents to the National Reader Survey rated literary quality.

⁴⁵ Figure 10 is based on the word counts (or 'token counts') for the isolated dialogue excerpts divided by the token counts for the full texts of the novel samples. The token counts have been calculated in Python using 'naive tokenization.' This method counts everything between two spaces as one word.

Figure A: Linear regression of dialogue ratio with mean literary rating for all 60 excerpts in sample corpus.



The steep downward slope of the trend line shows that this correlation between dialogue ratio and mean literary rating is significant. Based on the data I have accumulated, the trend line indicates that a hypothetical text consisting of approximately 60% dialogue would score a 3.7 on our literariness scale, while a hypothetical text with approximately 20% dialogue would score much higher, around a 4.6.

In other words: the less dialogue, the more literary a text appears to the respondents of the National Reader Survey. Moreover, this correlation is the first to use an expanded definition of dialogue as (free) direct discourse in working with the Riddle corpus, and it demonstrates that the negative effect of increased dialogue ratio on perceived literariness is already apparent in a representative 15% of the entire Riddle corpus.

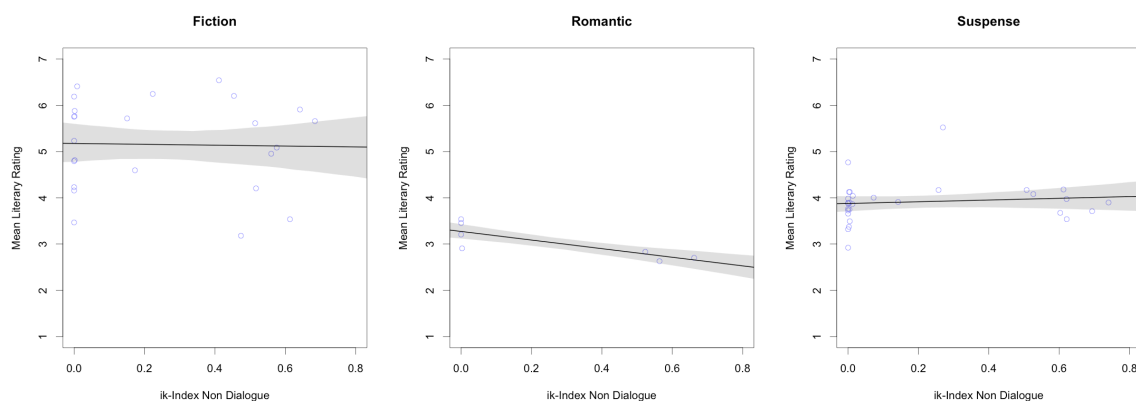
4.1.2. Narrative text Ik-index and mean literary rating

Because the narrative and dialogue text distinction is one I imposed on the data set in hindsight of the National Reader Survey, I did not feel confident directly correlating those Ik-indices with reader opinions. I instead wanted to delve immediately into their effects on perceived literariness on the genre level.

Narrative text is depicted as 'non dialogue' text in figure 10 and plotted along the same axes for mean literariness rating and Ik-index value. This is where I expect the clearest picture of a novel's narrative perspective to arise, in text from which dialogue has been removed.

Compared to figure 9, the plotted blue dots that represent individual novel samples have swarmed towards the lower end of the X axis in all three graphs, indicating that text that has been corrected for dialogue scores lower on the Ik-index overall. There remains a visible literariness hierarchy from fiction to literary to suspense. I want to stress again that these three trend lines for fiction, romance, and suspense cannot be deemed correlations in the slightest. I can therefore only make very cautious observations that might hint towards larger trends in how genre influences the perception of first or third narrative perspective.

Figure 10: Linear regression of narrative text Ik-index with mean literary rating per genre in the sample corpus.



For fiction, the grey margin of uncertainty of the trend line remains high, which means that there is a wide variety in possible outcomes in mean literary rating for each Ik-index point on the trend line. Compared to romance and suspense, it is therefore predictable with less certainty how a literary fiction novel with a given Ik-index value will score in terms of perceived literariness. The trend line itself is almost flat, indicating that perceived literariness does not react to changes in the Ik-index for narrative text.

The number of novel samples in the romance subset is still too small to make generalisations about. The trend line for romance again has the most pronounced slope of the three genres because it is based on so little data; it is therefore that dialogue isolation appears to have the biggest impact on the slope. The downward trend line can merely suggest that a lower literary rating is associated with romance novels once their degree of first person pronouns becomes higher.

The trend line for suspense has an upward slope, suggesting that narrative text with a higher degree of first person pronouns appears to be perceived as slightly more literary. This might be a careful indication that different standards of literary perspective apply for different genres. Possibly, the perceived literary meaning of narrative perspective could differ marginally based on in which genre it is encountered. A possible explanation is that first person perspective is less stable in literary meaning in the eye of the Dutch reader than third person perspective. In a moderately literary genre such as suspense, first person narrative perspective might raise positive literary quality associations with literary fiction, rather than negative associations with romance.⁴⁶

However, I must underline once more that this is informed speculation and that there is really no discernible correlation here. The only claim that I

46 Of course the stylistic scope of this experiment is limited.

can make is that narrative perspective does not determine mean literary rating.

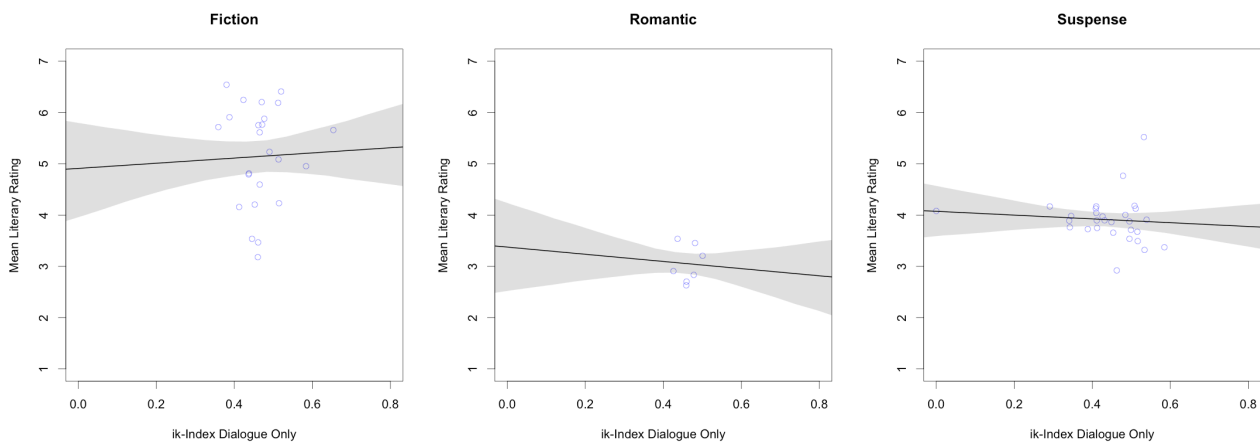
4.1.3. Dialogue text Ik-index and mean literary rating

Figure 11 depicts isolated dialogue text as 'dialogue only' text, in correlation with mean literary rating for the three largest genres in the Riddle corpus, plotted along the same mean literary rating and Ik-index axes.

The blue dots that each plot an isolated dialogue text excerpt from the sample corpus are very condensed along the x axis and more spread out along the y axis. To put it differently, dialogue text appears to be quite stylistically uniform in all three genres, while the mean literary rating that is attributed to it is more varied. Again, the trend line for dialogue text in fiction hovers around a mean literary rating of 5, while for romance it is positioned much lower around 3, and around 4 for suspense. It appears that dialogue text is 'swept up' with the mean literariness ratings of the entire novels, which are structured by genre.

The lack of slope in these trend lines shows that there are no statistically valid correlations between narrative perspective in dialogue text and perceived literariness. I can only make some cautious suggestions as to general tendencies in the difference in perceived literariness of dialogue text, which has very similar Ik-indices in different genres.

Figure 11: Linear regression of dialogue text Ik-index with mean literary rating per genre in the sample corpus.



The trend line for literary fiction has a larger grey margin of uncertainty than suspense and, to a lesser extent, than romance fiction. This can likely be attributed to the fact that respondents to the National Reader Survey displayed less consensus in their perceived literariness ratings for literary fiction than for suspense. The margin of certainty for dialogue text in romance is larger than for the full text and isolated narrative text correlations. This might be due to a lack of diversity in the data points used to calculate the trend line: the Ik-indices for romance are few and very concentrated. It is therefore more difficult to predict hypothetical extreme Ik-indices from. This effect seems to occur more generally as the areas of uncertainty in this figure are all relatively large, which supports the observation that the Ik-index values for dialogue text in this corpus are very similar; it would be difficult to predict how its perceived literariness would react to great hypothetical changes.

The linear regression for literary fiction is not steep enough to indicate a correlation between perceived literariness and narrative perspective in dialogue text. It is however minimally steeper than for full-text and narrative

text, which could suggest that the perceived literariness of dialogue text in literary fiction is more reactive to changes in narrative perspective.⁴⁷

The trend line also implies that a higher Ik-index for dialogue in literary fiction would be associated with a marginally higher mean literary rating. For romance (and here I am generalising based on limited data) and to a lesser extent for suspense fiction that trend is inverted: dialogue with a higher Ik-index would receive a lower literariness rating.

What could hypothetically be at play here are different, generically informed associations with first person oriented dialogue text: for literary fiction, it might be regarded as psychologically rich, while for genre fiction, the same text might be thought of as more dialogic and informal. These observations, however, remain speculative and far from robust.⁴⁸

In conclusion, there seems to be no cold hard correlation between mean literary rating and narrative perspective in any part of the text, whether it be the full text, isolated dialogue text, or isolated narrative text. It appears that narrative perspective does not determine literariness, although I have made some suggestions of its interplay with genre.

4.2. Socially structured literary narrative perspective

To investigate to what extent literary narrative perspective is structured by genre, I will give a broad overview of the trends in narrative perspective

47 It might be possible that readers find first person perspective in dialogue text slightly more important for literariness than in narrative text, but this effect is not significant.

48 Moreover, the Ik-index is only one empirical take on narrative perspective in dialogue text - by the parameters of this experiment all dialogue text looks somewhat equal, but it could be very much different in other stylistic aspects.

and perceived literariness for the three largest genres in the Dutch literary landscape of the early 21st century.

Figure 12: Main three genres with average of literariness ratings, standard deviation in mean literariness ratings, and mean Ik-index and standard deviation in Ik-index for all text types (full text, narrative text and dialogue text).

| genre | mean_MLR | stdv_MLR | narr_part | mean | stdv |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Fiction | 5.17 | 0.98 | FT | 0.32 | 0.20 |
| | | | ND | 0.25 | 0.27 |
| | | | DO | 0.47 | 0.06 |
| Suspense | 3.91 | 0.46 | FT | 0.31 | 0.17 |
| | | | ND | 0.20 | 0.27 |
| | | | DO | 0.44 | 0.11 |
| Romantic | 3.04 | 0.36 | FT | 0.33 | 0.20 |
| | | | ND | 0.25 | 0.31 |
| | | | DO | 0.46 | 0.03 |

4.2.1 Average literariness rating and standard deviation per genre

In the first column of figure 12, all three main genres are listed as (genre). The second column is the average literariness rating of all novel samples per genre (mean_MLR), which are in turn based on the averages of all collected reader opinions for each work in my sample corpus. The third column indicates the standard deviation in that average literariness rating with

(std_MLR). This value indicates the amount of variation in the literariness ratings for each genre, and here reflects the level of consensus in literary quality of respondents to the National Reader Survey. Like the reader responses, average literariness rating and standard deviation are expressed on a Likert scale between 1 and 7.

The average literariness rating per genre as indicated by the novel samples in our sample corpus reinforce the genre literariness hierarchy established for the larger Riddle corpus. They also correspond to the rough literary quality averages indicated by the trend lines in the previous experiment, which correlated literariness ratings with the Ik-indices of all three narrative parts. Works in the (literary) fiction category have the highest perceived literary quality with an average literariness of 5.17 out of 7. Below that, around the 4 point mark, hovers the suspense genre with moderate perceived literary quality, and romance is seen as least literary with a score 3.04, although this average is based on a limited dataset.

The average literariness ratings for literary fiction have a comparatively high standard deviation of about one point on the Likert scale (0.98). The standard deviation in average literariness rating for suspense is half that of literary fiction (0.46), and romance is 10 indexical points below suspense (0.36). In other words, readers show much less consensus in their perceived literariness for literary fiction than for suspense, which they rate as intermediately literary with more certainty. The literariness status of romance, or lack of it, seems to be the most unequivocal in the eye of the Dutch reader. I want to refrain from making statements about romance fiction that go beyond suggestions, because the data set for romance is so small.

4.2.2. Average Ik-index and standard deviation per text type

In the fourth column of figure 12, each genre is divided into three text types or 'narrative parts', indicated with (narr_part). 'FT' stands for 'full text,' or the complete novel sample, 'ND' stands for 'non-dialogue text,' or the narrative framework that remains after (free) direct discourse has been manually removed, and 'DO' stands for 'dialogue only text,' or isolated dialogue text. The fifth column (mean) indicates the average of the Ik-indices scored by all the fragments under a genre label. For example, the average Ik-index of the 24 full-text novel samples in the category literary fiction is 0.32.

The sixth column depicts standard deviation, the average Ik-index fluctuation from the mean or (stdv).⁴⁹ Standard deviation provides more insight into the composition of the mean. The mean itself does not give any information about how the data in a set distributed. Standard deviation, as such, reflects the uniformity of a data set. The higher the standard deviation of the mean Ik-index, the more variation in narrative perspective within the genre. In the context of this research, the mean and standard deviation verify the extent to which first or third narrative perspective is limited to specific genre contexts. I will discuss the mean and standard deviation per text type.

Full text

The mean full-text Ik-indices for literary fiction (0.32), suspense (0.31), and romance (0.33) are all similar and moderate, suggesting there is no particular prevalence in first or third person perspective that is structured by genre. The full text data set for suspense has the lowest average Ik-index score, indicating a slightly smaller tendency towards first person perspective

49 For example, a standard deviation of 0.30 indicates that on average, numbers in that category deviate from the mean Ik-index with 30 index points. This would make 0.30 a high standard deviation, although it might look small when erroneously understood as a percentage of the mean.

than romance and fiction. It also has the lowest standard deviation (0.17 as opposed to 0.20 for both literary fiction and romance), which could be due dialogue text disproportionately affecting the Ik-indices in the suspense genre, 'flattening' the values out.⁵⁰ I want to avoid drawing specific conclusions on romance fiction, keeping the small size of the the data set in mind. The standard deviation for all three genres, however, is so high that it appears that the 'intermediate' mean Ik-indices are the result of scores located both on the high and the low end of the Ik-index spectrum. As such, both first and third person narrative perspective appear not to be restricted to specific genre contexts.

Narrative text

I will test my observations for the full-text Ik-indices with the average narrative text Ik-indices, which paint a clearer picture of the pronouns in a novel sample's narrative framework alone. With the isolation of (free) direct discourse, which features a relatively high amount of first person pronouns, the mean Ik-index for narrative text is lowered overall. The mean Ik-indices remain quite similar across the three genres, although the difference between suspense (0.20) and fiction and romance (both 0.25) becomes more pronounced. In comparison with literary fiction (+0.07) and romance (+0.08), the mean Ik-index for suspense is the most impacted by dialogue isolation (+0.11), which has the greatest diminutive effect in case of third person narratives. This effect is due to the increased contrast in narrative perspective between narrative and dialogue text in third person narratives as opposed to first person narratives. These outcomes confirm that suspense has a somewhat greater predisposition to third person pronouns than other

⁵⁰ I will explain this effect more thoroughly in the paragraph for isolated narrative text.

genres, but that narrative perspective remains a mixed bag in this particular representation of the Dutch literary landscape.

In narrative text I_k-indices, the standard deviation looks to be even higher because the correction for dialogue makes the difference between third and first person narrative perspective more pronounced (0.27 for literary fiction and suspense and 0.31 for romance). When looking at narrative text in isolation, the standard deviation for suspense fiction becomes raised to the same level of literary fiction: due to its greater disposition to third person pronouns, the I_k-indices for suspense are no longer affected by first person pronouns located in dialogue. The identically high standard deviation of the mean I_k-indices for both literary fiction and suspense fiction supports that both first and third narrative perspective values are prevalent within the genres, albeit in slightly different ratios. I could state that romance fiction appears to be a bit more stylistically varied than the other two genres, but based on such a limited dataset, this would not be a fair judgment.

Of all genres, the standard deviation in literary fiction is the least impacted by the removal of dialogue text (+0.07 as opposed to +0.10 for suspense and +0.11 for romance). It suggests that first and third person narrative perspective are less clearly distinguished from one another in the fiction genre. The slanted effect of dialogue isolation on standard deviation indicates that there could be more stylistic ambiguity in literary fiction as opposed to suspense fiction, which might be more polarised into first-third person narrative opposites. This is not reflected by full-text or narrative text standard deviation alone.

Dialogue text

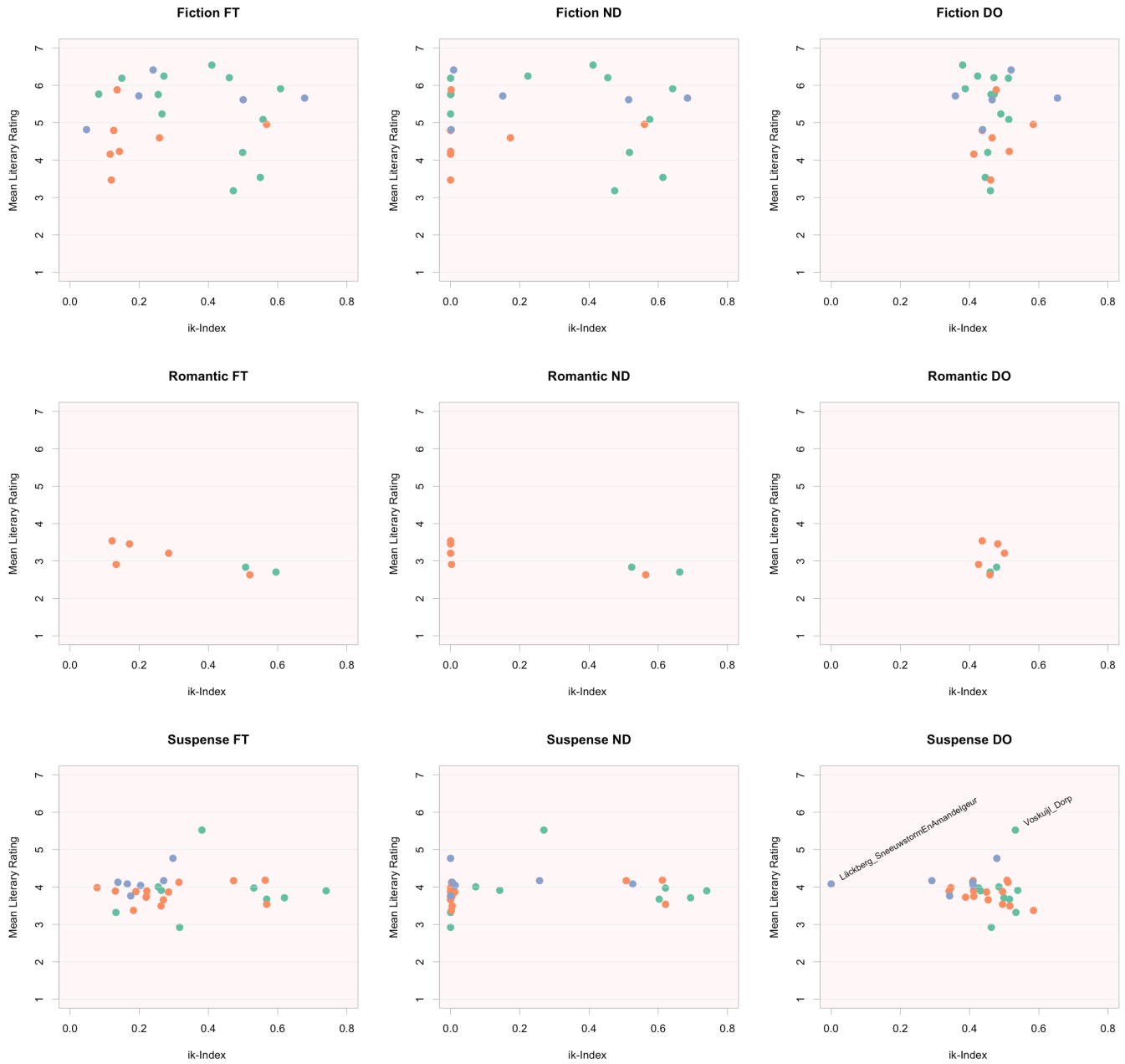
Unsurprisingly, the average I_k-index for isolated dialogue text looks very similar across the three genres. Only the average I_k-index for dialogue text in the suspense novel samples (0.44) is a bit lower than for literary (0.47) and romance fiction (0.46). Even if there are less first person pronouns present in suspense dialogue text than in other genres, the disproportionate effect that dialogue isolation has on the mean I_k-index of suspense narrative text remains. This speaks again to the relative predisposition of suspense fiction to a third person narrative perspective, both in dialogue and narrative text. Moreover, the higher I_k-indices for dialogue text in fiction and romance seem to support my earlier observation that first person pronouns in dialogue for fiction and romance might have different (non)literary connotations. Nonetheless, these differences are very slight and the same reservations for the romance dataset apply.

The standard deviation in dialogue I_k-indices for suspense is much higher (0.11) than for literary fiction (0.06) and romance (0.03), which might be due to the relative presence of third person pronouns in suspense dialogue.⁵¹ This could in turn be explained by a variety of factors such as dialogue in suspense being more descriptive or expositional than in literary fiction. Beyond stating that dialogue in romance appears to be very stylistically uniform which might be due to maintaining a more narrow definition of dialogue for this genre (see case study 3), I can again not make any substantiated claims.

⁵¹ The higher standard deviation for suspense dialogue text turned out to be influenced by an outlier which I will discuss in the next section.

In short, the data depicted in figure 12 reveals that the perception of the literariness of the narrative perspective of a text in my sample corpus is determined strongly by genre. This genre hierarchy determines what functions as literary narrative perspective, rather than that there is a stable textual basis of literary narrative perspective that stays within certain genre boundaries. Because first and third person appear roughly evenly in all genres with only minor variations it is much more difficult to determine the textual characteristics of 'literary' narrative perspective, although some hints have already presented themselves as to the genre-specific textual characteristics of (non)literary narrative perspective. Both first and third person perspective occur in literary fiction, suspense, and romance fiction, albeit in different proportions and distributions. On average, narrative and dialogue text in suspense appear to be more strongly inclined towards third person perspective than in literary fiction and romance. There also appears to be less distinction between first and third person perspective within the fiction genre.

4.3. Distribution of literary narrative perspective



Legend

- Dutch (NL)
- Translated (EN)
- Translated (DA DE FR IT NO SE SP)

Averages and standard deviation are productive to give a broad overview of literary narrative perspective. However, plotting each novel sample in my sample corpus can give a more detailed account of how narrative perspective is structured by social factors. In addition to genre, I will introduce the variable of translation. I have opted for visual presentation in scatter plots to optimally convey the data for each genre and translation category.⁵²

Because I subdivide the data in my sample corpus in different genre and translation categories and also take the Ik-indices for separated narrative and dialogue text into account, the result of all these variables is a large number of graphs; these 9 scatter plots are pictured in figures 13 and 14, respectively. I describe the graphs as systematically as possible per genre category.

Figure 13: Scatter plots of Ik-indices for full text, narrative text and dialogue text per genre (horizontal arrangement) with source language category indicated with dot colour.

⁵² The metadata tables on which these figures are based can be found in the Appendix.

4.3.1. Genre

Figure 13 divides my sample corpus by genre along the horizontal rows. All fragments within one genre category are plotted along the same two axes: the Ik-index values for all texts on the x axis are plotted against their mean literary rating on the y axis. The data for each genre is subdivided by source language, which is indicated by dot colour as displayed in the legend of the figure. Each colour represents a translation category. Dutch source language or untranslated novel samples are plotted in green. For the translated novels in the sample corpus, English source language novel samples are plotted in orange, and non-English source language novel samples are plotted in grey.⁵³

The three graphs per genre are plotted for the complete text (or full text, abbreviated with FT), isolated narrative text (or non-dialogue text, abbreviated with ND) and isolated dialogue text (or dialogue only text, abbreviated with DO) for each novel sample in that category. I will interpret how the data points are dispersed within these graphs to make observations about what narrative perspective conventions, or lack of them, look like for each translation category in a genre.

Literary fiction

I will first examine the graphs for literary fiction. From the plot for the full texts of the novel samples, it appears that novels that are translated from English consistently score low Ik-index values, indicating a high degree of third person pronoun narratives within this category. English translated novels also consistently score average in literary quality. The Ik-indices for

⁵³ The non-English label represents a miscellaneous category in which literary traditions from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, ranging from Spanish to Swedish literature, are meshed together for the sake of comparison.

non-English translated novels, on the other hand, seem to group into two distinct categories of first and third person narrative perspective. This translation category also scores slightly higher in terms of literariness. The Ik-index values for untranslated Dutch fiction are more evenly distributed along the x axis, which suggests that Dutch literary fiction is relatively undetermined in narrative perspective. The mean literary ratings for Dutch fiction is also comparatively diverse, which implies that the high standard deviation in reader ratings for literary fiction can be mainly attributed to a lack of consensus on the literary quality of Dutch *untranslated* fiction.

Next, the graph for isolated narrative text reflects the effect of dialogue isolation, which removes the relatively large amount of first person pronouns present in dialogue text.⁵⁴ Accordingly, the plotted Ik-indices for narrative text are drawn leftward, which has the strongest effect in the case of lower Ik-indices indicative third person perspective. Dialogue isolation thus amplifies the strong disposition of English source language novel samples towards a third person narrative perspective. The effect of dialogue isolation also increases the polarisation between first and third person narrative perspectives within the non-English translated works in literary fiction. Due to the disproportionate diminutive effect of dialogue removal on lower Ik-indices, narrative perspective in untranslated literary fiction also appears to become increasingly polarised, but remains the most undetermined overall.

The vertical concentration of the plotted Ik-indices for isolated dialogue text in the literary fiction genre underlines both its stylistic uniformity and high degree of first person pronouns. The dispersion of colours in this graph confirm how dialogue text is swept up into the literariness rating of the novel sample that it is located within: non-English translated novels concentrate at the highest literariness rating, English translated novels cluster below it, and

⁵⁴ Retroactive dialogue isolation does not change a novel's mean literary rating, so I will not discuss it again for isolated narrative text.

Dutch fiction is spread out vertically. This is expected because I have isolated dialogue text retroactively, after reader opinions on were awarded based on general impressions of whole novels. Subtle differences per translation category point out that not all dialogue is made equally. English translated dialogue tends towards a higher Ik-index than Dutch untranslated dialogue. Additionally, non-English translated fiction seems to have the most stylistically diverse dialogue text in terms of Ik-index.

Romance

The next row are the plots for romance fiction. With the objections to the robustness of this dataset in place, I will make some tentative suggestions on the narrative style of romance fiction. The only source languages for romance fiction in the Riddle corpus are Dutch and English, so there are two colours plotted in this graph. For romance, the full-text graph and especially the narrative text graph imply that translated romance fiction adheres to third person narrative perspective, while first person narrative perspective is the convention for untranslated romance fiction.⁵⁵ The plotted data points also suggest that translation structures literary quality in the romance genre. English translated romance novels score higher in mean literary rating than their Dutch untranslated counterparts. Finally, dialogue in romance fiction appears to be rather stylistically uniform, but this might be due to the restricted definition of dialogue that I have maintained for this genre.

Suspense

⁵⁵ The narrative text graph might suggest that Dutch romance fiction is more stylistically diverse than its translated counterpart. There are two objections to this. Firstly, higher Ik-index scores are usually more varied than than lower Ik-index scores, for the reason that writing a text without first person pronouns appears to be more semantically attainable than a text without third person pronouns, especially for descriptive text. Secondly, I would induce such an increased narrative diversity from only two data points.

In the full-text graph for suspense, the Ik-index scores appear to be generally clustered in first and third person perspective poles along the x-axis. Third person perspective is more prevalent in English translated suspense novels, while non-English translated suspense novels seem to exclusively adhere to third person narrative perspective. The full-text Ik-index values for Dutch source language novels in suspense appear to be comparatively varied. The condensed horizontal shape of the full-text Ik-index scores verifies that suspense appears to be very closely associated with an average literary rating, although subtle differences arise that are structured by translation. Again, untranslated novels have the most varying literariness scores, although these scores vary less than for the literary fiction genre. And also in suspense, non-English translated novels appear to be higher in perceived literary quality than English novels.

When examining the effect of the removal of dialogue text in the narrative text graph, again, the contrast between the first and third person perspective clusters on the x axis generally becomes more pronounced. Yet, the polarising effect of dialogue isolation appears to be greater on the Ik-indices for English and non-English translated novels, which indicates that these two subcategories are the cause of the increased disposition towards third person perspective in the suspense genre. In comparison, the Ik-indices for Dutch source language suspense novels remain slightly more varied along the x axis.

Once again, the plot of isolated dialogue text proves useful to reflect the literariness hierarchy of translation categories within the suspense data set. It also reinforces that dialogue text for suspense is stylistically uniform throughout. But there are some minor differences to be observed. Overall, dialogue text in suspense is clustered along a lower Ik-index than dialogue text in literary fiction, which confirms that it has a stronger disposition to third person narrative perspective. This seems to be mainly caused by

translated dialogue text: Dutch untranslated dialogue text in the suspense genre scores higher on the Ik-index than non-English translated dialogue text. Moreover, dialogue text that is translated from English appears to be the most stylistically varied in this genre because of the wide span of the data points along the x axis.

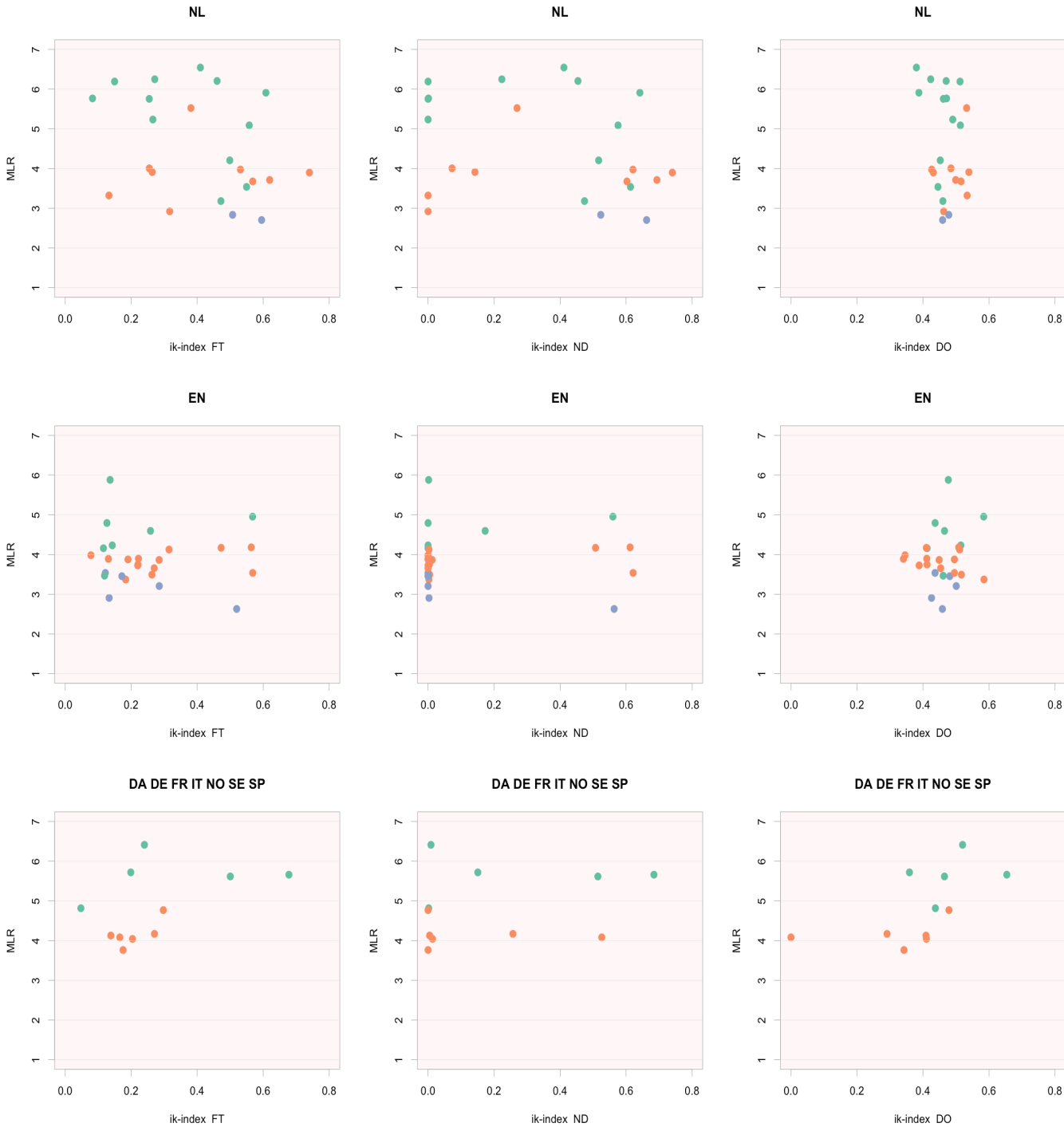
However, when comparing the roughly equal width of the clusters of plotted Ik-indices for isolated dialogue text in suspense and literary fiction, there seems to be no immediate explanation for the difference in their standard deviations that I observed in the previous section; 0.11 for suspense as opposed to 0.06 for literary fiction. Instead, this might be caused by the outlier that is located at a dialogue text Ik-index of 0: Camilla Läckberg's Swedish suspense novel *Sneeuwstorm en amandelgeur* (*A snow storm and the scent of almonds* in English, or *Snöstorm och mandeldoft* in Swedish). A manual recalculation without the outlier value generated a more logical mean standard deviation of 0.07 for suspense fiction compared to the mean standard deviations for literary fiction (0.06) and romance fiction (0.03).^{56 57}

As a final note, I will touch on the outlier itself. Initially I thought that the outlier might be due to Swedish suspense dialogue traditions, but I found it

⁵⁶ The observation would then become not that suspense dialogue is unusually varied, but that romance dialogue appears a bit more stylistically uniform than the other genres, although it is based on limited and compromised data.

⁵⁷ It could also be a possible reason why I have found that first person perspective in dialogue text seems to be a greater influence on perceived literariness than first person perspective in narrative text. Because the difference in standard deviation is larger than for dialogue text, there is a greater variety in Ik-indices that share the same literariness rating. This finding could then be the result of the error rather than any actual literariness effect of a higher first person pronoun ratio in dialogue text.

hard to imagine such a thing. In my experience in working with the bestselling fiction in the Riddle corpus, especially longer novel samples such



Legend

- Fiction
- Suspense
- Romantic

as these, it is highly unusual to encounter dialogue without first person personal pronouns. Upon closer inspection of the text itself, it turned out to be a reverse labeling error on my part, where I labeled isolated dialogue text as narrative text and vice versa. I then realised that the outlier is also visible in the narrative text graph for suspense, with an Ik-index of 0.53. It is the most rightward data point for non-English translated suspense fiction. The fact that the outlier appears to be an atypical value among its peers in both narrative and dialogue text Ik-indices confirms that my methodology is robust; it is sensitive to errors because the outcomes it produces are not arbitrary, but behave in meaningful patterns.⁵⁸

4.3.2. Translation

I have also visualised my data set subdivided by translation label to facilitate drawing overarching conclusions for each category. In figure 14, the categories are depicted as untranslated Dutch (NL), translated English (EN), and translated non-English (DA Danish, DE German, FR French, IT Italian, NO Norwegian, SE Swedish, SP Spanish). As per the legend literary fiction is green, suspense is orange, and grey is romance. The graphs plot the Ik-index against mean literary rating for the complete novel samples (full text or FT), isolated narrative text (non-dialogue text or ND), and isolated dialogue text (dialogue only text or DO).

Figure 14: Scatter plot of Ik-indices for full text, narrative text and dialogue text per source language category (horizontal arrangement) with genre indicated with dot colour.

All in all, it appears that Dutch untranslated literary fiction is more varied and ambiguous on the Ik-index scale, while Dutch suspense is more polarised

⁵⁸ Another outlier can be spotted for Dutch-language suspense with an unusually ambiguous Ik-index and a rather high mean literary rating for its genre: Anouschka Voskuijl's *Dorp* ('Village'). This is not a personal mislabeling and makes an interesting case study, which I will present in the discussion chapter.

between clearly determined first and third person narrative perspectives. Dutch romance fiction (insofar I can make generalisations, and limitations still apply) adheres to a first person narrative perspective. Dutch dialogue text in literary fiction has a higher ratio of first person pronouns than suspense fiction. Comparatively, dialogue text in Dutch romance fiction has intermediate Ik-index scores for its translation category.

Translated English novels seem to adhere almost exclusively to a third person narrative perspective for all genres. Overall, translated English dialogue has a higher ratio of third person pronouns than untranslated Dutch dialogue. Suspense dialogue is the most stylistically varied due to a wider span in Ik-indices. Romance dialogue in translated English novels again scores intermediate on the Ik-index, relative to the rest of the novels in its translation category.

Non-English translated suspense also tends toward third person narrative perspective, while non-English translated literary fiction is more evenly divided between first and third narrative perspective. There is no non-English translated romance fiction included in the Riddle corpus. Suspense dialogue appears to have relatively more third person pronouns than literary fiction dialogue. The Ik-index values for non-English translated dialogue text are quite diverse, which points to varying stylistic conventions for dialogue text in different literary traditions.

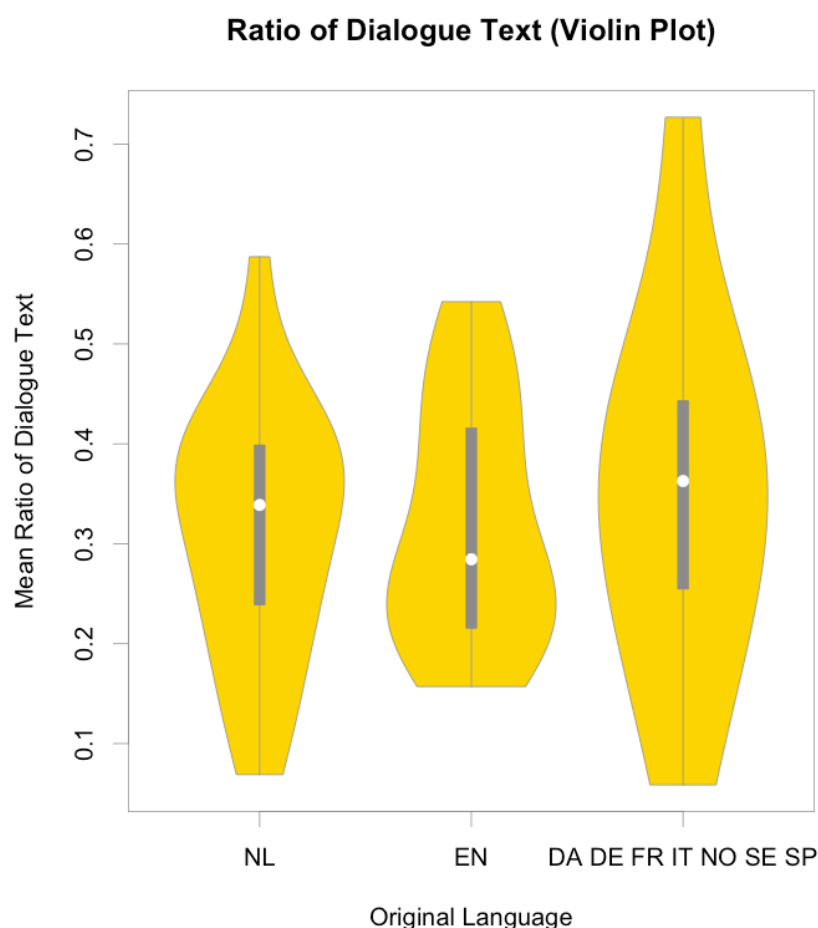
To sum up, it appears narrative perspective is strongly structured by translation. In translated novels, the use of the first person perspective

appears to be limited, while third person narrative perspective is a strong convention for moderate literariness across all genres. The Ik-index scores for untranslated Dutch fiction are more diverse and are associated with both higher and lower literariness, which is in turn influenced by genre. In romance, Dutch first person narratives receive a low literary rating while in literary fiction, the literariness ratings for first person narrative perspective are varied. Untranslated first person narrative perspective in suspense scores above average within its genre.

CASE STUDY 4: DIALOGUE RATIO AND TRANSLATION

Figure B illustrates how dialogue ratio is distributed across different translation categories. This experiment is intended to substantiate my finding that the relative increase in first person pronouns in Dutch untranslated novels in comparison to translated novels is not caused by a higher dialogue ratio, because dialogue text is generally associated with first person narrative perspective.

Figure B: Violin plot of mean ratio of dialogue text to narrative text per source language category.



A violin plot depicts the predicted distribution in particular data set. In the violin plot, dialogue ratio (token count for dialogue text divided by token count

for full text) is depicted on the y axis. Each translation category is depicted by a violin shape that is relative to the data in its particular subset. The widest points of the 'bellies' of the violins indicate where the largest amount of data points for a particular dialogue ratio value on the y axis can be expected. The shape of the violin plot indicates the predictive range for the data set. For example, more non-English translated novel samples would be expected for a dialogue ratio of 0.7 than for the other language categories.

The white dots indicate the calculated mean for each translation category. The grey bars surrounding it depict the standard deviation in dialogue ratio. It is the most likely that the actual average of the data set is located anywhere on that grey bar. In this figure, the averages all lie horizontally within the range of standard deviation from one another. This means that the mean dialogue ratio in the Dutch untranslated subset does not deviate enough from the standard deviations of the translated subsets to be substantially different. Consequently, the distribution of the dialogue ratios is not significantly different across the different source categories. In short, the prevalence of first person pronouns in Dutch untranslated novels is not due to a higher dialogue ratio.

Additionally, Figure B provides insight into the predicted distribution of dialogue ratio per source category. The predicted dialogue ratio distribution for translated English fiction appears to be the most condensed, which points to stronger dialogue ratio conventions for English fiction that is imported into the Dutch market. In comparison, the non-English translation category has a much broader predicted range of dialogue ratio values and appears to have less stable dialogue ratio conventions, which could be explained by the different literary traditions that the novels in the subset originate from.

5. Discussion

5.1. To what extent is literary narrative perspective text-intrinsic?

In my hypothesis, I expected no purely textual effect of narrative perspective on perceived literariness. The linear regressions that I have done to test this hypothesis, using readers' self-reporting of the literary quality of 60 Dutch language best-selling novel samples with the Ik-indices of those novels themselves, show that there indeed is no correlation between narrative perspective and perceived literariness. In other words: literariness in the eye of the early 21st century Dutch reader is not determined solely by a novel's ratio of personal pronouns that fall into either a first or third person category. This lack of correlation can be due to a number of reasons. The most obvious is that the respondents to the National Reader Survey may not find narrative perspective an important factor in determining their literariness verdict of a novel.

However, it is precarious to project respondent intentions onto results retroactively. No reader may reason along the lines of "I have really enjoyed this novel and it was a work of art on every front, but because it was written in the third person, I will not consider this literary at all." More likely is the option that narrative perspective *is* indeed a factor in perceived literariness, but that, as Herrmann et al. (2015) and Van Zundert and Van Dalen-Oskam (2019) describe, it is one textual factor among many that together shape a reader's general impression of the literariness of a novel. Therefore, it is difficult to make the effect of narrative perspective visible in a linear correlation experiment such as this.

It is important to remember that the set-up of this research is one of reverse-engineering literary narrative perspective. My research is largely based on already available metadata that I have used creatively to configure new data from in order to deepen our existing picture of what literary style looks like in this particular socio-cultural context. I have not studied narrative

perspective in relation to perceived literariness in isolation by conducting a smaller qualitative survey, although that was part of the initial research design.

Rather, I have approached narrative perspective as the needle in the literary-sociological haystack that it is; as a small factor that is easily overlooked by the bare eye but can be carefully extracted. This approach, although retroactive in nature, comes with the advantage of working with the indirect value assessments that underlie the Dutch literary field. The respondents to the National Reader Survey have not been asked to focus explicitly on first or third person narrative perspective in awarding literary quality ratings. As such, though the relationship between narrative perspective and perceived literariness may not be directly evident in these ratings, respondent's answers might contain implicit socialised biases that structure (non)literary narrative perspective.⁵⁹

On the basis of textual factors, I hypothesised that first person narrative perspective is more commonly associated with high literariness ratings than third person narrative perspective, which would be hard to express with linear regressions alone. The possible effect of the factors of psychological complexity and textual complexity did emerge from the results of this research, albeit in implicit ways. Firstly, dialogue isolation proved instrumental in unpacking my hypothesis that first person narrative perspective is more textually complex because it applies less contrast between dialogue and narration.

Through manual dialogue isolation, I have found that novel samples with a high ratio of dialogue text score lower in terms of literariness than novel samples with a low dialogue ratio. Texts with more dialogue score a higher Ik-index for their complete (or 'full') text because dialogue features

59 Although the notion of the unconscious response in a scientific research environment can be questioned.

more first person personal pronouns, which might suggest that texts with a higher Ik-index are seen as less literary. However, correcting for dialogue by isolating free direct discourse and direct discourse from the full novel samples nuanced this observation.

Dialogue isolation generally lowers the Ik-index of the full text. The diminutive effect is greatest in the case of third person narratives, which supports that there is a stronger stylistic distinction between dialogue and narrative text in third person narratives as opposed to first person narratives. As such, character and narrator perspective indeed seem to be more stylistically similar to one another in first person narrative perspectives than in third person narrative perspectives. In first person narratives, this might lead to more ambiguity for the reader which could be connected with higher perceived literariness.

Because first person narrative perspective is associated with character perspective, I also hypothesised that such a textual disposition to mental representation could also play a role in its increased perceived literariness. In the linear regressions, subtle changes per genre in predicted mean literary rating when a novel's Ik-index becomes higher suggest that narrative and dialogue text associated with character perspective may yield different interpretations depending on genre context. This could be due to first person narrative perspective indeed more textually grounded in character subjectivity, but that character subjectivity attaining different intertextual meanings depending on where it is located.

As such, the text-intrinsic literariness of first or third perspective seems to be limited. Rather, it is how that narrative perspective functions which makes it literary in the eye of the Dutch reader.

Nonetheless, there are exceptions where narrative perspective is identified (and often lauded) as the stylistic factor that 'makes' the literary quality of a novel. An example is Emma Donoghue's 2010 novel *Room* which

is written from the perspective of Jack, a five-year-old who has been living in captivity from the outside world since birth. In the Netherlands, respondents to the National Reader Survey awarded the translated novel *Kamer* an above-average mean literary rating of 5,45 out of 7. Internationally, *Room*'s inventive narrative premise has been invoked by critics as the reason for its success: The Guardian, for example, describes it as "a remarkable work of sympathetic imagination" (Preston, 2019).⁶⁰

The case of *Room* might suggest a literariness effect of narrative perspective that my statistical model of literary narrative style fails to describe. However, the example of *Room* serves as an example not of a discrepancy in my methodology, but as an illustration of its limits. In this thesis I only focus on the ratio of pronouns to express a text's narrative perspective. Yet the narration of *Room* is largely centred on the stylistic representation of the child consciousness, which extends far beyond the pronoun level. With its simple and childlike diction, *Room* defies conventions of literary language as grammatically and lexically complex, but its sparse use of language leaves gaps in meaning and is heavily stylised, for example by capitalisation and article deletion for nouns such as 'Room' and 'Floor' to suggest personification. The example of *Room* shows how complex narrative perspective is to do justice through operationalisation and how many different factors are at interplay in the textual representation of narrative perspective.

With this example I want to stress that my current computational approach to narrative perspective cannot be equated with a novel's 'narrative premise,' although that might be tempting. It remains methodologically ambitious to operationalise a higher-level textual quality such as narrative perspective. Although the Ik-index is relatively accessible and flexible, it is far from a complete reflection of narrative perspective and cannot capture its

60 'Success' can have many meanings in this context but I take it as artistic as well as economic.

more abstract qualities and workings. This is why narrative perspective might not be a determiner for perceived literariness by the parameters of this research.

5.2. To what extent is literary narrative perspective structured by genre?

To test the hypothesis I formulated for this research question that genre would be highly influential in determining the perceived literariness of narrative perspective, I divided the novel samples in my sample corpus by genre category and examined their average literariness rating and standard deviation. The literary fiction, suspense, and romance subsets mirrored the literariness hierarchy found in the Riddle corpus, with literary fiction being most literary, suspense being moderately literary, and romance being least literary (Koolen et al. 2020).

The standard deviations in average literariness ratings for each genre also confirmed Koolen et al.'s (2020) finding that there seems to be less consensus among respondents about the literariness of works in the literary fiction category. This may indicate that for literary fiction, the reader may not know as readily what to expect - the only expected constant might be that element of *unexpectedness* that is so integral to existing conceptions of high literature (Attridge 2004).

I then investigated to which extent first or third person narrative perspective was restricted to certain (non)literary contexts by looking at the mean literariness rating and its standard deviation in Ik-indices for each genre. I initially hypothesised that literary narrative perspective would

resemble a horse shoe model in which the most and least literary novels would become stylistically convergent rather than operate on narrative extremes. From broad comparison it appears that the mean Ik-index for isolated narrative text lies marginally higher for literary fiction and romance than for suspense, indicating a stronger relative disposition towards a first person narrative perspective for these genres, although my data set for romance fiction is limited. On the other hand, narrative text in suspense novels generally leans towards a lower Ik-index, showing a stronger relative disposition towards third person narrative perspective. This is reinforced by the greater diminutive effect of dialogue isolation on the mean narrative Ik-indices for suspense, because it reduces the interference with the third person perspective signals of full-text Ik-indices.

While the standard deviation for mean dialogue Ik-indices indicates that dialogue text is much more stylistically uniform than narrative text across all three genres (especially after the removal of the outlier *Sneeuwstorm en amandelgeur* and considering the limitations for romance dialogue), I will single out the minor variations to reinforce how third person narrative perspective appears to be more associated with moderately literary genre contexts than first person narrative perspective. Isolated dialogue text in suspense also has comparative tendency. Isolated dialogue text from two opposites in mean literary rating, romance and literary fiction, both score a marginally higher mean Ik-index.

My results substantiate Houweling's finding that highly literary works are associated with a first person narrative perspective, which she indeed attributes to increased thought representation (2016, p. 73). They also confirm the relative prevalence of first person narrative perspective in romance, which as been described by Koolen (2018) and Radway (1984), among others. My case study of the narrative-dialogue distinction in romance fiction has also reinforced Jautzes description of narrative

perspective in chicklit as dialogic and therefore associated with first person pronouns (2014). Academics remain divided on the function of first person perspective in women's genre novels, whether it is the romantic heroine's positioning as schizophrenic object of male desire (Modleski, 2008, p. 47), the chicklit protagonist's relatability and her suspension of the male gaze (Mabry, 2006, p. 196), or the internalisation of that gaze through self-scrutiny (Koolen, 2018, p. 233). And for suspense, Gregoriou gives hints as to its increased tendency towards third person narrative perspective, as she writes that dialogue and narration in crime fiction often rely on summary to deliver the complicating action of a story, and on evaluation that often takes place in discussions among police officers or in the detective's self-dialogue (2007, p. 10).

High and low literary narrative perspective are thus more stylistically different from moderate narrative perspective than they are from one another. However, the effect I describe here is very slight; not enough for a horse shoe, but perhaps enough for a road bump. There is no genre limit to narrative perspective: both first and third person occur in all genre contexts. This confirms that the literariness of narrative perspective is located in the literary fiction genre and not in the text itself. Nonetheless, there appear to be some slight but meaningful patterns in the distribution of first and third person narrative perspective in the Dutch literary field.

5.3. How is literary narrative perspective distributed across genre and translation?

I hypothesised that the narrative conventions for literary narrative perspective could be found in the literary fiction genre, and that it would not

be a unified set of textual characteristics. Instead I argued that *resistance* to stylistic convention and increased narrative ambiguity would mark literary narrative perspective as opposed to genre fiction such as suspense and romance. I also expected translation to play a role in structuring the perceived literariness of narrative perspective. I will evaluate these hypotheses on the basis of the visualisation of the distribution of the Ik-indices, foregrounding both translation within genre, and genre within translation categories.

5.3.1. Genre

Within the literary fiction genre, it appears that there is a translation literariness hierarchy visible that reinforces the findings by the Riddle team (Koolen et al. 2020) and Anna Krans (2017). This translation hierarchy also clearly structures narrative perspective, more strongly so than I initially expected. English translated novels are regarded as moderately literary and predominantly gravitate towards a third person perspective. Non-English translated novels score above (well) average in literary rating and are generally polarised between polarised Ik-indices, e.g. high or low Ik-indices that are clearly divided between a first and a third person perspective.

Dutch untranslated literary fiction scores the highest and most varied literariness rating, the latter more so for first person narrative perspective. Its narrative text Ik-indices also are the most varied throughout the genre. Some Ik-indices are very low, indicating a third person narrative perspective, while others are very high, indicating a first person narrative perspective. Then there is a third category beyond these two poles which features more undetermined Ik-indices which do not immediately point to either narrative

perspective. Especially these ambiguous Ik-index values seem to be associated with some of the highest ratings within the literary fiction corpus.

Investigating the translation-governed characteristics of narrative perspective within the literary fiction genre, it appears that Dutch literary fiction reveals the most about the conventions of highly literary narrative perspective. These conventions are indeed marked by stylistic deviation and narrative ambiguity, as I have hypothesised based on the work of Attridge (2004) and Wood (2005). As opposed to these more formally “aesthetic” works of literature (Gregoriou, 2007, p. 16), romance and suspense fiction are typically more polarised on the Ik-index. The strong narrative conventionality of ‘genre fiction’ thus mirrors its thematic formulaicness, as I have hypothesised on the basis of on critique by Christina Gregoriou (2007).⁶¹

By comparison, English translated literary fiction then appears to resemble the works of suspense fiction in this sample corpus: it has a moderate literariness rating and tends to a clear-cut third person narrative perspective.⁶² This finding is especially interesting in the context of the reader motivations to the National Reader Survey, which described English translated novels more in terms of ‘suspense’ and untranslated novels more as explicitly literary (Koolen et al., 2020).

This detailed picture of the textual traits that those most highly literary works in the data set share can help to locate literary narrative perspective in unexpected places. My sample corpus in fact contains an example of literary perspective outside of a literary context, which is *Dorp* (‘Village’) by Anouschka Voskuijl. *Dorp* is an outlier because it combines an ambiguous narrative text Ik-index with a rather high mean literary rating. These are two

61 I will go further into the possible reasons for this in the next section but would like to point out that my observations about translated English literary fiction and its textual genre characteristics are based on limited stylistic parameters and require more thorough research.

62 The romance subset is too small to draw specific conclusions about its conventionality, so I have grouped it under genre fiction.

characteristics that are exceptional for works in the suspense genre. I will devote more attention to a close reading of *Dorp* in a case study.

CASE STUDY 5: *DORP*

The broadly contextualised patterns in narrative perspective are exciting to observe and stimulating to interpret, but they are also useful to locate textual

literary narrative perspective in non-literary contexts. Here, qualitative analysis can bring valuable insights to the table.

One of the novels that was included in my sample corpus displays atypical behaviour from the genre that it is categorised in: *Dorp* ('Village') by Anouschka Voskuijl, a Dutch untranslated suspense novel that was first published in 2011. For its genre, *Dorp* has an exceptionally high mean literary rating of 5.52⁶³ as well as an unusually intermediate full-text Ik-index of 0.38 which, when corrected for dialogue text (with a ratio of 0.4 and an Ik-index of 0.53), lands at a narrative text Ik-index of 0.27. This Ik-index value, as depicted in the scatter plot for the suspense genre, is markedly ambiguous and therefore more typical of the novel samples categorised under literary fiction. I will zoom in on the text of *Dorp* on the paragraph level to get a feel for what might make this particular novel such an outlier within its genre. This exercise is also intended to illustrate how the Ik-index can act as a starting point for critical consideration, rather than a tool that eclipses qualitative understandings of narrative perspective.

Ik kan me herinneren van toen ik een jaar of elf was, dat er vlak bij mijn school een trein ontspoord was. Ik stond al heel snel bij de plaats van het ongeval, en ik hóórde het gebeuren: eerst zei iedereen dat er geen gewonden waren, maar toen begon iemand te beweren dat er wél iemand met letsel was. Binnen een half uur werd er rondverteld dat er twee doden te betreuren waren, terwijl dat dus helemaal niet waar was. Zo gaat dat met roddels. En meestal is het onmogelijk om de oorsprong van zo'n verhaal te achterhalen en is het ook onmogelijk de verhalen de kop in te drukken. Raar verschijnsel eigenlijk, roddel, misschien leuk voor een student om eens onderzoek naar te doen.

63 Although the unusually high literariness rating for *Dorp* could also be partially explained by reader's misconstrual of Anouschka Voskuijl with J. J. Voskuil, her (phonetic) namesake and an established Dutch literary author. I was kindly reminded of this fact by Karina van Dalen-Oskam.

Het hele dorp was naar het uitvaartcentrum gekomen, leek het wel, en ook waren er veel mensen van buiten het dorp. De uitvaartleider had Bernadette al voorbereid op hordes mensen. 'Hoe jonger iemand overlijdt, hoe meer mensen er komen', had hij gezegd, 'en als iemand dan ook nog door een...', Bernadette hoorde hem aarzelen, 'een geweldsdelict om het leven is gekomen, dan kunt u helemaal veel belangstellenden verwachten. Ik moet u aanraden uw gezicht van tevoren goed in te smeren met crème, ja, dat klinkt misschien een beetje raar, maar ik heb in dit soort gevallen al vaak gehoord dat mensen na afloop helemaal schraal waren van het zoenen.'⁶⁴ (p. 132)

In this excerpt a first person narrator, Isabel, recounts past events in the present tense ("I can remember...") and then shifts into general description, marked by impersonal forms such as "het" ('it') and "er" ('there'). The paragraph then shifts into a third person narrative perspective to recount the character Bernadette's exchange with the funeral director, which is written in the past tense.

This short excerpt from a 10 000 word novel sample already reveals the shifts in narrative perspective in a novel that the Ik-index essentially smoothes over. The ambiguity of the Ik-index score of *Dorp* can suggest that a the novel might

64 My translation, in which I have focused on similarity in dialogue pacing.

I can remember that back when I was about eleven years old, a train derailed close to my school. I was at the scene of the accident very quickly, and I heard it happen: first someone reported no casualties, but then someone started alleging that someone indeed had been injured. Within thirty minutes word was spreading of two unfortunate deaths, while this obviously wasn't the case.

That is the way of gossip. And often it is impossible to recover the source of such a story and it is also impossible to quash the stories. Odd phenomenon, actually, gossip, perhaps a nice subject for a student to look into.

The whole village had come to the funeral home, it seemed, and people from outside the village flocked there as well. The funeral director had already prepared Bernadette for droves of people. 'The younger the departed, the more people show up,' he had said, 'and especially if the cause of death is', Bernadette heard him hesitate, 'a violent incident, then even more onlookers can be expected. I must warn you to put on lots of face cream in advance, yes, that might sound a little unusual, but I have heard so frequently in these kinds of cases that people were completely chafed afterwards due to all the kissing.'

feature a lot of variety in personal pronoun use, but only a close-reading of the text itself can reveal the ways in which these pronouns are dispersed throughout the text. These quantitative and qualitative insight combined indeed support that *Dorp* does not adhere to a singular first or third person narrative perspective as appears to be more customary for the novels in the suspense category.

So what could be the reason for *Dorp*'s categorisation into the suspense genre while it appears to bear the textual traits of literary narrative perspective? What could be at play in the case of *Dorp* is a publisher who deemed it to be more strategic to 'undersell' the book by categorising it as genre fiction, rather than taking the gamble to market it as literary fiction. Perhaps the provincial-sounding title, *Dorp* ('Village') was a factor, the regional setting of a village in Zuid-Limburg, the interpersonal subject matter of a sudden disappearance and its effects on a rural community, or the female persuasion of a book written by a female author from the perspective of a disabled woman.⁶⁵ It is an understandable decision for a publisher to strategically downplay a novel's potential literariness and categorise it as suspense, because it can mean a boost in reputation for being a source of 'quality' literary thrillers rather than a publisher whose literary fiction might be perceived as not quite convincing.⁶⁶

Another, extratextual signal as to the generic duality of *Dorp* is its visual appearance. I must remark that book covers were not an explicit part of the National Reader Survey, but they are nonetheless meaningful to consider in individual cases such as this because book covers are a means of intertextual

65 No analysis of *Dorp* and the literariness of its narrative perspective is complete without a short digression into its narrator: Isabel, a woman who has suffered a stroke. The effects of this condition on Isabelle's experience are echoed stylistically. Although this is not a factor that the Ik-index is sensitive to, *Dorp*'s inventive narrative premise may contribute to its greater perceived literariness.

66 Karina van Dalen-Oskam generously alerted me to the fact that *Dorp* was self-published by Anouschka Voskuil (Hebbon, n.d.). The choice for self-publishing alone is interesting. It also implies limited economic capital with less margin for error and adds an authorial dimension to publisher reputation. What is more, it introduces a personal aspect into the question of (un)conscious devaluation. Within the scope of this thesis I cannot go beyond these broad strokes. But *Dorp* would be an interesting case to analyse through the lens of Howard Becker's sociological work on the 'cooperative network' of art production (2008).

positioning. They present readers with visual cues that gesture towards the expected content (and (non)literary quality of that content) found inside.

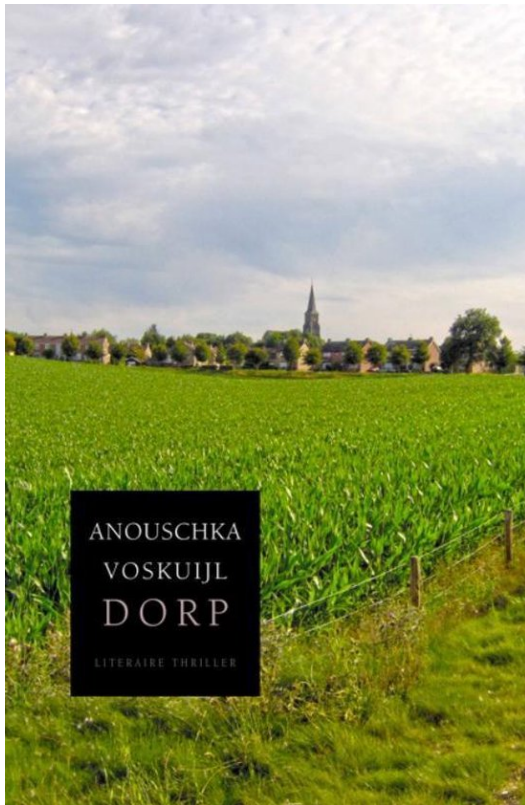
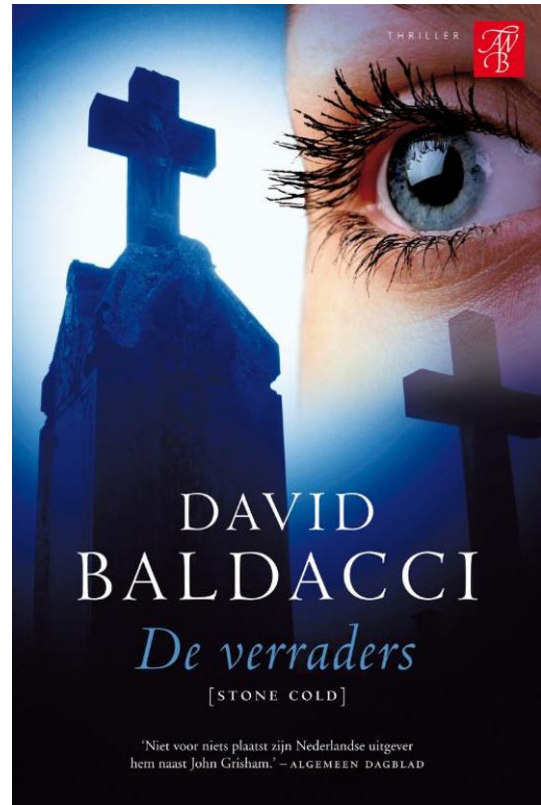
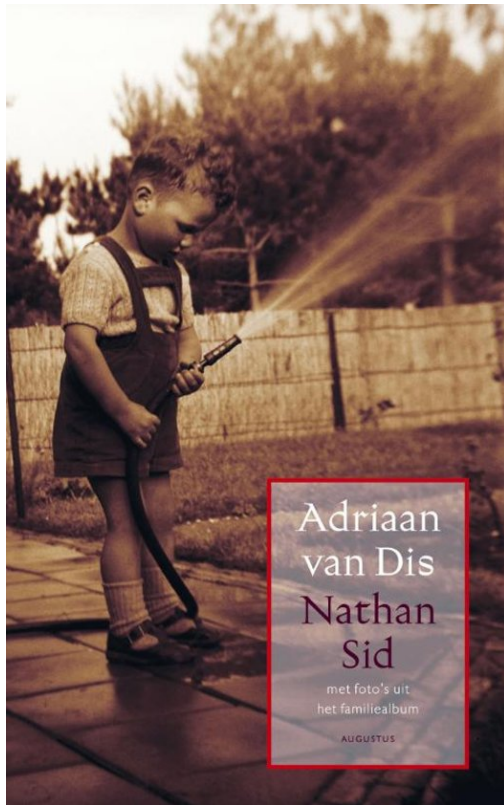


Figure C: Cover of Anouschka Voskuijl's suspense novel *Dorp* (first print, 2011).⁶⁷

Left, Figure D: Cover of Adriaan van Dis's literary fiction novel *Nathan Sid* (19th print, 2010 edition).

⁶⁷ The genre demarcation 'literary thriller' is another Dutch literary-sociological specificity that is, sadly, too intricate an issue to explore here.

Right, Figure E: Cover of David Baldacci's suspense novel *De Verraders* (first published in English as *Stone Cold*) (first print, 2009).



What is so particularly striking about the cover of *Dorp* (figure C) is its reminiscence of novels that fall into the literary Fiction category, such as this novel (figure D) by Adriaan van Dis, who is an established Dutch male author. Both covers feature a vaguely thematic photo with an understated, coherent colour scheme and a title and author in a square frame positioned at the bottom corner. Reviews written by readers of *Dorp* on the website bol.com reveal the influence of the work's visual gesturing towards the literary fiction genre: "A stunning photo on the cover, that does not really suggest a thriller, but does suit this story rather well",⁶⁸ user 'analetter' writes (my translation). More evocative of

68 "Een schitterende foto op de cover, die ook niet echt een thriller suggereert, maar wel heel goed bij dit verhaal past."

the thriller genre would be a cover like those of David Baldacci (figure E), with much more expressive symbolism, louder colours, greater contrast and a more visual prominence for the author's name, to which the novel title is of secondary importance.

In other words, the Ik-index has effectively signalled that *Dorp* is a novel that has been grouped under the suspense genre, but that this categorisation is not entirely textually supported when we take the typical narrative perspective characteristics of the genre into account. A closer look into the commercial positioning of the work, such as the book's cover which (successfully, we might say based on anecdotal evidence) evokes associations with literary fiction, confirms the generic hybridity detected by our basic model of narrative perspective across different genres. The dual marketing strategy for *Dorp* reveals a degree of consciousness about the novel's formal irregularity. This might be the result of internalised intuition or of calculated devaluation to minimise risk in a gendered literary market. Regardless of intention, my methodology allows us trace and quantify the effects of a system in which certain kinds of writing may not receive the literary benefit of the doubt.

5.3.2. Translation

Because my research generated more determinate outcomes than I was expecting, I would like to broach the topic of (non)literary narrative perspective and translation in the context of international cultural

production. Namely, translation appears to be an influential factor in structuring (non)literary narrative perspective.

For the excerpts in my sample corpus, there appears to be no significant difference in dialogue ratio for works translated to Dutch versus works whose source language is Dutch. This indicates that a heightened dialogue ratio is likely not the cause for the more frequent appearance of 'ik' in Dutch source language works, as Karina van Dalen-Oskam writes (unpublished manuscript, 2020).⁶⁹ Rather, the relative occurrence of first person pronouns in translated and non-translated Dutch language works seems to be located in the narrative text.

From closer examination of the isolated narrative text for each translation category, it indeed appears that translated novels score a markedly lower Ik-index than untranslated novels throughout. Novels translated from English and the other languages in my novel sample corpus such as Danish, German, French, Italian, Norwegian, Swedish, and Spanish seem to gravitate towards third person narrative perspective compared to Dutch untranslated novels. I will first begin with exploring the reasons for this apparent phenomenon and then proceed to discuss the relatively marked differences in dialogue text for both translated and non-translated novels.

The concentration of lower Ik-indices for novels that have been translated to Dutch from English likely has a sociological component that is linked to the conditions of international literary production. For reasons of scope I will only globally describe these international dynamics using the centre-periphery model introduced by Pascale Casanova (2004) and applied to the Dutch context by Bevers et al. (2015).

The centre-periphery model as described by Bevers et al. differentiates between an advanced centre of production and those regions who are located in the less prestigious periphery of that centre (2015, p. 13). Bevers et

⁶⁹ This work was unpublished at the time of writing.

al. maintain that The Netherlands is positioned in the semi-periphery; a position of relative privilege, but not of dominance (2015, p. 380). In turn, English language markets make up the centre of production (Heilbron and Sapiro, 2007, p. 95) and account for a large share of the total international cultural output (Heilbron and Sapiro, 2007, p. 96). The resulting influx and recognition of English novels in the Dutch literary field is reflected by the large component of first-language English novels in the Riddle corpus.

Already within this sample corpus, a certain translation hierarchy is reflected within genres, which reinforces earlier findings for (selections of) the Riddle corpus (Koolen et al., 2020; Krans, 2017). Dutch literary fiction scores the highest in perceived literariness, with non-English translated works scoring second-highest in literary fiction. But non-English translated suspense scores higher in mean literary rating than its Dutch untranslated counterparts. Suspense works of Scandinavian origin, especially, fall within the higher regions of the literariness scale, above untranslated Dutch suspense. Most generously, this points to a sub-centre of cultural production for the suspense genre, but at least the results indicate an association with Scandinavian suspense and literary quality. And in the limited data that is available for romance, there is an elevation in perceived literariness for English translated works as opposed to Dutch untranslated works, where the prestige hierarchy appears to be reversed as well.

Regarding the global market of translation, Pierre Bourdieu has distinguished the commercial or large scale of production, as opposed to the the small scale of production that is governed by a logic of aesthetics (1971). In the field of large scale production, Gisele Sapiro writes, the international exchange of books is determined by the law of the market (2008). Against this global socio-economic background there are a myriad of possible explanations for the prominence in third person narrative perspective in translated works of moderate literary quality in the Dutch literary field.

With this Dutch context in mind,⁷⁰ it is important to remember that The Riddle does not encompass a complete cross section of the Dutch literary field, but rather describes the perceived literariness of those 400 novels that are the most sold and borrowed, e.g. also enjoy a certain economic success (Koolen, 2018, p. 20). To paraphrase, the novels in my corpus are cultural products that have been published within a commercial globalised market with the objective of obtaining profit, rather than for (purely) artistic reasons.

I have observed that English language novels that are sourced from the cultural centre attract a certain literary prestige in the Dutch semi-periphery. As reflected by the average literariness ratings for English third-person narratives in my sample corpus, they appear to be associated with an acceptable level of perceived literariness in the Dutch target market. Additionally, the success of English language novels has already been proven in a foreign market, a preselection criterion which may render them relatively stable and low-risk investments (Bourdieu, 2008). This could be a reason why translated English fiction is more resemblant of genre fiction than of untranslated Dutch fiction. 'High risk, high reward' publishing seems to be limited to the national literary market, where the lowest, but also the highest literary ratings are awarded for novels that are different. For example, in their use of first person narrative perspective.

These explanations combined may account for at least some of relative prominence of third person narratives that are imported into the Dutch literary market. The question then becomes one of cause and effect. Are third person perspective novels chosen expressly for (inter)national publication and promotion, or is the prominence of translated third person narratives a symptom of the current market that constantly weighs costs against

⁷⁰ Novels that are imported from the Anglophone periphery are a mediated representation of that market. The translated novels in the Riddle corpus have passed through lens of economic profitability for the Dutch publisher. This negates exciting chauvinistic conclusions such as the Dutch language or literary tradition being more inventive or dynamic. To compare the Dutch and English literary fields, more neutral grounds for comparison than translation are required.

benefits? Although this socio-textual phenomenon is fascinating to describe, I cannot retrieve the micro-level intentions of actors in the literary field from the data itself.⁷¹

On to the topic of dialogue. Dialogue text I_k-indices for non-English translated novels differ from their untranslated counterparts - they are much more diverse. This variation may indicate a set of different literary conventions for dialogue texts from different cultural backgrounds - this particular subset includes translated novels from German, French, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish. Such a melting pot of source languages complicates my ability to draw substantiated conclusions on any one of these languages, but the overarching tenet remains that stylistically different literary traditions exist alongside one another within the Dutch literary landscape, at least judging from this exercise in narrative perspective. Another reason for this wide variety in I_k-index scores for non-English translated dialogue text could also be that the I_k-index does not mesh well with for languages whose referral system is structurally different. Spanish, for example, omits subject pronouns for verb forms. The I_k-index was developed after Dutch grammatical structures and requires pronouns to express narrative perspective as a the ratio of first person pronouns in a text.

Nonetheless, all novels in the Riddle corpus are in Dutch translation. The I_k-index's incompatibility with these novels would thus imply that translators adhere to the source text so closely that they would take structural liberties with basic Dutch grammar and render the novel illegible. As such, the more plausible theory remains a variety in narrative traditions for dialogue texts from non-English literary cultures.

71 Although for an excellent overview of Dutch publishers' decision-making processes in acquisition in the Netherlands, see Rietstap, E. (2019). 'De redacteur als tekstbeoordelaar. Acquisitie en redactie bij Nederlandse algemene uitgeverijen'. *Tijdschrift voor taalbeheersing*, 41(1), pp. 257-272.

6. Conclusion: The relationship between narrative perspective and perceived literariness

6.1. To what extent is literary narrative perspective text-intrinsic?

Narrative perspective is not a textual factor that determines perceived literariness. A text-intrinsic literary narrative perspective does not exist, and a novel written from a first person perspective is not guaranteed a higher rating than a third person narrative. Rather, readers' associations between literary quality and narrative perspective appear to be more implicit, as they are only a small indirect aspect of the judgments of the participants in the National Reader Survey. The relationship between narrative perspective and perceived literariness can be better described by looking at how narrative perspective *behaves* in different literary and non-literary contexts.

6.2. To what extent is literary narrative perspective structured by genre?

Literary narrative perspective is largely defined by what functions as such in the eye of the Dutch reader, which is largely structured by genre. Literary fiction receives the highest mean literariness ratings. It also receives mean literariness ratings of the widest range, which indicates that readers seem to feel more ambivalently about the literariness status of these works. In comparison, suspense and romance fiction are awarded very consensus-based mean literariness ratings that have a low standard deviation. Even from this subset that accounts for 15% of the total Riddle corpus it already becomes apparent that the respondents to the National Reader Survey were in relative agreement about the literariness status of these two genres; they agreed that suspense was moderately high in literariness, and that romance was anything but literary (Koolen et al. 2020).

Although both first and third narrative perspective appear in all genres in roughly equal quantities, suspense features a marginally higher relative amount of third person pronouns in both isolated narrative and dialogue text. On average, first person narrative perspective seems to appear somewhat more frequently on both ends of the literariness spectrum, in literary fiction and romance. This may indicate that there are stylistic similarities between those novels with the lowest and highest mean literary ratings in this sample corpus.

Third person narrative perspective is generally associated with moderate literariness in all genres contexts in which it occurs. On the other hand, the (non)literary status of the first person narrative perspective seems to be less fixed and more dependable on genre context. For literary fiction, both the highest and lowest literariness ratings are associated with a high degree of first person pronouns, while romance novels with a first person narrative perspective score lower mean literary ratings than their third person counterparts. And for suspense, a subtle reversal of this tendency occurs, with the few novel samples with a high Ik-index scoring somewhat higher in perceived literariness. As such, different socio-textual factors might influence the perceived literariness of first person narrative perspective.

One explanation for the elusiveness of the first person perspective could be textual. It could indeed speak to the increased textual ambiguity or subjectivity of first person narrative perspective that it can take on both high and low literary meaning in the eye of the Dutch reader. However, it is plausible that social factors are also at work. In the moderately literary suspense genre for instance, first person narrative perspective might invoke associations with prestigious and contemplative literary fiction, rather than with the more informal and dialogic sphere of romance. As Corina Koolen writes, these (non)literary realms are strongly gendered (2018). Although it is tempting to dig at the gender gap in literature, there are simply too many

variables that enter into the stylistic differences between high and low literature that this research does not account for. Consequently, I cannot further pinpoint the nature of these intertextual associations for suspense fiction. I can only signal that different prestige connotations seem to be at play in the literary appraisal of first person narrative perspective.

6.3. How is literary narrative perspective distributed across genre and translation?

The novels within categories that are considered to be ‘genre fiction,’ or fiction that is characterised by its formulaic adherence to certain narrative conventions, demonstrate a clear predisposition towards either first or third narrative perspective.⁷² The genre category of ‘literary fiction’ on the other hand, appears to be more stylistically diverse, with more novels that cannot immediately be categorised as either first or third person narratives.

Translation brings another interesting dimension to this phenomenon. A sizeable part of the international influx into the Dutch literary market appears to adhere to a third person narrative perspective, where narrative perspective in domestically produced works are more variable and ambiguous. Through the lens of what I have observed about the stable relationship between third person perspective and moderate perceived literariness, it appears that third person narratives make for the most reliable investment for Dutch publishers looking to import books from the cultural centre of production.

However, beneath the surface more socio-economic and textual influences could be at work that lead to the disproportionate export of third

⁷² For the purpose of drawing broader conclusions I will discuss romance and suspense together as genre fiction here, with the note that the romance data set is limited.

person narratives as opposed to first person narratives. Examples include overseas success as a predictor for domestic success, the palatability of third person narratives (which may in turn be rooted in text-intrinsic factors), the reception of translated novels in the Dutch market, or even different literariness conventions for foreign literary traditions.

In either case, we see distinct roles emerging for different source language works in the Dutch national literary field, in which translated works indeed seem to form a stable 'core' of the literary output, and domestically produced works account for more variation in terms of (non)literary status and narrative perspective. The ways in which narrative perspective is distributed across the semi-peripheral Dutch market reinforce third person narrative perspective as a textual signifier of economic and literary moderation, and first person narrative perspective as a stylistic chameleon that carries less fixed literary meaning.

6.4. What does literary narrative perspective look like?

In the final instalment of this conclusion I will dive deeper into those novels in my sample corpus where, according to my results, literary narrative perspective resides. In figure 15, the five most literary and least literary titles

in the sample corpus are listed, together with their complete (or 'full-text') Ik-indices and those for manually isolated dialogue text and non-dialogue or narrative text. These two overviews encapsulate the relationship between perceived literariness and narrative perspective in the Dutch 2010s context in a nutshell.

The five least literary novels grouped together are exemplary of genre fiction. These works appear to feature either very high or very low narrative text Ik-indices, indicating a strong pronoun adherence to either first or third person narrative perspective, while the five most literary novels illustrate how narrative perspective in the literary fiction genre is more diverse and less clear-cut. The range in literariness ratings for the five least literary novels is also much smaller; with a 0.29 Likert point difference between the fifth least literary and the least literary work, as opposed to more than double that value, 0.63,⁷³ for literary fiction. The Ik-indices for the full text of the most literary works in my sample corpus also appear to be less affected by dialogue isolation than the least literary works, indicating a lower dialogue ratio and stronger disposition to a first person pronouns throughout.⁷⁴

Figure 15: Least and most literary rated works in subcorpus on a Likert scale of 1-7 (1 is lowest, 7 is highest).

73 A quick manual calculation shows that the standard deviation in mean literary rating for the most literary works (0.20) is almost double that of the least literary works (0.12).

74 Dialogue isolation has the highest diminishing effect on third person narrative perspectives due to its heightened contrast with dialogue text.

| 5 least literary works (Author_ThreeMainTitlewords) | Ik-index full text | Ik-index dialogue text | Ik-index non-dialogue text | Mean literary rating | Genre |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Kinsella_WatSpookJij | 0.52 | 0.46 | 0.56 | 2.63 | Romance |
| Gastel_ZwaarVerliefd! | 0.6 | 0.46 | 0.66 | 2.70 | Romance |
| Middelbeek_Turbulentie | 0.51 | 0.48 | 0.52 | 2.83 | Romance |
| Fallon_OpManAf | 0.6 | 0.43 | 0 | 2.91 | Romance |
| Baantjer_MesInRug | 0.32 | 0.46 | 0 | 2.92 | Suspense |

| 5 most literary works (Author_ThreeMainTitlewords) | Ik-index full text | Ik-index dialogue text | Ik-index non-dialogue text | Mean literary rating | Genre |
|--|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Mortier_GestameldLiedboek | 0.41 | 0.38 | 0.41 | 6.54 | Fiction |
| Bernlef_GeleendeLevens | 0.27 | 0.42 | 0.22 | 6.25 | Fiction |
| Wieringa_Caesarion | 0.46 | 0.47 | 0.45 | 6.2 | Fiction |
| Bakker_Omweg | 0.15 | 0.51 | 0 | 6.19 | Fiction |
| Abdolah_Kraai | 0.61 | 0.39 | 0.64 | 5.91 | Fiction |

From the five lowest scores, I have already examined the narrative style of Sophie Kinsella’s romance novel *Wat spook jij uit?* (*Twenties girl*), as well as Ab Baantjer’s suspense novel *Een mes in de rug* (*‘A knife in the back’*) up close. I have also moved up higher in the literariness ranking, where Anouschka Voskuil’s suspense novel *Dorp* (*‘Village’*) gave an impression of what a genre ‘hybrid’ novel might look like. I will now traverse to the other end of the literariness scale by analysing an excerpt from Erwin Mortier’s 2011 literary fiction novel *Gestameld liedboek* (liberally translated: *‘Stammered songbook’*), the highest scoring novel in the sample corpus. *Gestameld liedboek* received a mean literary rating of 6.54 out of 7 from our respondents. The excerpt was taken from the full text of the novel sample.

De rust en de sereniteit waarmee ze haar levenseinde heeft afgewacht is aangrijpend en biedt me op een rare manier ook troost. De dagen heb ik doorgebracht met afwisselend werken aan de roman en bij haar zijn, en terwijl ik hier in de tuin zat te schrijven voelde ik me op wonderlijke wijze 'ingebed' in het bestaan.

Mijn moeder is heel erg aangeslagen, wat op zich voor ons vreemd genoeg ook een geruststelling is; ook al zijn er dagen dat een echt gesprek niet meer mogelijk blijkt, ze is meer 'intact' dan we soms zouden denken.

De uitvaart was, na zes dagen van niet echt diep verdriet, meer van een schrijnende melancholie - negenentachtig kun je bezwaarlijk een geval van wiegendood noemen. Alleen na de dienst, op het kerkhof, toen die kist daar zo alleen lag, verzonken in de groeve, in de gietende regen, kreeg ik het even te kwaad.

Ze rust nu bij mijn grootvader en, wat een troost is, nabij de dreef naar het kasteel. Een heel mooi stuk van het dorp waar ik opgegroeid ben - en een van die Lieven en mij zeer dierbare landschappen.

Na de rouwmaaltijd hebben we wat door de streek getoerd, de bossen van Aalter, en de oude kouterlanden rond het kanaal naar Brugge. De regen had alle stof van de afgelopen warme dagen weggespoeld, er hing een blauwige nevel boven het land en alles zag er zo groen uit. Voorouderlijke grond ook, want onder de dijk van het kanaal staat nog steeds de hoeve waar mijn grootmoeder geboren is. Na jaren van

leegstand worden het woonhuis en de stallen nu gerestaureerd. Het deed me goed het allemaal terug te zien.^{75 76} (p. 5)

I have selected this short excerpt because it is similar in theme as the excerpt I chose for Dorp to give an impression of the difference between a 5,5 and a 6,5 on the literariness scale. In this close reading of literary narrative style I will focus mainly on pronoun use, while there are of course many different stylistic characteristics that might contribute to the perceived higher literariness of *Gestameld Liedboek*. Another integral element to the narrative style of the excerpt is a continuous shift in verb tenses, which lies outside of the detection abilities of the Ik-index in its current form.

This excerpt from *Gestameld liedboek* acts as a window into what ambiguous narrative Ik-indices may look like on the paragraph level. In this descriptive excerpt, the narrator relates events coloured by emotion, switching between third person pronouns to relate events and first person

75 My translation, in which I have opted for sound and feeling rather than linguistic verisimilitude.

The tranquility and serenity with which she has awaited her passing are moving and in a wondrous way also pacify me. The days I have passed with alternately working on the novel and keeping her company, and while I was writing here in the garden I miraculously felt 'embedded' in being.

My mother is very affected, which actually is also an uncomfortable source of comfort to us; even though there are days when a real conversation no longer turns out to be possible, she is more 'whole' than we would sometimes be inclined to think.

The funeral was, after six days of shallow sadness, more an occasion of a harrowing melancholy - ninety-eight can hardly be regarded a case of cot death. Only after the service, in the graveyard, when the coffin was lying there so solitarily, sunken in the ditch, in the pouring rain, I fleetingly teared up.

She is resting now in company of my grandfather and, which is a comfort, close by the avenue leading to the castle. A very beautiful part of the village I grew up in - and one of those landscapes very dear to Lieven and myself.

After the mourning meal we have toured about the region, the Aalter forests, and the old plowlands surrounding the Brugge-bound channel. The rain had washed away all the dust of the blistering days before, a bluish fog lingered over the land and everything looked so very green.

Ancestral soil, too, because under the channel's dyke the farm where my grandmother was born is still erect. After years of vacancy, the living quarters and the stables are now being refurnished. I felt strengthened to revisit it all.

76 Because it proved difficult to translate this excerpt grammatically faithfully, I will quote from the Dutch version in this close reading.

pronoun to represent the mental state evoked by those events. Some sentences are purely descriptive, such as “Na jaren van leegstand worden het woonhuis en de stallen nu gerestaureerd”, while the next can be more subjective, such as “Het deed me goed het allemaal terug te zien.”

Moreover, some sentences alone showcase a narrative gradient from third to first person narrative perspective. For example, the narrator states: “De rust en de sereniteit waarmee ze haar levenseinde heeft afgewacht is aangrijpend en biedt me op een rare manier ook troost.” In this sentence, “Ze haar levenseinde heeft afgewacht” is indicative of third person narrative description, “[het] is aangrijpend” is an implied impersonal subject that is not registered by the Ik-index, and “biedt me op een rare manier ook troost” is indicative of first person character experience.

Earlier in this research I phrased the definition of literariness in the eye of the early 21st century Dutch reader in terms of the perceived ‘right balance’ between form and content. It appears that this idea of a literary ratio can be extended to personal pronouns. Where some have characterised literary narrative style as descriptive (Jautze et al., 2013; Jautze, 2014), and others as subjective in nature (Krans, 2017), the constant shifts in personal pronouns on and within the sentence level in *Gestmeld liedboek* suggest that the literariness of narrative perspective may reside in the artful combination of both.

A close reading of this excerpt from *Gestmeld liedboek* is simultaneously affirming and humbling. It shows how a single sentence alone can exemplify those text-imminent traits of literary narrative perspective once it has been identified where and how to find them. Yet this very short excerpt is also enough, in all its stylistic richness and narrative complexity far beyond the realm of pronouns, to point out the long way that is still to go, towards literary narrative perspective.

6.5. Limitations and recommendations

Research as methodologically tentative as this lends itself to a wide range of expansions. The subject of making a stylistic quality such as narrative perspective quantifiable, as I have started to scratch the surface of it in this thesis, certainly leaves room for conceptual and empirical innovation. In the results of this research I have also encountered some interesting patterns that can act as starting points for more in-depth research into how and why narrative perspective structures our understanding of the literary.

The way in which I have operationalised narrative perspective has its limits. I have approached narrative perspective in the narrow sense of first versus third person narrative perspective, and I have only approximated a very small and computationally viable aspect of it using a pronoun index. A benefit of the Ik-index is its relative transparency which allows for the researcher's hermeneutical involvement as opposed to 'black boxes,' an oft-heard critique of machine learning measures in the Digital Humanities (Sample, 2019). It is also easily modifiable to accommodate different types of pronouns. Yet the Ik-index remains a somewhat two-dimensional representation that is reductive of narrative perspective in its full textual complexity, although effective for the bestselling novels studied here.

I believe that the current and very preliminary understanding of narrative perspective can be much enriched through operationalisation of the concept of the focaliser, e.g. the narrative entity who emerges from the text in collaboration with the reader. Moreover, it is important to realise that narrative perspective does not only have a grammatical anchor (as I have worked with it here in the form of first or third person pronouns) and a spatial anchor (or focaliser), but also has a temporal element. One example of this is verb tense, which has been disregarded from my research. Further inquiry

into these aspects can broaden our computational account of narrative perspective, especially in relation to literary style.

For the purpose of this research, I have used the Ik-index on 10,000 word complete or 'full' novel samples, isolated dialogue text, and isolated narrative text. As such, I have represented the narrative perspective of each novel in my sample corpus with only three numbers. Returning to shorter paragraph-length text excerpts or modifying the Ik-index to e.g. create a third person pronoun index could be helpful in mapping perspective shifts across entire novels, on which I have placed no special focus in this thesis. Shifts in narrative perspective may contribute to perceived narrative ambiguity or complexity which could in turn relate to perceived literariness, but our current knowledge in this area remains lacking. As such, the topic of perspective shifts could benefit from additional study.

Next to this, I have used a representative sample corpus of the larger Riddle corpus for this thesis due to the issue of manual dialogue isolation, which was quite labour-intensive. This effort has produced a sizeable corpus of dialogue text which could be useful in future work towards dialogue isolation. Automatic dialogue isolation has remained an unknown in the field of Digital Humanities thus far and the possibility would be groundbreaking: it would, for instance, facilitate comparative research to monitor the definition of literary narrative perspective overtime and over place. One option with the 200,000 words of dialogue text that I have accumulated would be to use it a training set for a machine learning model to recognise and isolate dialogue text, although that particular model would be subjective to the training material. For the subject of (non)literary narrative perspective, automatic dialogue isolation would also allow me to work with the entire Riddle corpus rather than a representative selection, which can substantiate some of the cautious observations which I have based on subsets of a subset.

It remains crucial to be reflexive about the methodological choices that underly my current manual method of dialogue isolation, especially when the output of those efforts will be used for a machine learning model. Although my understanding of dialogue in this case has been as theoretically informed as possible, but in practise it has not been waterproof. The difficulties in upholding a single dialogue isolation strategy for both genres point to the increased mimetic nature of narrative text in romance fiction as opposed to literary fiction. Despite a convergence in Ik-index, these stylistic differences between narrative perspective in literary fiction and romance can be pinpointed more comprehensively. Further study into operationalising the textual characteristics of (free) indirect discourse could be worthwhile to better accommodate the narrative style of romance.

Additionally, I think it is important to emphasise again that the Ik-index is a method that only works for languages with similar referral systems to Dutch. Adapting the pronoun index strategy for different languages could also enable us comparative research into different literary traditions without the filters of translation (although the lens of translation is a valuable subject of study in itself). I would, however, propose to study these literary cultures individually rather than treating them as one miscellaneous 'non-English' category as I have done. Dialogue traditions, for example, appear to be different for the non-English translated novels in this subcorpus, which could be a fruitful point of departure for further research.

Next is the retroactive nature of this study. Part of the appeal of studying conceptions of literariness descriptively, i.e. without set and stable criteria for the participants to base their value judgments on, is the possibility of laying bare implicit preferences. However, when doing research into a single smaller factor of literariness such as narrative perspective, it is difficult to find any discernible linear effect. One solution would be to simply integrate more variables, which all contribute their respective knowledge to

as complete a model of literary style as possible. I do want to warn against combining an endless amount of computational approximations of literary-sociological or narratological concepts, because stacking abstraction upon abstraction detracts from the robustness of the end result - I sometimes felt that this was already a problem with the explorative scope of this thesis.

A way to bring literariness attitudes towards narrative perspective into direct focus would be to study it in isolation. To make a start with such a direct approach to literary narrative perspective, I will be conducting a pilot experiment with the participation of 21 high school students of pre-university level, all around the age of 17 years old. This population is particularly interesting to examine more closely because these students are fully immersed in the literary socialisation process, due to the Dutch schooling system in which 'suitable' reading is a required part of the standardised testing curriculum. I will present the students with three separate paragraphs taken from several novels with comparable mean literary ratings in either a first-person or third person narrative perspective, and ask them to rate them anonymously on the same Likert scale of literariness as used in the National Reader Survey, together with short motivations.

Finally, directions for future research that I have signalled in this thesis are:

- The exploration of Dutch fiction beyond the Riddle corpus;
- The literariness connotations of second person, undetermined, or alternative pronouns and narrative perspectives;
- The reasons for gravitation towards a third person narrative perspective in translated novels in the Dutch field;
- The stylistic convergence of translated literary fiction and genre fiction such as suspense;

- The differences between English translated literary fiction and English literary fiction in its domestic context;
- The difference in dialogue text conventions between literary traditions;
- The text-intrinsic connection between character subjectivity and first person narrative perspective;
- The stylistic convergence of literary fiction and romance fiction;
- A more comprehensive model of dialogue text in romance fiction;
- The difference in prestige connotations of first person narrative perspective in different genre contexts, especially suspense;
- Increased narrative diversity in suspense dialogue, especially in connection to expository dialogue;
- The suggestion that all literary fiction (in this corpus) is to some extent descriptive and that this accounts for 1) the increased variance in first person I_k-index values and 2) the empirical impossibility of a 'complete' I_k-index value of 1.0;
- Further qualitative accounts of novels with ambiguous I_k-index values;
- Testing the increased literariness impact of first person narrative perspective when it is located in dialogue text.

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Figure 16: Accumulated metadata Suspense

| | text name | token count full text | lk-index full text | token count dialogue text | lk-index dialogue text | token count non-dialogue text | lk-index non-dialogue text | ratio dialogue | genre | mean literary rating | language category |
|----|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 58 | Voskuijl_Dorp 41 | 9698 | 0.38 | 3848 | 0.53 | 6089 | 0.27 | 0.4 | Suspense | 5.52 | 1 |
| 37 | Mankell_GekweldeMan 164 | 9725 | 0.3 | 4970 | 0.48 | 4753 | 0 | 0.51 | Suspense | 4.77 | 2 |
| 53 | Stevens_Vermist 114 | 9732 | 0.56 | 4623 | 0.51 | 5091 | 0.61 | 0.48 | Suspense | 4.18 | 3 |
| 43 | Nesbo_Schim 22 | 9901 | 0.27 | 3592 | 0.29 | 6312 | 0.26 | 0.36 | Suspense | 4.17 | 2 |
| 33 | Koryta_Begraven 102 | 9742 | 0.47 | 2906 | 0.41 | 6833 | 0.51 | 0.3 | Suspense | 4.17 | 3 |
| 48 | Rosenfeldt_WatVerborgenis 28 | 9766 | 0.14 | 2227 | 0.41 | 7529 | 0 | 0.23 | Suspense | 4.13 | 2 |
| 29 | King_Gevangen 287 | 9813 | 0.31 | 5322 | 0.51 | 4489 | 0 | 0.54 | Suspense | 4.12 | 3 |
| 34 | Lackberg_SneeuwstormEnAmandelgeur 24 | 9843 | 0.17 | 7155 | 0 | 2678 | 0.53 | 0.73 | Suspense | 4.08 | 2 |
| 35 | Larsson_VrouwDieMet 247 | 9728 | 0.2 | 4269 | 0.41 | 5458 | 0.01 | 0.44 | Suspense | 4.04 | 2 |
| 57 | Vlugt_Herfstlied 19 | 9723 | 0.25 | 3767 | 0.48 | 5951 | 0.07 | 0.39 | Suspense | 4.00 | 1 |
| 26 | Jackson_ZevendeDoodzonde 137 | 9822 | 0.08 | 1908 | 0.35 | 7882 | 0 | 0.19 | Suspense | 3.98 | 3 |
| 45 | Pauw_Daglicht 37 | 9667 | 0.53 | 4504 | 0.43 | 5156 | 0.62 | 0.47 | Suspense | 3.97 | 1 |
| 24 | Hollander_Zielsverwanten 54 | 9684 | 0.26 | 2639 | 0.54 | 7039 | 0.14 | 0.27 | Suspense | 3.91 | 1 |
| 23 | Hollander_Vluchtgedrag 79 | 6975 | 0.74 | 2825 | 0.43 | 6975 | 0.74 | 0.41 | Suspense | 3.9 | 1 |
| 13 | Coben_Levenslijn 79 | 9640 | 0.22 | 3653 | 0.41 | 5937 | 0 | 0.38 | Suspense | 3.9 | 3 |
| 17 | Forbes_SterfMetMij 67 | 9811 | 0.13 | 3202 | 0.34 | 6602 | 0 | 0.33 | Suspense | 3.89 | 3 |
| 7 | Baldacci_NietsDanWaarheid 28 | 9738 | 0.19 | 2759 | 0.5 | 6959 | 0 | 0.28 | Suspense | 3.88 | 3 |
| 19 | Gerritsen_KoudHart 112 | 9664 | 0.28 | 4785 | 0.45 | 4868 | 0.01 | 0.5 | Suspense | 3.86 | 3 |
| 3 | Adler-Olsen_VrouwInKooi 33 | 9627 | 0.18 | 4307 | 0.34 | 5310 | 0 | 0.45 | Suspense | 3.76 | 2 |
| 47 | Rose_MoordVoorMij 16 | 9696 | 0.22 | 4086 | 0.41 | 5568 | 0 | 0.42 | Suspense | 3.75 | 3 |
| 21 | Hayder_Huid 40 | 9747 | 0.22 | 4113 | 0.39 | 5610 | 0 | 0.42 | Suspense | 3.73 | 3 |
| 22 | Hollander_Naaktportret 76 | 9776 | 0.62 | 3950 | 0.5 | 5815 | 0.69 | 0.4 | Suspense | 3.71 | 1 |
| 55 | Verhoef_Close-up 84 | 9670 | 0.57 | 3875 | 0.52 | 5790 | 0.6 | 0.4 | Suspense | 3.67 | 1 |
| 52 | Smith_OpVolleZee 114 | 9790 | 0.27 | 4678 | 0.45 | 5103 | 0 | 0.48 | Suspense | 3.66 | 3 |
| 44 | Patterson_Hitte 75 | 9660 | 0.57 | 3851 | 0.5 | 5798 | 0.62 | 0.4 | Suspense | 3.54 | 3 |
| 12 | Clancy_OgenVanVijand 116 | 9711 | 0.26 | 2773 | 0.52 | 6920 | 0 | 0.29 | Suspense | 3.49 | 3 |
| 14 | Cussler_Duivelsadem 176 | 9800 | 0.18 | 1539 | 0.58 | 8254 | 0 | 0.16 | Suspense | 3.37 | 3 |
| 46 | Rijn_LastMinute 21 | 9760 | 0.13 | 1888 | 0.53 | 7865 | 0 | 0.19 | Suspense | 3.32 | 1 |
| 5 | Baantjer_MesInRug 23 | 9588 | 0.32 | 5631 | 0.46 | 3941 | 0 | 0.59 | Suspense | 2.92 | 1 |

Appendix I: Metadata

Figure 17: Accumulated metadata Fiction

| | text name | token count full text | lk-index full text | token count dialogue text | lk-index dialogue text | token count non-dialogue text | lk-index non-dialogue text | ratio dialogue | genre | mean literary rating | language category |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 41 | Mortier_GestameldLiedboek 5 | 9792 | 0.41 | 675 | 0.38 | 9112 | 0.41 | 0.07 | Fiction | 6.54 | 1 |
| 25 | Houellebecq_KaartEnGebied | 9952 | 0.24 | 3770 | 0.52 | 6170 | 0.01 | 0.38 | Fiction | 6.41 | 2 |
| 9 | Bernlef_GeleendeLevens 31 | 9877 | 0.27 | 1608 | 0.42 | 8260 | 0.22 | 0.16 | Fiction | 6.25 | 1 |
| 59 | Wieringa_Caesarion 57 | 9879 | 0.46 | 2440 | 0.47 | 7427 | 0.45 | 0.25 | Fiction | 6.2 | 1 |
| 6 | Bakker_Omweg 40 | 9724 | 0.15 | 2458 | 0.51 | 7246 | 0 | 0.25 | Fiction | 6.19 | 1 |
| 2 | Abdolah_Kraai 17 | 9636 | 0.61 | 1290 | 0.39 | 8344 | 0.64 | 0.13 | Fiction | 5.91 | 1 |
| 20 | Harbach_KunstVanVeldspel 147 | 9786 | 0.14 | 1978 | 0.48 | 7801 | 0 | 0.2 | Fiction | 5.88 | 3 |
| 8 | Beijnum_SoortFamilie 96 | 9904 | 0.08 | 1106 | 0.47 | 8792 | 0 | 0.11 | Fiction | 5.76 | 1 |
| 60 | Winter_RechtOpTerugkeer 128 | 9740 | 0.25 | 3300 | 0.46 | 6438 | 0 | 0.34 | Fiction | 5.75 | 1 |
| 36 | Lewinsky_LotVanFamilie 306 | 9770 | 0.2 | 1495 | 0.36 | 8264 | 0.15 | 0.15 | Fiction | 5.72 | 2 |
| 51 | RuizZafon_SpelVanEngel 155 | 9681 | 0.68 | 2764 | 0.65 | 6917 | 0.68 | 0.29 | Fiction | 5.66 | 2 |
| 4 | Ammaniti_JijEnIk 16 | 9587 | 0.5 | 2697 | 0.47 | 6885 | 0.51 | 0.28 | Fiction | 5.61 | 2 |
| 1 | Abdolah_Koning 2 | 9753 | 0.27 | 4018 | 0.49 | 5730 | 0 | 0.41 | Fiction | 5.23 | 1 |
| 32 | Koch_ZomerhuisMetZwembad 56 | 9838 | 0.56 | 3169 | 0.51 | 6663 | 0.58 | 0.32 | Fiction | 5.09 | 1 |
| 54 | Stockett_Keukenmeidenroman 87 | 9779 | 0.57 | 2399 | 0.58 | 7374 | 0.56 | 0.25 | Fiction | 4.95 | 3 |
| 28 | Jonasson_100-jarigeManDie 6 | 9823 | 0.05 | 576 | 0.44 | 9245 | 0 | 0.06 | Fiction | 4.81 | 2 |
| 38 | Mastras_TranenOverKashmir 12 | 9846 | 0.13 | 2045 | 0.44 | 7796 | 0 | 0.21 | Fiction | 4.79 | 3 |
| 49 | Rosnay_DieLaatsteZomer 9 | 9713 | 0.26 | 2540 | 0.47 | 7167 | 0.17 | 0.26 | Fiction | 4.59 | 3 |
| 11 | Brown_AllesWatWij 82 | 9872 | 0.14 | 2481 | 0.51 | 7380 | 0 | 0.25 | Fiction | 4.23 | 3 |
| 56 | Verhoef_Tegenlicht 32 | 9697 | 0.5 | 2614 | 0.45 | 7076 | 0.52 | 0.27 | Fiction | 4.2 | 1 |
| 15 | Evans_Vergeving 86 | 9784 | 0.12 | 1605 | 0.41 | 8176 | 0 | 0.16 | Fiction | 4.16 | 3 |
| 10 | Bezaz_Vinexvrouwen 23 | 9668 | 0.55 | 3519 | 0.45 | 6146 | 0.61 | 0.36 | Fiction | 3.54 | 1 |
| 30 | Kingsbury_NooitTeLaat 74 | 9840 | 0.12 | 2106 | 0.46 | 7729 | 0 | 0.21 | Fiction | 3.47 | 3 |
| 50 | Royen_Mannentester 7 | 9754 | 0.47 | 2251 | 0.46 | 7507 | 0.47 | 0.23 | Fiction | 3.18 | 1 |

In the tables below I have listed all the data that I have acquired for all three genres; (literary) fiction, suspense and romance. The tables are all sorted by literariness rating from high (7) to low (1). The first column indicates the position of the work on the randomised list of 60 texts that I have compiled for this experiment. The novels are displayed as they are coded in the Riddle metadata, or Author_ThreeMainTitlewords.

Figure 18: Accumulated metadata Romance

| no. | text name | token count full text | lk-index full text | token count dialogue text | lk-index dialogue text | token count non-dialogue text | lk-index non-dialogue text | ratio dialogue | genre | mean literary rating | language category |
|-----|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 27 | James_KleineDingen 7 | 9828 | 0.12 | 1898 | 0.44 | 7962 | 0 | 0.19 | Romantic | 3.54 | 3 |
| 42 | Neill_VriendschapLiefdeEn 65 | 9777 | 0.17 | 2524 | 0.48 | 7197 | 0 | 0.26 | Romantic | 3.45 | 3 |
| 40 | Montefiore_Affaire 35 | 9644 | 0.29 | 5058 | 0.5 | 4579 | 0 | 0.52 | Romantic | 3.21 | 3 |
| 16 | Fallon_OpManAf 29 | 9762 | 0.13 | 2146 | 0.43 | 7577 | 0 | 0.22 | Romantic | 2.91 | 3 |
| 39 | Middelbeek_Turbulentie | 9692 | 0.51 | 3542 | 0.48 | 6107 | 0.52 | 0.37 | Romantic | 2.83 | 1 |
| 18 | Gastel_ZwaarVerliefd! 43 | 9783 | 0.6 | 3532 | 0.46 | 6244 | 0.66 | 0.36 | Romantic | 2.7 | 1 |
| 31 | Kinsella_WatSpookJij 57 | 9633 | 0.52 | 3611 | 0.46 | 5889 | 0.56 | 0.37 | Romantic | 2.63 | 3 |

The number next to the title indicates the randomised page number in the macOS Pages file that I started to count 10,000 words from, cutting off at the sentence boundary. The column next to it displays the final word count (or 'token count') for the full text of the novel sample. The same columns I have listed for dialogue text and narrative or (non-dialogue) text respectively, with the according lk-indices listed next to them.

The token counts have turned out a bit lower than 10,000 words which can be explained by the different word counting methods employed by different kinds of processing software; in this case R. The next column presents the dialogue ratio for each novel sample which was calculated using these token counts.

The next columns show the genre label, mean literary rating, and source language code. This is based on my own coding system, in which 1 represents Dutch source language books, 2 stands for translated works from English, and 3 stands for non-English source languages.

Appendix II: Example of novel sample

Ila: Excerpt from full-text sample of Bernlef_Geleende Levens

het huis dat grossman voor hen had uitgezocht lag achter in een rustig laantje voor ieder huis stond een auto nergens was een mens te zien nika frummelde aan haar opgestoken blonde haar en weer vroeg ze nu aan de verhuizer of dit wel het goede adres was dit is het adres dat uw man mij opgegeven heeft zei hij julien was uit de laadbak gesprongen en maakte het tuinhok open een vrijstaand huis met grote lege ramen voor een toekomstige suppoost van een beeldenpark een wel heel fraaie behuizing nika liet haar lipafdrukken op juliens wang achter ze haalde een zakdoekje uit haar handtas en veegde zijn wang schoon ik kan het nog steeds niet geloven toch is het zo zei julien en hij draaide de sleutel in het slot om terwijl zij door het lege huis liepen de trap naar de bovenverdieping beklommen en over de plankenvloer kloten was de verhuizer al begonnen hun meubels naar binnen te sjouwen julien en nika stonden voor de open ramen van wat hun slaapkamer zou worden ze keken uit op een heuveltje begroeid met slanke berken julien sloeg een arm om haar heen maar nika maakte zich los ik moet die verhuizer gaan zeggen waar hij alles neer moet zetten in de huiskamer keek ze om zich heen ze moest meteen gordijnen laten maken tegen de inkijk ze schaamde zich een beetje voor de staat van haar meubels de burens hiernaast hadden vast betere spullen julien staarde naar het berkenbosje op de heuvel hij hoorde een leeuwerik maar hoe hij de lucht ook afspeurde hij zag het zingende vogeltje nergens om vijf uur werden ze bij grossman verwacht wanneer zou hij moeten beginnen en wat zou zijn werk precies inhouden toen hij nika vertelde dat ze s middags in grossmans villa werden verwacht zei ze: ik heb niets om aan te trekken natuurlijk heb je iets om aan te trekken die groene jurk met die pofmouwtjes een vrouwtje uit de provincie zei nika smalend we zijn hier ook in de provincie zei julien en hij gaf haar een tikje op haar billen toen de verhuizer al hun spullen had neergezet trok julien zijn portemonnee de verhuizer schudde zijn hoofd alles is betaald zei hij en tikte met zijn wijsvinger tegen een denkbeeldige pet de rest van de middag hielp julien nika met het op zijn plaats zetten van tafels stoelen een dressoir dat nog van zijn moeder geweest was en een paar

kleinere ronde tafeltjes een droogboeket zou mooi staan zei hij terwijl hij een van de bijzettafeltjes in een hoek van de kamer zette

IIb: Excerpt from isolated narrative text sample of Bernlef_Geleende Levens

het huis dat grossman voor hen had uitgezocht lag achter in een rustig laantje voor ieder huis stond een auto nergens was een mens te zien nika frummelde aan haar opgestoken blonde haar en weer vroeg ze nu aan de verhuizer of dit wel het goede adres was zei hij julien was uit de laadbak gesprongen en maakte het tuinhek open een vrijstaand huis met grote lege ramen voor een toekomstige suppoost van een beeldenpark een wel heel fraaie behuizing nika liet haar lipafdrukken op juliens wang achter ze haalde een zakdoekje uit haar handtas en veegde zijn wang schoon zei julien en hij draaide de sleutel in het slot om terwijl zij door het lege huis liepen de trap naar de bovenverdieping beklommen en over de plankenvloer kloten was de verhuizer al begonnen hun meubels naar binnen te sjouwen julien en nika stonden voor de open ramen van wat hun slaapkamer zou worden ze keken uit op een heuveltje begroeid met slanke berken julien sloeg een arm om haar heen maar nika maakte zich los in de huiskamer keek ze om zich heen ze moest meteen gordijnen laten maken tegen de inkijk ze schaamde zich een beetje voor de staat van haar meubels de burens hiernaast hadden vast betere spullen julien staarde naar het berkenbosje op de heuvel hij hoorde een leeuwerik maar hoe hij de lucht ook afspeurde hij zag het zingende vogeltje nergens om vijf uur werden ze bij grossman verwacht wanneer zou hij moeten beginnen en wat zou zijn werk precies inhouden toen hij nika vertelde dat ze s middags in grossmans villa werden verwacht zei ze: zei nika smalend zei julien en hij gaf haar een tikje op haar billen toen de verhuizer al hun spullen had neergezet trok julien zijn portemonnee de verhuizer schudde zijn hoofd zei hij en tikte met zijn wijsvinger tegen een denkbeeldige pet de rest van de middag hielp julien nika met het op zijn plaats zetten van tafels stoelen een dressoir dat nog van zijn moeder geweest was en een paar kleinere ronde tafeltjes zei hij terwijl hij een van de bijzettafeltjes in een hoek van de kamer zette

Ilc: Excerpt from isolated dialogue text sample of Bernlef_Geleende Levens

dit is het adres dat uw man mij opgegeven heeft ik kan het nog steeds niet geloven
toch is het zo ik moet die verhuizer gaan zeggen waar hij alles neer moet zetten ik heb
niets om aan te trekken natuurlijk heb je iets om aan te trekken die groene jurk met die
pofmouwtjes een vrouwtje uit de provincie we zijn hier ook in de provincie alles is
betaald een droogboeket zou mooi staan